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An Analysis of India Pakistan Water Conflicts

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Abstract

The article seeks to address the water conflict between India and Pakistan and its implications for relations between the two opposite states. This dissertation further sheds light on the steps taken to find a solution to this conflict and then the issue was resolved through the "Indus water treaty in 1960", which was a temporary solution. This work examines disputes over the construction of dams or reservoirs on rivers across borders, such as the construction of "Baghliar dam", "Kishanganga project" and "Wuller Barrage" from India and further examines the Pakistan's response to these Projects. This study also sheds light on India's response to the Diamer Bhasha dam being constructing by Pakistan. The focus of this research is on the Baghliar, Kishanganga and Diamer Bhasha Projects. The method employed in the proposed research is analytical one and also with qualitative approach. This study is based on both primary and secondary sources. This study shows that if the water dispute is not solved then it will be catastrophic. An early resolution of this dispute is essential for better relations between both bilateral sates.

Key Words: Indus Water Treaty (IWT), Water Issue, World Bank, India Pakistan Relations, Baghliar Dam, Kishanganga Project, Wuller Barrage, Diamer Bhasha Dam.

Introduction

On the "World map," two independent and "sovereign" states were created in 1947 after the Indian subcontinent was split. The Indus Basin Irrigation System, which included 37 million acres of land, was once intended to be a single system, but it is currently "split between India and Pakistan" without regard to where the irrigation boundaries are. There have been problems of some kind between the two nations ever since they gained their freedom (Lowi, 1995).

Thus, although some were fixed, others remain. At the "top of the list" is the water dispute. After two countries brought up the issue with the World Bank, the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) was signed. The Indus Basin in 1960 is the best example of a solution to the water problem, but water conflicts between the two states soon resulted from dams India erected on western rivers (Qureshi, 2017).

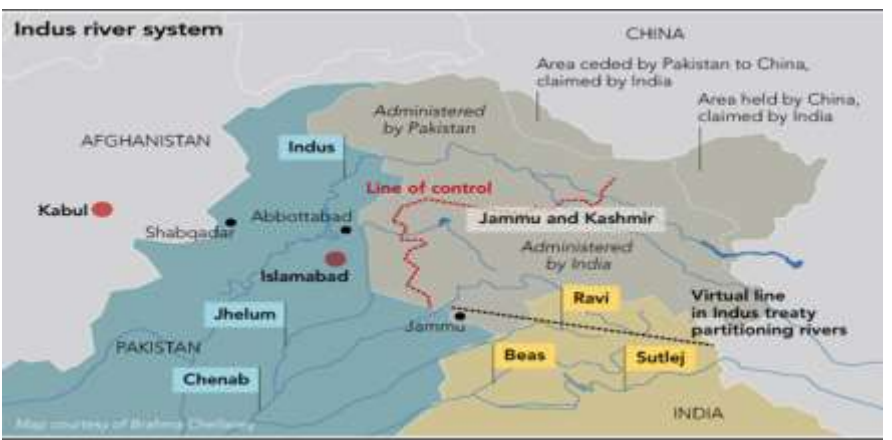
Since the 1947 partition, disputes between Pakistan and India over the "Indus Basin" have existed. Both parties attempted to settle their "differences" between "1947 and 1960," primarily through "short-term agreements," but when bilateral discussions failed to find a solution, international mediation was required. As a result, following nine years of discussions, the Basin Treaty was concluded in 1960 (Miner, 2009).

Water disputes have developed between India and Pakistan since the Indus Basin pact. These conflicts include those involving Baglihar, Kishanganga, Wullar, Dulhasti, Salal Uri II, Nimoobazgo, and many more. India has begun building dams on disputed sites in "violation of Indus water treaty" (Qureshi, 2017).

Indus River system and Kashmir

The Indus, the Chenab, the Jhelum, the Ravi, the Sutlej, and the Beas are the six waterways of the Canal water system. Although the Kabul River is included, it is not required to be mentioned in the current study. Five of India's six rivers originate in Indian-occupied Kashmir. Tibet and Afghanistan account for about 30% of the Indus Basin, Pakistan and India comprise the bulk of the basin. Ownership of the Indus drainage basin area is shared by China, Pakistan, and India (Akhtar, 2010).

The following map shows the Indus Water System:



Source: https://www.clearias.com/indus-water-treaty/

Table: 1 Catchment area of Indus River System (in Sq)

Name of Countries	Indus	%	Jhelum	%	Chenab	%	Ravi	%	Sutlej	%	Beas	%	Total	%
India	…..		…..		1735	6-7	4408	28.1	12138	29.6	7719	100	26000	8
Pakistan	158078	62.5	10188	47.7	13469	51.7	11333	71.9	11232	27.6		…	204300	56
Afghanistan	29200	11.5	….		…				----			….	29200	8
Jammu & Kashmir	47298	18.4	11171	52.3	10831	41.6			----			….	69300	19
Tibet	18062	7.6	---		---				17838	42.8		….	35900	9
Total	252638	100	21359	100	26035	100	15741	100	41208	100		100	364700	100

***Source*:** Nazir (1993). Water Resource of Pakistan and their Utilization. Miraj Din Press, 3-4.

While the border between Pakistan and Kashmir spans the remaining three rivers, Radcliffe's line cuts across the Ravi and Sutlej. The remaining five arrive in Indus in Punjab, West Pakistan (Wolf, 2008).

During the British era, the Mughals invented irrigation from these rivers, transforming enormous deserts into lush farmland. A major link canal can draw water from the other canal in the event that one canal lacks water due to the sequence of canals connecting them (Khan, 1959).

The water of the Indus River comes mainly from the Tibet region of China, flows through Jammu, Kashmir and Pakistan, and then empties into the Arabian Sea. There are numerous tributaries to it as well. The Indus River system has long been employed for irrigation. During British rule, India underwent new reforms. The extensive canal network was constructed, and the historic canals were restored (Nazakat, 2015).

This irrigation system was well understood prior to division. When the boundaries of the erstwhile province of Punjab were established in 1947, the system severed it. Furthermore, responsibility over the canal headworks was granted to India. On the border with Indian Territory lies "the Ferozepur weir on the Sutlej River," where the Dipalpur canal starts. The Sulemanki weir in the Montgomery area is located in the Indian district of Ferozepur, and it features important eastern training works (Gupta, 1958).

Kashmir is related to the water issue as well. This contested area is where the Jhelum and the Chenab enter Pakistan. India, which physically controls these waters, has the ability to obstruct Pakistan's access to essential supplies. Furthermore, the Jhelum headworks are located in Azad Kashmir at Mangla (Gupta, 1958).

The Indus River System flows through the Kashmir Valley, supporting Pakistan's claim to the area. As you may know, there are six rivers in the Indus Basin. This was reaffirmed in 1957 by Hussain Suharwardy, the country's prime minister at the time. The majority originate in Kashmir. This water, which irrigates our crops, is one of the reasons Kashmir is so crucial to us (Ranjan, 2016). The same justification was provided by General Ayub Khan, Pakistan's first military dictator, in his "autobiography," "Friends Not Masters," and "Why the Kashmir Valley Is Important for Pakistan." (Khan, 1967).

Pakistan is understandably concerned about the uncertain future of Kashmir. There are arguments that downplay the significance of Kashmir in this context, claiming that India can only harm Pakistan by storing the waters it cannot use owing to geographical conditions. Controlling Kashmir is thought to be able to assist Pakistan in managing its irrigation. There has been no denial of Kashmir's significance or the psychological effects of its rivers (Khan, 1959).

Moved Towards Signing of IWT

On September 19, 1960, in Karachi, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India and President Ayub Khan of Pakistan signed the Indo-West Treaty (IWT) following nine years of negotiations between the two hostile nations. In accordance with the agreement, the World Bank split the reservoirs into two halves. While the Beas, Ravi, and Sutlej are in India's territory, the Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus rivers are in

Pakistan's territory (Biswas, 1992). It was one of the few bright spots in the typically bleak picture of the globe that former US President Eisenhower presented.

There are twelve articles and eight appendices in this agreement. India is granted the sole right to utilize the combined water resources of the Eastern Rivers, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej. Except for a few special local uses, the agreement allows Pakistan to use the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and the Chenab) for the exclusive use of Pakistan. Within ten years, a system of canals linking to storage reservoirs and inter-canals was to be constructed to supply Pakistan's canals with a substitute water source, diverting from the eastern rivers (Khan, 1990).

Additionally, the agreement aids in financing the building of new barrages, connecting canals, and dams. There are two notable projects in the Indus River: Tarbela Dam and Mangla Dam in the Jhelum River. The agreement also stated that Pakistan would receive financial backing from India for the project in order to build dams, barrages, and roughly seven link canals" to store water. The World Bank, United States, New Zealand, Australia, and other friendly states of Pakistan" will cover the remaining amount (Wescoat, 2000).

The agreement lays out a mechanism referred to as the Permanent Indus Commission, which has a Commissioner for each country for coordination and information sharing on river use between the two nations. Furthermore, the agreement specifies a number of protocols for resolving disputes: inquiries are handled by the Commission, disagreements must be resolved by impartial specialists, and the matter is brought before the court (Zawahri, 2009). A seven-person Arbitration tribunal shall be consulted over the arbitration. The World Bank's function as an agreement signatory is restricted and procedural. Specifically, its function in resolving differences and disputes is limited to designating indigenous people to carry out a certain task upon “request from either party (Khan, 1990).

However, the agreement served as a substitute for certain "undeniable" "geopolitical" and other relevant variables in addition to being a means of resolving the war.

Indus Basin Project Development

As part of the Indo-Western Treaty-funded Indus Basin Project (IBP), the Mangla Dam, five barrages, and eight inter-river link canals were finished between 1960 and 1971 (IWT). In 1975–1976, the Tarbela Dam started operating in part. Indus Basin Project consists of two primary parts: Terbela (Indus) and Mangla (Jhelum). As part of the implementation timeline for the Indus Basin Project, the Mangla Dam project was started and completed by 1968. Simultaneously, the World Bank's assessment led to the decision to proceed with the Tarbela Dam. Thus, work started in 1968, was mostly finished in 1974, and part of the operation started in 1975–1976 (frenken, 2011).

The table below provides a thorough summary of the advancements made on the Indus Basin as a result of the Indus Water Treaty.

Main Water Conflicts between India-Pakistan after IWT

The Jhelum Rivers have some limitations on water storage, according to the IWT, but there are also some permitted uses of the water, such as the construction of hydroelectric power facilities on the river. As per the conditions stipulated in the Indus Water Treaty, India was permitted to construct hydropower plants for the local populace and utilize water from western rivers under specific conditions. Critiques erupted when India started work on the Sallal Hydro Project on the Chenab River in 1970. India first concealed information about it. Four years later, India gave vital intelligence to Pakistan (Sohail, 2015).

The design of the dam, which featured six lower level exits and spillway gates rising to a total height of 40 feet, was deemed unacceptable by Pakistan as a flagrant violation of the agreement. In April 1978, after negotiations, the two countries agreed to cease their disagreement. Then, when they declared their intention to construct a barrage on the Jhelum River in 1984, India once again disregarded the agreement. They declared in 1992 that they intended to proceed with another project on the Chenab River, which Pakistan was also granted under the 1960 deal (Michel, 2009).

Pakistan used to have difficulties from India about the allocation of water; these issues are currently being monitored. Their bilateral ties may suffer if these infractions persist. The IWT was cautiously and in its original form ratified by both parties in the first two decades (1960s and 1970s). However, Pakistan was powerless to stop India's violations of the pact once it began to breach several sections of it. Later, Pakistan complained and asked the World Bank to mediate, but to little effect (Begum, 2011).

Major Indian projects including "Baglihar, Kishanganga, Wullar, Dulhasti, Salal, Uri II, Nimoobazgo," and many more have occasionally gained attention and raised questions regarding the IWT pact.

Table: 3 Shows The Major Indian Conflicted Projects

Projects	River	Construction began	Type of Project	Completion year
Baglihar	Chenab	1999	Gravity	2008
Salal	Chenab	1970	Gravity	1987
DulHasti	Chenab	1985	Gravity	2007
Kishanganga	Jhelum	2007	Concrete face Rock-fill	2018

Details of the Major conflicted Projects which focused in this study are given below:

The Baglihar Project

Built in 1999 on the Chenab River, the dam has 450 megawatts of capacity. Due to the dam's gated spillway, which allows for far more water storage than what was permitted by the Treaty, Pakistan views the Project as a violation of the Indus Water Treaty (Adnan, 2018).

According to India, if they did not run the basin more flexibly, as had happened in the Salal project, it would quickly fill with sediment. In 2005, Pakistan requested that the World Bank designate an impartial expert in the event that the Indian and Pakistani IWT commissioners were unable to come to an agreement (Riffat, 2015).

The objective specialists argued that live storage was not the same as manipulable storage, applying a fundamental application of fine point. He said that live storage was limited to storage that could be used to generate power on an operational basis (Adnan, 2018).

Applying the great point, neutral experts have to have claimed that direct storage differed from controlled storage (Riffat, 2015).

The results, however, will only make sense if Pakistan's concerns are properly stated, as there may be power outlets in Indian dams that have never been found previously. However, Pakistan's worry consumes continually remained then continues to be India's capacity near connect the flow to Pakistan, therefore it makes little difference (Sumbly, 2007).

The "Indus Water Treaty" was upheld by Baglihar's ruling, which would have removed basic physical protection and given Indians seriously manipulating the timing of water flow in Pakistan which was a big blow for Pakistan (Sohail, 2015).

DulHasti Dam

In 1989, construction got underway. Beginning in 1983, the 390 MW DulHasti hydropower project was completed and put into service in February and March of 2007. The National Hydroelectric Projects Corporation (NHPC) is carrying out the project as a government effort. According to Pakistan, this is a full dam designed to store water for irrigation needs, similar to the Baglihar Dam. It is not merely a "hydropower" facility. Additionally, Pakistan believes that the "Marala headworks" could experience one to two days of water stagnation during the lean months due to the operational pond's 7605.5 acre feet (Akhtar, 2010.)

The Kishanganga Project

In Indian-held Kashmir (IHK), the Kishanganga project got underway in 1994. Two significant tributaries to the Jhelum River, which flows westward in India, exist. The northern tributary that flows at a significant height in the Himalayan foothills is called the Neelum River. The southern tributary, Jhelum, flows at a far lower altitude. Shortly after entering Pakistan, the two tributaries converge (Salik, 2015).

One of the projects that India has been following closely in the disputed Himalayan region between the two nations is the 330 megawatt Kishan Ganga hydropower facility (Sailk, 2015). In 2007, India began working on the project. Three years were lost on the project when Pakistan took the dispute to the "permanent court of Arbitration" in 2010.However, in 2013, the court authorized India to use the water from the Kishanganga (Neelum River) for the production of power, ruling the Kishangana a run-of-the-river plant within the meaning of the Indus Waters Treaty (Bhutta, 2013).

Pakistan requested in 2016 that the "World Bank" establish Ratel, a "Arbitration tribunal, to examine a different project including the Kishan Ganga and Chenab.

India turned down the suggestion, stating that an unbiased expert should resolve the case and that Pakistan's concerns were essentially technical (Adnan, 2018).

Pakistan has refuted the notion that any technical expert's judgment is required, and India is not required to follow the expert's advice (Bhutta, 2013).

Both procedures were initiated by the World Bank, but were shelved when Pakistan and India declined to retract their offers. After the break, the bank held more rounds of discussions; the most recent one was in September 2017, however the issue remained unresolved (Salik, 2015).

Wullar Barrage

In order to transform the "natural Wullar Lake into a dam with a capacity of.03 MAF," construction on the barrage began in 1984. Pakistan's protests throughout the construction were so loud and persistent that the Indian government had to halt operations in 1987. Since the panel was unable to settle the issue, the matter has since been taken up in conversation with India, and both governments have agreed different steps aimed at fostering confidence (Haines, 2018).

According to Pakistan, building a dam on the Jhelum will help India control the flow of the river, while India maintains that the dam is for maritime use as approved by the Indus Water Treaty. This represents Pakistan's viewpoint on the conflict. Problems in Pakistan, such the Wuller Barrage, the Bagliar Project, and the Kishanganga Project, aim to deny the nation it's just portion of water (Riffat, 2015).

Chutak, NimooBazgo&Dumkhar hydro projects on the Indus

On the Indus River, India is building three hydropower plants in Indian Held Kashmir. These include 57-meter-tall Nimoo Bazgu, the 42-meter-tall Damkhar, and the 59-meter-tall Chotak Dam (Alam, 2002). On February 22, 2009, the Pakistan Armed Forces decided to send experts to the dam site for the first time in order to ascertain whether the current construction was in accordance with the design provided in the Indus Waters Treaty. This decision was made because the military was worried that the projects could cause chaos with the Northern Areas if the dams collapsed for any reason or fault (Ranjan, 2016).

On March 29, 2010, during the Indus Commissioners' conference, India sent Pakistan the construction blueprints and maps for the Nemo Buzgo Power Plant. Pakistan voiced worries about the Nemo Buzgo and Chutak power facilities, stating that it was afraid Indian projects will interfere with Pakistan's uninterrupted water supply (Alam, 2002). The Pakistani side emphasized that maximizing the utilization of water area in the design is the goal of the current Nemo Bazgo project. Pakistan takes objected to the NimooBuzgo on six different grounds, citing that India designed the entire project on the most approximate conceptual data on water and flood flows (Akhtar, 2010).

India stated that the development of the Nemo Bazgu hydropower project was not a part of the ongoing negotiations at the July 2010 meeting of the Indus Commissioners (Ranjan, 2016).

Although Pakistan has started construction on the Diamer Bhasha dam, India has objected to the project being built in the disputed territory of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Following the construction of the Mangla and Tarbela dams, which the

current P.M. Imran Khan of Pakistan just officially opened, one of the primary projects in Pakistan is the dam at Diamer Bhasha. India has strongly protested to this initiative.

Pakistan's Diamer Bhasha Dam Project, Gilgit Baltistan

The Diamer-Bhasha Dam is a major water and power storage project in Pakistan. It is named after the villages of Kohistan in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Diamer, a region in northern Pakistan known as Gilgit Baltistan. The primary portion of the dam and its operations are situated in Gilgit Baltistan's Diamer district (Sabir, 2017).

The location of this dam on the Indus River is 40 km downstream from Chilas city and 315 km above Tarbela Dam. It is acknowledged that "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is home to the left bank and left wing house, while Gilgit-Baltistan is home to the right abutment and powerhouse. By providing 4,500 megawatts of electricity, this project significantly reduces the existing power shortfall and generates annual revenue of US 2.216 billion (Kiani, 2020). The dam will create jobs in the trade, industry, and agriculture sectors during and after construction, according to the government (Sabir, 2017).

The Supreme Court of Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan, and WAPDA are collaborating to expedite the construction of this dam in Pakistan. Phases one and two of the dam project are dedicated to basic water reservoirs and associated infrastructure. This dam will require billions of rupees in addition to endless hours of labor (Dawn, 2008).

Controversy over Diamer Bhasha Dam

Protests in the area and regional tensions with India affect the project. The project will cost $14 billion in total. Pakistan has been attempting to raise money for fifty years. Since 1980, it has been submitted to the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Western friends; however, because the project is situated in a war zone, each of them has rejected it (Sabir, 2020). The project was added to the list of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects in 2016. However, Pakistan withdrew its demands in 2017 when China insisted on having 100% control of the entire asset (Singh, 2012).

The project was unexpectedly started in 2018 with a crowd-funding effort directed by Pakistan's Chief Justice Saqib Nisar, but the amount raised did not reach the goal. Pakistan finally resorted to China because it had no other choice. An extension of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) includes the dam (Dawn, 2008).

The chairman of the Water and Power Development Authority of Pakistan, Muzamil Hussain, revealed the plan at a "press conference" (WAPDA)."The WAPDA will arrange the remaining funding, with the Pakistani government providing the remaining 30%," he stated. This is understood in relation to the debt of China. The total cost of the project at US$ 8.8 billion, but had previously given a figure of 14$ billion," was Hussein's estimate (News Desk, 2020).

India has objected, claiming that Pakistan is illegally occupying Indian territory where the project is located. In addition, the people living in "Gilgit-Baltistan" are demonstrating. In the "Diamer district" alone, 32 villages are predicted to be

submerged by the dam. There will be roughly 50,000 homeless persons. There is no compensation for those who have already lost their land. Their cultural legacy is also at risk. Fifty communities will have their Buddhist sculptures and inscriptions submerged (Sabir, 2017).

Diamer-Bhasha Dam Construction

The construction of the massive hydroelectric project was officially opened by the P.M. of Pakistan, Imran Khan on Wednesday, July 15. The person accompanying him was Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Chairman, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (News Desk, 2020).

Imran Khan said in his speech that his government was planning to build the largest dam in Pakistani history. This will be our third sizable dam. China has constructed about 5,000 large dams out of a total of over 80,000 dams. This will allow you to estimate the enormous errors we have made in the past (Brohi, 2020).

This dam was decided to be built fifty years ago," he stated. There isn't a better place to build a dam. It is an organic dam. The decision to start this project was made 40–50 years ago, and it started today. This is among the main causes of our lack of advancement (News Desk, 2020).

The head of the "CPEC" in Pakistan used to be the ISI's spokesperson within the Pakistan Army. Asim Bajwa said on Twitter, "Diamer Bhasha mobilization: historic milestone as PM launches massive construction work at Diamer Bhasha Dam today." The 6.4 MAF Water Reservoir, which will also add 1.2 M acres for agriculture and 4,500 MW of less expensive, environmentally friendly hydropower, will generate 16,000 jobs (sic) (International the News, 2020).

Indian reaction on the construction of Diamer Bhasha Dam

According to government sources in India, India maintains its stand on any project in contested area. As Union Territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh include their entire territory, which is an integral part of India and cannot be taken away. Such operations in areas of tension with China and Pakistan have always been met with protests from India. The announcement was made in May 2020 as a part of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BEI) and China's CPEC project. The statement was met with anger from the Foreign Ministry. We consistently and unequivocally maintain that the entirety of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has been, is, and will always be an essential and inseparable component of India (Mohan, 2020).

This was stated by MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava on May 14 at a news briefing. Regarding all of these projects in the Indian territory that Pakistan is illegally occupying, we have continuously expressed our objections and communicated our concerns with both Pakistan and China (NewsDesk, 2020).

In the area, there are several contentious projects besides the Diamer-Bhasha Dam. Numerous projects are encountering similar issues from both sides of the border.

Conclusion

This article has covered the history and 1947 distribution of the canal system. It also went into great detail about how Pakistan and India proceeded to sign the "Indus Basin Treaty," which was arranged by the "World Bank" in order to settle their disagreement over water in 1960. Water-related disputes and worries exist between the two nations despite the Indus Water Treaty because of their political ties.

The IWT cannot be revoked since it lacks an exit clause. Therefore, since this deal is going to be finalized, it leaves open the potential of renegotiating. There's a chance that we'll experience a serious water crisis soon. Therefore, it would be preferable for the two countries to work together in order to handle the water concerns rather than exacerbating the situation. This study has also covered how tensions between Pakistan and India are exacerbated by the development of multipurpose water projects.

Water relations are determined by the political ties between the two nations, as this study has already indicated. The real and enduring sources of animosity between the two states are disagreements regarding partition and their design.

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