



Islamabad Policy Research Institute

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National Dialogue Series (Session II) Roundtable Managing Hyphenated Climate and Water Challenge: A Case Study of Pakistan

The second National Dialogue Series Roundtable was organised by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute titled 'Managing Hyphenated Climate and Water Challenge: A Case Study of Pakistan' on 17 July 2019. The roundtable included water experts from the World Bank, LEAD Pakistan, SDPI, WAPDA, GWP and the Prime Minister's Inspection Commission.

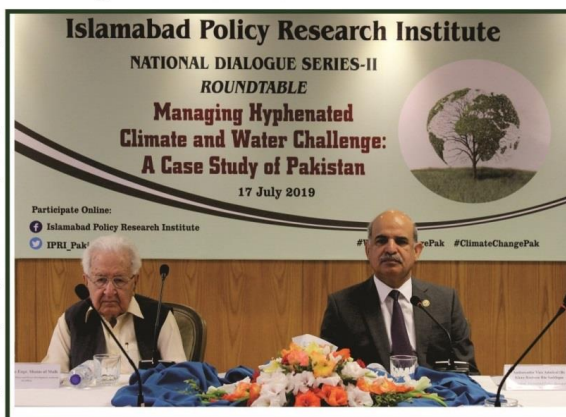
In his Keynote Address, the Chief Guest **Engr. Shams-ul-Mulk**, former chairman of Pakistan's Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), said that a conference on water issues is important in order to take concrete steps to conserve water for the next generations. Providing a historical overview on the Indus Waters Treaty and role of WAPDA in the development of dams like Tarbela and Mangla, he stressed that 'when it comes to water issues, leadership, vision and capacity are very important.'

Mr Mulk was of the view that those who oppose the construction of large dams are not aware of the looming water crisis in the country. 'Enemies of Pakistan have disabled and crippled our efforts so much that we have not been able to build any new dams,' he said. He recommended that Kabul River should become a 'river of friendship' and joint cooperation initiative between the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Welcoming the speakers, environmental activists, media and students, President of IPRI **Ambassador Vice Admiral Khan Hasham bin Saddique (R)** highlighted that the objective of the National Dialogue Series is to debate and proffer policy

recommendations on important national issues. He said that climate change and water security are urgent contemporary challenges whose socioeconomic and food security impact on Pakistan would be grave. Dilating upon water security, President Saddique shared that Pakistan is blessed with adequate surface water and the fourth largest grand water aquifer. However, population growth, urbanisation, and poor water management have caused water scarcity with only 1100 cubic metres/person water now available. He highlighted that while urgent steps are needed to conserve, build new storages and recycle water, 'transboundary water disputes are ticking time bombs which need to be resolved diplomatically.'

Mr Lixin Gu, Program Leader at the World Bank, outlined that the availability of water is crucial for Pakistan's agricultural growth. He informed that the sector consumes around 95 per cent of the country's water resources. Mr Gu pointed out that 'Pakistan is



well endowed with water, but because it is the world's sixth most populous country, water availability per person is comparatively low.' He said that 'water use is heavily dominated by agriculture which contributes around one-fifth to the national GDP, but less than half of this is from irrigated cropping. Irrigation contributes around USD 22 billion to annual GDP. Crops like wheat, rice, sugarcane, and cotton, that represent nearly 80 per cent of all water use, generate less than 5 per cent of GDP - around USD 14 billion per year.'

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Water security is an important and growing challenge for Pakistan, and one that extends far beyond the traditional water sector. It influences diverse aspects of economic and social development, as well as national and regional security. - Engr. Dr (Hon.) Shams-ul-Mulk

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Managing Hyphenated Climate and Water Challenge: A Case Study of Pakistan



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Discussing Pakistan's transboundary water relations with India and Afghanistan, **Dr Pervaiz Amir**, a regional expert for the Stockholm-based Global Water Partnership, pointed out that internal issues as well as India's use of water as a coercive tool are increasing Pakistan's water woes. He warned that unlike the recent showdown between the two countries, threats from the Indian leadership - especially Narendra Modi and his cabinet - should not be taken lightly and negative tactics from the Indian side need to be countered. 'Pakistan needs to sort out its interprovincial conflicts over water and ensure internal dispute resolution first before going to the international community to rally support for its historical rights over water flows,' he stressed.

Mr Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, CEO of Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Pakistan, called for better understanding of mountain water sources and their impact on food production. He outlined that Pakistan needs more efficient targeting measures and take into account the impact of climate change upon the downstream flow of mountain water. Mr Sheikh highlighted that by 2030, Pakistan stands to lose wheat yields by 20 per cent - a staggering amount for a country whose backbone is formed by wheat.

Dr Imran Saqib Khalid, Research Fellow from the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, offered sectoral analysis based on a field research conducted in D.G. Khan and Jhang to look at political economy considerations in determining water governance responses to flood risks; equity and justice concerns in disaster risk management and policymaking. He highlighted

that Pakistan's current flood crisis stems from emphasis on 'control' rather than 'management' since flood control measures have been ad hoc and stand-alone, reactive rather than proactive, and largely focused on structural measures. Sharing the study's results, Dr Khalid said that over a dozen entities are dealing with floods in Pakistan across federal, provincial and

district boundaries which makes coordination difficult. He shared that natural water channels are blocked by influential people through unplanned development, hence, exacerbating losses during floods, with women and children bearing the brunt of the impact of extreme events.

In his presentation 'Water Scarce to Water Secure Pakistan: Recommendations for Action', **Mr Syed Abu Ahmad Akif**, Member Prime Minister's Inspection Commission, said that the difference between developing countries that have progressed and those that have stagnated is not the ability to formulate policies, rather the ability to translate policies into actions. 'In Pakistan, policies and recommendations abound, what matters is identifying implementable improvements to deal with water and climate change issues.'

In his concluding address, **Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel**, lamented the deteriorating quality and quantity of water flowing into Pakistan. He said that Pakistan's re-engagement with the climate change negotiations, after several years of being sidelined due to absence of skilled negotiators, is

an important development. He appreciated IPRI's initiative of a National Dialogue Series to facilitate cooperative solutions to major socioeconomic issues and helping in the formulation of broad contours of a national narrative.

Policy Learnings

The deliberations resulted in the following recommendations:

Agriculture

- To address climate change risks, the focus should be on a more resilient agriculture sector since increasing the efficiency of water use will contribute to greater resilience.
- Pakistan should stop growing thirsty crops; and end sugar subsidy.

Water Sector

The government should:

- create a Water Commodities Market in line with international best practices.
- make the water sector financially sustainable by measuring and pricing water realistically.
- reform, improve and strengthen water governance laws, policies, institutions and infrastructure investments.
- implement the National Water Policy 2018 in letter and spirit.
- invest immediately & heavily in storage capacity and water enforcement.
- be prepared for India's attempts of using water as a coercive strategic tool.
- develop a water resources model that prioritises further research and dialogue on mountain water.

Flood Management

The government should:

- redefine standards viz-a-viz flood embankments.
- harness green/natural infrastructure to manage existing and future flood risks.
- ensure proper land use planning.
- develop a gender-sensitive early warning system.
- formulate a comprehensive insurance policy mechanism to counter the impacts of extreme flood events.

Guest Lecture

Pakistan's Achilles' Heel: A Case for International Law and Diplomacy

Mr Ahmer Bilal Soofi, former Federal Minister of Law and founder of Research Institute of Law (RSIL) was invited to speak on 'Pakistan's Achilles' Heel: A Case for International Law and Diplomacy' at IPRI on 16 July 2019.

Mr Soofi discussed Pakistan's domestic, regional and global legal challenges, and the corrective measures required to address them. He outlined how Pakistan can present its case more effectively if battles in international courtrooms are well

affairs and legal expertise, but also inability to fight the battle of perceptions. In this regard, he highlighted the 2008 Mumbai Attacks case and the legal avenues pursued by Pakistan in its aftermath. 'While lawfare has begun to be weaponized by states, Pakistan failed in perception management in this case and as a result the fallout is being felt to this day, especially on the Kashmir freedom struggle.'



fought. He also analysed Pakistan's preparedness on legal grounds when it comes to dealing with India and state-sponsored terrorism in order to make the country's case stronger on political, economic as well as legal fronts. He reiterated that Pakistan should aggressively pursue strategic legal cases, while being open to negotiations on commercial ones. 'This would help restore international investors' confidence in Pakistan', he assured.

It was pointed out that the Kulbhushan Jadhav case is one of the few instances in which credible, irrefutable evidence of terrorist activities against Pakistan has emerged, and can serve 'as a turning point through which Pakistan can project to the world, India's nefarious use of lawfare against us in international relations,' he said.

The former Federal Minister asserted that legal jargon is a tool of real politick and statecraft, and stressed that Pakistan's weak position in the international sphere is not only a direct consequence of the lack of understanding of international legal

Pakistan needs a 'battalion' of young lawyers and legal experts working within the government.

Earlier, welcoming representatives from the law fraternity, diplomats and academicians, President of IPRI Ambassador Vice Admiral Khan Hasham bin Saddique (R), expressed the hope that the discourse would be beneficial since legal dimensions are gaining currency in international affairs. He said that IPRI will undertake and sponsor research in this vital field of study in order to provide inputs to the government.

Pakistan needs a comprehensive legal framework which enables us to defend the country's national interests both within and outside. Lack of expertise on legal aspects, whether related to diplomacy, economy, armed conflict, or the environment that are integral to state institutions, often hampers progress and is an impediment in statecraft.

Recommendations

- Pakistan has not worked on law-based diplomacy to build relationships with various international institutions. Legal directorates of these entities create an enabling environment for countries to achieve their strategic objectives. Due to the lack of advocates in the field of international law, Pakistan has faced difficulties in projecting its actual image and fight misperceptions on grounds of legitimacy. In order to deal with the crisis of image management, Pakistan needs to place its legal practitioners, international law experts and analysts in the core branches of international bodies.
- A legal body should be constituted at the federal level by appointing two retired senior justices to sort out commercial cases of international investors.
- Contemporary diplomacy and international law are interwoven domains which form the basis of foreign policy for most states. Pakistan must invest heavily and post-haste in these domains.

IPRI Scholars' Newspaper/Online Articles

1. **Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Research Officer**
"A Delicate Balancing Act in South Asia" - *Asia Dialogue*
2. **Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer**
"Perils of Diplomatic Disengagement" - *The Nation*
"Nuclear Giants and Ethical Infants" - *Daily Times*
3. **Maryam Nazir, Assistant Research Officer**
"Off to White House" - *Daily Times*
4. **Zeeshan Javed, Junior Consultant**
"Pakistan India and the 'Grey Zone'" - *Daily Times*

Guest Lecture

Evolving Nature of Inter-State Relations between Pakistan and India

**GUEST LECTURE:
JAVED JABBAR**



Without passing the buck – the onus for improved inter-state relations between Pakistan and India, primarily falls on India. For both countries, this bilateral relationship is extremely important and deserves continuous work through official and public diplomacy.

These were a few of the reflections of Mr Javed Jabbar, a prominent writer, filmmaker, policy analyst, and former Federal Minister and Senator, speaking at the Guest Lecture series at IPRI on 24 July 2019. The lecture titled 'Evolving Nature of Inter-State Relations between Pakistan and India' covered a range of topics including the recent meeting of Prime Minister Imran Khan with US President Donald Trump; impact of the reprehensible use of media by India; and future state of relations between the two. The conversation was moderated by President of IPRI Ambassador Vice Admiral (R) Khan Hasham bin Saddique.

Senator Jabbar observed that Pakistan-India have 'possibly the most complex bilateral relationship of any two nation-states. There are no two other nations in the entire world with such multilayered complexities as those found here.' While the people share a long history together, he said that there are also great differences between them which are now being manipulated and influenced by a hysterical Indian media. He censured the absolute insanity of the Indian news channels in fanning flames of mistrust and hatred between the neighbours.

Giving his views about the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Senator Jabbar hoped that the 64 per cent Indians who voted against the BJP/alliance would move the Indian polity towards more rationale policies which are beneficial for the region and Pakistan-India relations.

On reaction of the Indian government about recent comments by President Trump for mediation between Pakistan and India, Senator Jabbar opined that Pakistan 'should not act hypersensitively. While this is a major breakthrough for us, we need to be cautious about taking this offer by President Trump at face

value. India's bilateralism is akin to bullyism. We are fortunate that, at least, in South Asia, Pakistan is the sole country that can challenge India's hegemony.'

Ambassador Vice Admiral Saddique said that the evolving nature of inter-state relations between India and Pakistan require careful deliberation for formulation of prudent policies which can benefit relations between both states and the welfare of their people.



Under the Modi administration, India has gone from strategic restraint to preemption. The increasingly belligerent attitude of the Indian state and society has never been this confrontational in terms of its singleness of purpose against Pakistan. So, we are likely in for more challenging times for this relationship.

A lively question-answer session followed the lecture, which was attended by senior and junior diplomats, eminent academics, students and a large number of media channels and journalists.

Recommendations

- If India wants to present itself as a great potential global power, it will need to show that it can live in peace with its neighbours, including Pakistan.
- Given Pakistan's weak image, the country needs to engage more multi-dimensionally with the international community. The government should make substantial financial investment to sell its positive image.
- On the issue of Kashmir and the future, Prime Ministers Khan and Modi should immediately re-initiate secret back channel talks in order to make more robust use of Track 1. Continuation/invigoration of the quiet, non-media-reported Track 2 processes, along with cultural interactions and sports activities is also a vital need of the hour.
- The virus of Hindutva is now firmly embedded in different parts of Indian society and the consequences of this have been terrible. Pakistanis should use social media in non-confrontational ways not only to counter Indian vitriol, but also to introduce the country to the world as a progressive and modern state.



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