

# The Domestic Considerations of Indian Foreign Policy: A Case Study of Indo-Bangladesh Teesta Water Deal during UPA-II Government

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## ABSTRACT

The foreign policy of a country is shaped and influenced not only by the necessity of international environment but also by imperatives of domestic structures and processes. The focus area of the study is primarily Indo-Bangladesh Teesta water deal during UPA-II government. Teesta basin is confronted with a wide range of challenges covering economics, government, and politics to culture, the environment to gender issues to security issues to the health of riverine ecosystems. These concerns, while differing in degree and type, are all tied together by the Teesta, which functions as a common thread flowing through them all and connects them all together. Even though the basin is best known for the lack of a bilateral agreement between India and Bangladesh over water sharing, internal disputes such as the anti-dam motion in Sikkim and the 'Save the Buri Teesta' movement in Bangladesh are also big concerns tied to bilateral trade between the two riparian countries. The study concentrated on the geopolitics of water conflicts in the Teesta basin as well as the role that the TMC party as a domestic factor has played in water negotiations in recent years. The concern of the paper is to examine how a internal domestic considerations of a country act in shaping a country's foreign policy.

**Keywords-** Foreign Policy, Bilateral agreement, Negotiation, Domestic consideration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The authority to make foreign policy is usually seen as a domain of the executive branch. However parliamentary democratic country like India foreign policy decisions is also influenced by variety of domestic factors that includes the opposition or the political party within the ruling coalition itself. National government, as the central decision makers, face constraints not only from the international system, but also from their domestic's constituents. At the final phase of "Teesta River Water Sharing Treaty" between India and Bangladesh TMC's eleventh-hour opposition jeopardies the "Second Generation" river water sharing agreement that were to ride on the back of the Teesta accord. The movement of water regulated by the laws of environment. Water supply cannot be included in asset particular topic since the riparian right preserves a person's access to fresh water irrespective of ownership (Ramana 1992). Political borders drawn throughout Asia, and other parts of the

world, without regard for river flow and basins. Trans-boundary streams have the ability for both conflict and cooperation since they create hydrological, sociological, and economic mutuality between nations (Actionaid 2015). There are far more than 276 lakes and rivers in the world that shared between two or more downstream nations, creating so many opportunities for water resource conflicts. The scope of this paper is to elaborate on the influential power of domestic factors especially posed by a regional political party in the case of 'India-Bangladesh Teesta river water sharing Treaty' and to examine how this affected the Indian government room for maneuver in the international negotiation.

## II. OBJECTIVES

India is the largest democratic country, where foreign policy is not a very important issue for the electorate compare to other general issues. Cabinet enjoys executive power to make laws of foreign policy although

there are number of ways in which other political parties can shape the government prerogatives. My study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- a) To examine the degree of constraints on incumbent's desire and wishes of foreign policy formulation
- b) Opposition parties or coalition political party have had any stake in the decision-making process?
- c) How did the Indian government react on the domestic constraints posed by a regional party?

### **III. MEANING OF FOREIGN POLICY**

Meaning of foreign policy has been defined by scholars in many ways. In general, foreign policy of a state means a set of principles or guidelines to choices of actions being made about other states to realize the long-range goals and short-term objectives that the state has formulated. Decision makers are influenced by external environment as well as domestic environment. Joseph Frankel says decisions taken on foreign policy "are subject to a unique interplay between domestic and foreign environments "Conventional theorist, neo-realist or structural realism put more importance towards external factors or international system while studying the international politics. Where the neo-classical realist gave new impetus to domestic context of foreign policy making.

### **IV. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The strategy to formulate the foreign policy is in line with challenges from international environment, however decision makers are also influenced by a complex domestic setting at home. The foreign policy output is mediated by domestic factors.

My paper would like to assess the input of the domestic pressure and politics posed on decision making mechanism of foreign policy with the help of "two-level metaphor" concept given by Robert Putnam combined with Pre-Theory and Linkage Politics by James Rosenau, "Political Opposition Model" by Joe Hagan.

The "two-level game "approach says that for making of foreign policy at the domestic level, there are different groups who pursue their interest by pressurizing the government and plays important role for shaping the decision. On the other hand, at the international level government seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressure.

"Linkage Politics" is defined as any recurrent sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another. "Linkage Politics" shows that the relevance of the domestic factors in the foreign policy process. Political parties as the key actors play important role for output environment of foreign policy.

According to "Political opposition" model given by Joe Hagan is to show how political opposition to a particular regime affects the action of regimes in the field of foreign policy.

## **V. TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH**

When India and Pakistan gained independence on August 15, 1947, the partition of Bengal took place. The Bengal Boundary Commission concluded, that "the Province of Bengal as formed under Government of India Act 1935 would cease to exist and two new Provinces to be named respectively as West Bengal and East Bengal should be constituted in lieu thereof." Cyril Radcliff, the Chairman of the Bengal Committee, which established on June 30, 1947, found it exceedingly difficult to draw a line that would clearly split Muslim from non-Islamic territories (Bagge 1950).

The commission wanted to avoid any needless interruptions to communication and river systems but defining a boundary without causing rail & river service disruptions proved challenging. The railway built to cross fifty-four rivers, potentially generating transboundary water shared resources issues. The first controversy over Ganga water distribution emerged with the opening of the Farakka Barrage Project. The Teesta water dispute is one among the extensive line of disagreements.

The global boundary constructed without consideration for the Bengal's holistic eco-hydrology. The Ganga Brahmaputra-Meghna network continues to flow across divided Bengal, crossing over terrain, cultures, and boundaries. The geographical features of this subcontinent influence the significant seasonal fluctuation of river flows. The intrinsic features of rivers in this region include flood, changeable geometry of meanders rivers, avulsion, sedimentation, and channel degradation. Society's challenge is to deal with these hydro-geomorphic processes while also improving our knowledge of the fluvial system.

## **VI. SHARING OF TEESTA RIVER WATER**

The conflict between India and Bangladesh over the allotment of Teesta water has given rise to a new dimension in hydro-politics. As early as the second half of the twentieth century, both India and Bangladesh started building water diversion systems on the Teesta River, employing tunnels and barrages built at Gajaldoba in India and Duani in Bangladesh (Bangladesh). Both projects designed with excessive expectations, and they doomed to fail due to a lack of water. The Teesta's lowest flow is less than two hundred cusec (7066 cusec) in February, but the twin canals that start from India's Gajaldoba barrage & Bangladesh's Duani barrage were meant to bring back 520 cumec (18,372 cusec) and 283 cumec (9998 cusec) respectively. There is no provision for conserving rainwater as well as during the dry season in either project.

## VII. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Teesta begins to run over a flat terrain at Shevok, West Bengal, and its width expands as it progresses farther downstream. Following its entry into Bangladesh, the Teesta flows and through districts of Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, and Rangpur until joining the mighty Brahmaputra River near the hamlet of Kamarjani in Kurigram district (Islam, 2016). Because it was originally a member of the Ganges River system, it used to flow south through West Bengal's Jalpaiguri region rather than southeast. The term Teesta is derived from Sanskrit word 'Triosta,' which alludes to the old Teesta River basin's three main channels: Karatoa, Purnabhaha, and Atrai (Prasai & Surie, 2013). Teesta river and most of its tributaries flow with high velocity and carry boulders and suspended sediments (Goyal & Goswami, 2018). The Teesta River's water velocity is around six metres per second, and the average dissolved sediment load is around 15.89 106 tonnes annually (Roy, 2011; Acharjee & Barat, 2013). The Teesta River system, which is surrounded by Himalayan terraces in the north, the Barind tract in the west and southwest, Ganges River in the south, and Jamuna River in east, has by far the most active floodplain in North Bengal. (Islam, 2016).

As Teesta has already proven to be a politic landmine, reaching an acceptable solution needs care. The Teesta is South Asia's fourth biggest river, with stakeholders owing to its geographical location. Its source is in Sikkim, and it travels through West Bengal before entering Bangladesh.

Only one deal on pooling Ganga waters exists so far, which signed in 1996 and is set to expire in 2026. Only in 1970 did India recognize the Ganga as a global river, and the Ganges water Agreement was the result of 25 years of discussions which recognized the rights of the Bangladesh as a low - lying coastal state and established a procedure for managing Ganga waterways to ensure Bangladesh received a deemed sufficient throughout the dry season. But just as Bangladeshi farmers kept prisoner by the monsoon's whims, which include floods, drought, and hunger, the Teesta water-sharing deal, which has been in the works since 2011, has succumbed to the inconstancy of Indian principal and state politics. Eighty-three percent of the Teesta's catchment area is in India, whereas the rest seventeen per hundred is in Bangladesh. From 1983, when a tentative agreement awarded 39 percent to India and 36 percent to Bangladesh, negotiations have been ongoing. Groundwater recharging occurs between the two Teesta barrages - at Gazaldoba in Jalpaiguri just on Indian border and Dalia in Lalmonirhat on the Bangladesh side - resulting in a lower share for Bangladesh. The left over 25% kept in reserve for a future decision. Especially for a river's survival depends on the normal pattern of a modest amount of water "450 cu seconds in the instance of the Teesta" (Parsai Gargi, September 6, 2011).

The major issue, according to the experts, occurs due to seasonal fluctuations in its flows. The Teesta River believed to have an average yearly flow of sixty billion cubic meters, however much of this water only flows during the rainy time. i.e., between June and Sept, allowing little flow during the dry season, which runs from October to Apr/May and sees average monthly flows of around five hundred million cubic meters (MCM). During the lean season, this poses difficulties of equitable distribution. The Government of India and Sheikh Hasina's administration were set to strike an accord in 2013 with these issues in mind. This 18-year-old arrangement provided for a 50-50 split of Teesta between both the two nations during the lean season, with twenty % of the overall river flow set aside for environmental purposes. The water pact, however, not confirmed because the UPA administration gave in to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's last-minute objections. This centered on accusations that an identical water-sharing agreement between the two nations would be "unfair" to West Bengal since it would negatively affect the state's water supply. Banerjee, on the other hand, recognizes that she cannot continue to restrict water to Bangladesh, which shares fifty-seven streams with India. She said that she is okay with sending water to Bangladesh but not from the Teesta, because it is the lifeblood of North Bengal and has not enough water to share with Bangladesh, instead, she offered to both Prime Ministers that a study will be conducted further to see whether water from other rivers in the region, such as the Torsa, Jaldhaka, or Raidak, might be supplied to Bangladesh (Sarah hasan,2014).

However, neither the Dhaka nor New Delhi appear to be really considering this notion. Experts on rivers likewise baffled as to how this is meant to operate. "These rivers are Brahmaputra tributaries. Rerouting the water to Bangladesh's Teesta command region will be a monumental, if not impossible, effort, according to a top West Bengal government official. Due to the Bangladesh's vulnerable situation as a downriver tributary and the sheer number of rivers shared by the two countries (54), the success of the India-Bangladesh partnership has traditionally relied on concerns of water-sharing. As a result, a fast settlement to the lengthy Teesta problem is critical to the development of a strong partnership between the two countries. To achieve this goal, it is critical to overcome the major flaws that have hampered collaboration thus far.

## VIII. BANGLADESH'S STANDPOINT

Equal distribution of the stream is critical from Bangladesh's standpoint for two reasons. To begin with, Bangladesh's present ad hoc water sharing structure

deemed insufficient. This centered on assertions that Bangladesh's basin dependency is greater than India's: the Teesta River basin of Bangladesh is home to twenty-one million citizens, compared to eight million in the West Bengal and one-half million in Sikkim. Second, Bangladesh claims that West Bengal's Gazaldoba barrage is channeling a huge amount of water on the Teesta in a "unilateral" manner, reducing the country's traditional flow to barely 10% and jeopardizing the Teesta Irrigation Project. This exacerbated by Bangladesh's downstream location, where any building by India impacts the water flow accessible to Bangladesh.

The four dams now under construction, here are the plans to build thirty-one additional dams as in upper Teesta watershed region in Sikkim. While these dams referred regarded as "run-off the river" dams since they do not affect river flows, the lean season will result in higher storage and evaporation, affecting the amount of water available downriver in Bangladesh. Aside from farmers who are suffering, the river's health just on Bangladesh bank is also in jeopardy due to siltation caused by insufficient water flow. These are all valid issues that make it critical for India's central administration to provide Bangladesh a fair deal.

## IX. DISCUSSION

West Bengal's worries, on the other hand, cannot be dismissed. "Teesta has dried up," West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said after the 2013 agreement fell through. There is a serious shortage of drinking water. The Centre, on the other hand, was giving free Teesta water." Equal sharing opposed because West Bengal is left with inadequate water flow during the lean season to satisfy its own irrigation demands. "Not enough water is coming into the Teesta to satisfy our irrigation needs," West Bengal State Irrigation Minister Rajib Banerjee stated in 2013. How is it possible to provide more water to Bangladesh without satisfying our own needs? That is why we reject the Teesta Treaty.... We cannot allow our own farmers to suffer." Although many have blamed the state administration of politicizing the issue to gain votes, the fears in West Bengal are legitimate.

However, it is quite critical that the Centre assuages the state's worries because West Bengal's involvement in the Teesta talks is critical from any standpoint. "Provincial feelings (concerning the Teesta) cannot be wished away," as former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh correctly stated in 2011. According to the Constitution, water is a state matter as well as any choice on water sharing must be approved by the state government.



Source: *South Asian networks of Dams rivers and People*

**Figure 1: Map of existing dams on the Teesta, 2013**

While the national government can enter in bilateral water-sharing arrangements with foreign nations, a long-term deal requires the participation of the state legislature, in this instance the Mamata Banerjee administration. The key to addressing this is in the treaty's draught accord, which is fair and takes both nations' concerns into account. The Teesta Treaty has enormous potential to help West Bengal in the future, and it is up to a federal government to make this more commonly known as a means of gaining agreement. That once Teesta deal signed, it will pave way for such a Joint Investment Strategy in the Teesta Basin to supplement water flow during dry periods, shop flood water during the summer for recovery during the parched months, and introduce drought-resilient crops, all of which have the power to change the economies of West Bengal's northern districts and Bangladesh's north-western districts.

It has been claimed that discussions are no longer "ongoing" because no mutually agreeable basis for a water-sharing agreement has been reached after more than 30 years. Discussions between the two countries proceeded for decades without progress until 2011, when Delhi and Dhaka negotiated a new deal — a 15-year interim pact — under which India would have 42.5 % of the Teesta's waters throughout dry season and Bangladesh would get 37.5 percent. The agreement also called for the establishment of a cooperative hydrological monitoring base to collect reliable data in the future. However, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) in West Bengal voiced strong resistance to the agreement, which was set to ink later that year when Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee scheduled to join then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Dhaka but had to cancel at the last minute. Given that TMC party was a major governing party of the federal government, and since water is a state matter, the contract could not sign without the consent of the chief minister. Her

unwillingness to sign caused Dipu Moni, Bangladesh's foreign minister in charge, to warn that if India went unsuccessful to produce on the Teesta water-distribution deal, bilateral ties would become problematic.

Following India's 2014 elections, Dhaka voiced fresh optimism for a deal, particularly in front of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip in June 2015. Despite the Prime Minister's assurances, the contract not signed at that time. "Rivers should nurture the India-Bangladesh relationship and not become a source of discord." Mamata Banerjee has taken a friendlier tone after the 2016 re-election, despite her opponent. Bangladesh's High Commissioner to India, Syed Muazzem Ali, told in press reports that Mamata Banerjee had encouraged Dhaka "to be trusted on her Teesta issue" during a preliminary visit to Bangladesh in reply to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's invite to go to Kolkata.

Water, a natural resource it has become a diplomatic, political, and environmental weapons, also a conflict that threatens a key bilateral tie in the region. For distinct reasons, India cannot afford to complicate this relationship. Bangladesh's external water reliance, as per the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is above 90%. A massive portion of that water passes via India. In South Asia, global transboundary water disputes have proven to be more harmful than interstate water disputes. The Ganges and Teesta rivers with Bangladesh have become as significant in diplomatic as commerce and security – both economic and geo - strategic – as the Indus network with Pakistan and the Brahmaputra with China. Although no guns have fired, there is little question that these are water battles.

The Teesta River's crossing point between India and Bangladesh indicated by pillars on ground and iron poles in water, which were buried at the time of rainy season but noticeable when the stream is dry. It would be impossible to determine or accept that a national boundary has crossed if it is not for them. So, why does a means that knows no boundaries, borders, religions, or nationwide identities elicit such strong feelings of attachment and ownership. A river, in its flow, embodies the exact values that humankind can only aspire to, but instead of acknowledging its ability to bring people together, it becomes the focal point of strife.

Whether it was Sikkim's torture or the feelings of people from northern Bengal — all of whom live next to the Teesta — their own greatness, their history and their loyalty all tangled themselves with their needs for water, be it irrigation of croplands, drinks or preserving their land's environmental durability. Politicians will be unable to ignore the mix of passion and necessity, both of which inextricably linked to river. Because food, language, and folklore all flow up and down their path, all rivers have fundamental ties with traditions, which manage to grow inland due to navigational patterns.

Sharing a resource, according to political scientists and anthropologists, frequently threatens the basic sense of identity and culture that developed over

generations. Bengal's deal to share Teesta waters written by successive CPM administrations, but residents allege they never ever questioned regarding their demands and only learned about the pact in 2011, when then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was already on his way to Dhaka to sign it. Mamata Banerjee's rejection of the contract was due to their objections. The CPM asserted that she was engaged in "limited politics" and did not see a bigger context of regional integration beyond state interests at that time. Talking to farmers near Gazaldoba, who deeply appreciate the initiative, the locals seem as concerned about protecting their faith and the Teesta, as they are angry about the thought of dividing water resources with Bangladesh.

#### *Teesta and Mathabanga-Churni: Segment of the Same Tributary System*

The Mathabanga-Churni tributaries, together with the Teesta, are two of India and Bangladesh's 54 transboundary rivers. They are all parts of Brahmaputra-Ganga-Meghna (GBM) basin, which spans 1.7 million km<sup>2</sup> and is home to 630 million people in five countries: China, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. The GBM basin not subjected to any all-inclusive, international water collaboration and administration procedures, despite its enormous size, riparian, and large population. Instead, a variety of official and informal bilateral procedures to cooperatively manage specific sub-basins have developed.

The Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) is an institution, which created in 1972 by India and Bangladesh to perform "together in harnessing the rivers common to both nations for the benefit of the two countries' peoples." The JRC, on the other hand, has been engaged solely on the Ganga Waterway since its establishment, and has unwittingly sown the roots of a fragmented view on the wider river basin occupied by India and Bangladesh. For little time, the clue of a contract and a Main River Organization (RBO) that would cover all the transborder rivers between both nations and behave them as a single, integrated lake discussed in hydro political circles along both borders, but it has not reflected in the JRC's or governments' actions.

It's no wonder, then, that the Ganga Treaty grabbed two decades to convey, that Teesta negotiations really took off after the Ganga Treaty was contracted, and that when Sheikh Hasina call on New Delhi in 2017, Banerjee presented "other waterways systems," namely the Torsa, Sankosh, and Raidak waterways "in place of" the Teesta, to meet Bangladesh's water requirements. Banerjee's request that the Mathabanga-Churni streams cleaned for the Teesta talks to continue exemplifies India's (and, to a great extent, South Asia's) slender and disjointed perspective of its water resources. The pollution situation in Mathabanga-Churni is significant, although it has minimal bearing on the Teesta's portion. As a result, Banerjee's motivations are political.

***TMC party's pressure on UPA government for not formulating the Teesta deal***

The seriousness of the Mathabanga-Churni rivers' contaminated waters' negative impacts on the surrounding ecosystem, residents, and economy is undeniable. Banerjee may be attempting to secure a "quid pro quo" by connecting this problem to the upcoming Teesta accord. Her outspoken opposition to the deal, on the other hand, officially recognized, and this is just another ploy to stall movement on the Teesta problem. The Teesta's flow in northwest Bengal reduces dramatically during the lean time, and portions of the waterway diminished to a drip. Banerjee opposes the deal "to preserve the welfare of the farmers in the area." The Teesta is crucial for irrigating 1.20 lakh hectares of territory in north. West Bengal, and draught agreement in its present shape might have a considerable influence on agriculture in this region.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh claimed that the Government Of west bengal agreed to a critical water-sharing deal with Bangladesh before withdrawing over the weekend, compelling India to back out of international obligations. Dr. Singh said he had spent over a month consulting with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the treaty's specifics, and asked Defence Secretary Shivshankar Menon to "seek guidance from her." On his way home from Dhaka, Dr. Singh informed journalists, "I was told that all technical matters were straightened out." At a session of the Cabinet's Political Advisory Council, the Trinamool Congress voiced opposition to the proposed treaty. "I sent Shankar Menon to Kolkata once more," Dr. Singh remarked. "He had a discussion, and he took to Dhaka what the Chief Minister stated and also what Mr. Menon understood, and the arrangement was made." "Some other things came up, and Ms. Banerjee indicated she would not accompany me to Dhaka," Dr. Singh continued. He claimed, "It was only later that I understood her dissatisfaction was due to what we were attempting to do on the Teesta."

Allowing more of the Teesta to Bangladesh, on the other hand, could hurt Banerjee's TMC's electoral prospects, particularly in northern Bengal, where ethnocultural Nepalis and Gorkhas, Hindu Bengalis who has showed up from East Pakistan, primitive tribes, and Marwaris whom has established here for trade do not support them. Because Banerjee and the TMC party are attempting to concentrate votes in North Bengal, any controversial action, such as backing the Teesta accord, would jeopardize their electoral chances in the region.

Sheikh Hasina Wajed, Bangladesh's prime minister, announced that "New Delhi and Dhaka had reached an understanding on water-sharing in the Teesta and Feni rivers," the first formal acknowledgement of how close bidders were to reaching an agreement. Despite the fact that the Teesta Treaty will directly benefit Bangladeshi farmers, it has far-reaching repercussions for India. The deal, which will serve as a model for deals to divide the bodies of water of 53 tributaries with

Bangladesh, also will assist India in establishing rules for asserting its claims to Chinese-sourced rivers.

Even if the Administration of India has lawful power to overturn West Bengal's views on transboundary rivers, realism demands that it cannot disregard a state with such strategic and economic significance as West Bengal. The northern West Bengal districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar (which, parenthetically, are also component of the Teesta River basin) are situated in the geopolitically significant Siliguri Corridor, also known as the "Chicken's Neck," which shares boundaries to Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan, and is close to China. Under India's "Act East" strategy, the state provides 40% of the GDP of East and North-East India also serves as the entrance to the trans-regional commercial and trade route. Its Gajaldoba barrage, which regulates the movement of the Teesta to Bangladesh, is now in northwest Bengal, particularly the Chicken's Neck, and places the nation in a key place in the Teesta sharing situation. So far, Banerjee has indeed been able to use these considerations to keep the deal from signed. Her insistence on restarting discussions on the Teesta after 'fixing' the Mathabanga-Churni pollution problem is another ploy to delay signing the Teesta accord.

In 1979, Bangladesh finished building the Dalia barrage, the country's largest irrigation project. The Teesta's waters were to be used to irrigate 540,000 acres of land inside the country's northern rice-growing heartlands as part of the Dalia project. The Teesta's 4,500-kilometer canal network, which carries the Teesta's waters to growers, has been open to the public since 1985. The growers got the freshwater they urgently needed, but the canal ran dry just few years ago. Farmers in West Bengal began receiving water from Gazoldoba barrage, which India built on the Teesta, in 1993. Farmers utilised their vote to guarantee that their demands were satisfied before Bangladesh, and the Indian scheme provided water for 228,000 hectares. According to researchers Yoshiro Higano and Muhammad Fakrul Islam, India's "exclusive control of the Teesta's water during the dry season at Gazoldoba rendered the Dalia barrage useless" as early as 1996. They claimed that during the rainfall, water flows as from barrage created "floods and bank erosion, resulting in considerable suffering." A draught treaty on the Teesta was thrashed out in 1997, a year after former West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu assisted in the stewardship of a major Ganga deal. The Prime Minister remarked, "He was a terrific man." Within decade or two since, little progress has been accomplished, fueling resentment in Bangladesh, where farmers face devastating water shortages during minimal rainfall years.

***How foreign policy determination is affected by the TMC party's decision?***

Mamata Banerjee, the West Bengal's chief minister who was to accompany Dr. Singh on the journey (her TMC had been an alliance of the UPA government until then), publicly condemned the suggested agreement about a week before trip was to start and decided to opt

out of the Indian negotiating team on the grounds that her government had not been contacted on the suggested water-sharing setup, which she claimed would jeopardise the state's water supply. In an interview, Singh dismissively stated that the National Security Adviser, Shiv Shankar Menon, had already been in daily contact with the West Bengal administration that had agreed to the Teesta accord before pulling out at the eleventh hour causing India to retreat from its international obligations. Specialists from Bangladesh said that higher riparian India was diverting a considerable amount of water to suit its irrigation requirements through a barrage at Gazaldoba, making the Teesta water-sharing arrangement extremely sensitive from Dhaka's perspective. As a result, Bangladesh claimed that its Teesta Irrigation Project, which began in the 1980s, had been severely harmed, and also that, although farmers bore the brunt of the damage, the river's health on the Bangladesh side had been jeopardised, with its flow deemed drastically inadequate. However, while Dhaka first requested a 50% share of Teesta water, it gradually scaled back its demand in order to establish a workable settlement, and some progress on this subject was expected during the Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission meeting in June 2013. However, New Delhi had to cancel the meeting after getting a letter from West Bengal state claiming that its delegates would be unable to attend owing to panchayat (rural local authority) elections, while also stating that stance on the Teesta agreement had not altered.

The Teesta water-sharing issue stands out as an example of natural resource politics, highlighting a central issue during the age of economic liberalisation, when geoeconomics vigorously opposed geopolitics' claims to be the pivot of international affairs. The involvement of electoral factors on both ends of the border in complicating things could not be neglected: Mamata Banerjee's TMC, with a support base in southern Bengal and a hunger to succeed over north Bengal voters, presumably saw compromises to Bangladesh on Teesta water as counterproductive to this goal. Sheikh Hasina, on the other hand, has had to deal with repeated messages from her counter - part, Khaleda Zia of the BNP, who is supported by Islamist forces, that the Teesta deal's delay is evidence of her failure of the government to wrangle reciprocal compromises from India in exchange for several key considerations she had picked up earlier to confront the larger neighbor's critical security interests.

#### ***Failure of the Teesta Talks is India's damage***

India has little motivation in the short term to step up to the plate in devising trans - boundary water collaboration along with Bangladesh as the higher tributary to the Teesta and other transborder streams shared with Bangladesh. Due to its upriver position and apparent regional predominance, which have enhanced its holding capacity, it has avoided joining the pact. India was able to 'get up' for the Teesta negotiations failure in 2011 by completing the long-expected Land Boundary Agreement in 2015 and helping Bangladesh in sectors

such as military, transportation, energy, education, marine safety, so on. Bangladesh, being the lower downstream of the Teesta (and so many other transborder streams) and a minor neighbor, has had no option but to follow the India's Teesta talks, which are in turn affected by Bengal. This situation, however, may not last long. As much as Bangladesh requires the waters of the Teesta and India's cooperation, India also requires Bangladesh in a variety of methods. However, even an official bilateral agreement with West Bengal is insufficient. The new government must depart from traditional, statist approaches to water diplomacy by involving basin-wide administration issues or the concerns of basin residents on both sides, i.e., farmers and fishers who directly impacted by the Teesta's outcome. As a result, a bilateral agreement that can co-opt the general agreement of all stakeholders, from persons living in the basin to troubled states and central governments on both sides, urgently needed.

Bangladesh erected its own Teesta Barrage just on Dalia Stream for irrigation purposes in 1990, at the price of 460 million dollars 15 years after completing the Teesta Barrage work in Jalpaiguri. The technique for irrigation of fields for three agricultural seasons is Dalia's canal system, but only if India supplies water from Gazaldoba. While Sikkim's hydropower projects had minimal effect on downstream flow, the Gazaldoba dam was a significant cause of conflict in the water relationship between India and Bangladesh. According to Dhaka, the process results in even less flows than the normal route of the river, and farmers simply cannot look to their farms or catch fish for the right harvest. It is frequently simply a tiny waist-intense stream even during the rain. Millions in Bangladesh's Teesta Basin of rice farmers and fishers have claimed that their livelihoods driven with water to lower water intensive crops like maize and tobacco.

## **X. CONCLUSION**

Indo-Bangladesh Teesta water deal is an excellent example of how a foreign policy decision can get entangled to domestic politics. With the help of theory proposed by Robert Putnam, James Rosenau and Joe Hagan on present topic we can find out the domestic political roots of Indian foreign policy. While dealing with the Teesta agreement the Indian Prime Minister, as the central actor, simultaneously had to cope with the pressures and constraints from domestic constituents.

The new NDA administration has its job cut out for it. It would have to build consensus with all partners in West Bengal to share the Teesta equally. This administration is in a stronger position to do so since it won a solid majority in the Lok Sabha Polls, making it less subject to coalition demands than its predecessor. However, it is equally critical to find a mutually acceptable agreement to the Teesta without undoing the gains made by the previous administration in areas such

as land border agreements, security, and commerce with Bangladesh. The fundamental diplomatic issue for the Modi government is to strike a balance between the state's demands and the country's bilateral commitment to Bangladesh. (thehindu.com,2019)

Geographically, India is more fortunate. India has a significantly lower external water reliance percentage of 33.5 percent. However, because India's population growth figures are much greater, prolonged forecasts of water deficit and shortages for India are similarly concerning, and India will need to negotiate with Dhaka to protect its own interests. Despite worry expressed by water conservationists and the environmentalists, the creation of new irrigation channel systems and increased drinking water supplies in the metropolitan regions are one of the reasons of India's large river binding plan, therefore defusing water limitations for both users. Indeed, a river connection plan, comprising Manas, Teesta and Ganga, expected to increase the agriculture supply in North Bengal and meet farmers' needs, and provide for a bigger share downriver by tackling water shortages. On the other side, Bangladesh has voiced grave misgivings about the notion of connecting the river and claims that it will make less water accessible downstream.

The Teesta basin issue is only one of the river problems that should manage quickly with Bangladesh. Continuous disputes also exist in the Feni Basin, starting in Tripura and flowing to Bangladesh after a trip of only ninety kilometers, entirely a joint boundary between Bangladesh and India. Both parties want to raise water for agricultural use and the Feni Water Allocation Agreement is bound to collapse so much like the Teesta Agreement. Bangladesh was also worried about the Tipaimukh dam built on the Barak River in Tripura, claiming that it would have an influence on the water as in Meghna River downriver.

While India can certainly fight for a larger part of stream waters that are based on its own demands and political imperatives, and argue that it must protect its own water requirements, both in north-eastern India and in Bangladesh in the form of reservoirs and distract river water (mostly Brahmaputra, that will affect downstream delivery), India and Bangladesh have a long history of alliance and collaboration, so the two South Asian nations have plenty of precedence for working out their issues. Bangladesh's most delicate problem continues to be water. Water concerns with Bangladesh must, without a doubt, addressed in the framework of political and security. Dhaka's activities against Indian insurrectionaries trying to hide in Bangladesh, her willingness to cooperate in building bilateral and regional infrastructure agreements, and the geo-strategic cooperation with Delhi highlight the permanent interdependence of the two countries on fronts and the lack of commitment to a sustainable agreement.

With Teesta accord in limbo and a contract on sharing Feni stream resources in jeopardy, there are whispers in Bangladesh that rather than entering bilateral discussions, a global body for choices on water allocation of transboundary rivers involving China should established. This is not a rosy picture for India. In the aftermath of Prime Minister Modi's trip and the passing of significant contracts, there was undisputed support for India throughout Bangladesh's political landscape, increasing hopes of further collaboration to resolve river water problems. The resolution of last year's land border issue by Foreign Minister A.H. Mahmud Ali showed that everything is doable with a political will during the dialogue between India and Bangladesh in March 2016. As revered even as Teesta River is, and as emotive as its water are to people who live near and for it, it is up to elected officials to persuade the public that water is fundamental and basic, and that each community along a river's path has a valid claim to it. They must promote the notion of an equal sharing agreement as soon as possible to maintain cordial relations with a key neighbor on an already tumultuous subcontinent. Dhaka is certain that no further talks on the Teesta deal, which fell in 2011, would take place, and that it is up to India to accept and implement it. But it is now necessary for the US, much more prevalently than the Teesta Contract, using the institutional framework available to it - the Co-operative Rivers Commission - to create a set of norms and directives that limit not just the use of Teesta, but all cross-frontier flows in common with Bangladesh.

The Teesta River Basin is already in dire need of long-term and efficient solutions that address not only each country's requirements, but also the basin's needs overall. To do this, a thorough and long-term agreement will need to draft. The options include increasing lean season flow, instilling a water-conservation style of life, doing research on less water-intensive crops, monitoring water quality, and water storage.

This case has falsified the assumption that foreign policy was still a domain of the executive branch. From the above study it can be concluded that smaller political parties may have a stake in shaping Indian foreign policy. The importance of domestic factors that has impacted other policy areas could not leave this area untouched, and such influences on the overall Teesta Water sharing treaty with India and Bangladesh shall be taken as an important example for further foreign policy process in India. This study is an attempt at understanding the role of different domestic considerations, which have had a decisive impact on Indo-Bangladesh Teesta water sharing deal. With the changing pattern of contemporary Indian coalition politics it can be assume that domestic politics will continue to have a significant influence on future foreign policy decision in India.



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