

# Indus water treaty issues between India and Pakistan

March 21, 2019

## Manifest Pedagogy

Water conflicts in South Asia is a broad topic in International Relations which need to be studied under which this particular topic given above needs to be studied. Questions in Mains may be generally related to water conflicts and possibility of Water wars in Asian region or very specifically a country could be picked like Pakistan which is presently in news. Questions related to Indus Water Treaty, provisions and geographical aspects related to rivers can be asked in Prelims

## **In news**

Government issues details of projects aimed at stopping the flow of India's share of water to Pakistan

## **Placing it news**

India and its neighbourhood relations

## **Static dimensions**

1. Indus water treaty
2. Water problems between India and Pakistan

## **Current dimensions**

Impact on Relations of India and Pakistan after Pulwama attack specifically Indus Water Treaty

# Content

## What is it?

Indus Waters Treaty was signed on September 19, 1960, between India and Pakistan and brokered by the World Bank. The treaty **fixed and delimited the rights and obligations of both countries concerning the use of the waters of the Indus River system.**

## Important provisions of the treaty

- It was signed by the then **Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru** and Pakistan's **President Ayub Khan**.
- The treaty administers how river Indus and its tributaries that flow in both the countries will be utilised.
- According to the treaty, Beas, Ravi and Sutlej (eastern rivers) are to be governed by India, while, Indus, Chenab and Jhelum (western rivers) are to be taken care by Pakistan.
- However, since Indus flows from India, the country is allowed to use 20 per cent of its water for irrigation, power generation and transport purposes.
- Transition period of 10 years was permitted in which India was bound to supply water to Pakistan from its eastern rivers until Pakistan was able to build the canal system for utilization of waters of the western rivers.
- The Treaty also provides arbitration mechanism to solve disputes amicably. **A Permanent Indus Commission** was set up as a bilateral commission to implement and manage the Treaty. The Commission solves disputes arising over water sharing.
- The treaty also sets out mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between two countries regarding their use of the rivers.
- It also makes mandatory for both countries to appoint

water commissioners, who are required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites.

- Either party must notify the other of plans to construct any engineering works which would affect the other party and to provide data about such works.
- A Court of Arbitration shall be established to resolve the dispute regarding the treaty. Hence In cases of disagreement, **Permanent Court of Arbitration(PCA)** or a neutral technical expert is called in for arbitration.
- The World Bank's role in relation to "disputes" and "differences" with respect of IWT is limited to the designation of people to fulfill certain roles when requested by either or both of the parties.
- Though Indus originates from Tibet, China has been kept out of the Treaty. If China decides to stop or change the flow of the river, it will affect both India and Pakistan.

### **Projects of India and Pakistan over which there are conflicts**

#### **Projects over which Pakistan has raised objections:**

- Rattle on Chenab river
- Wullar Barrage/Tulbul barrage on Jhelum
- Kishanganga hydroelectric plant.
- 1,000MW Pakal Dul dam and 48MW Lower Kalnai hydropower projects on the Chenab river.
- The Lower Kalnai project is on a left bank tributary of Chenab .
- 1,856 MW Sawalkote plant.
- Kwar, Kiru and Bursar in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Kirthai I and II.

#### **Projects on which India has raised objections**

- Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) project passing through the Great Rann of Kutch area (Gujarat, India).

#### **India's stand after Pulwama**

- Union government stated that India would use the entire share of water allotted to it under the Indus Waters Treaty.
- India already utilizes 95% of the 33 MAF (million-acre feet) allotted to it under the norms of the Indus Waters Treaty.
- To consume the entire share, the **government has undertaken steps to stop the flow** of almost 2 MAF from the Ravi river, from Madhopur. These include completing the Shahpurkandi project, constructing the Ujh multipurpose project – to create 781 million cubic metre storage on the Ujh, a tributary of the Ravi – and developing the second Ravi-Beas link below Ujh. The last project alone will utilise 0.58 MAF of surplus water below the Ujh dam by diverting the same to Beas basin. All three are ‘national projects.’