Permanent Indus Commission

What is the issue?

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India accepted Pakistan's invitation to the next round of talks, as it has for the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) in Lahore .

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What is a PIC?

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- Under the treaty, **India has full use of the three "eastern" rivers (Beas, Ravi, Sutlej),** while Pakistan has control over the three "western" rivers (Indus, Chenab, Jhelum), although India is given rights to use these partially as well for certain purposes.
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- The Permanent Indus Commission mandated to implement the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) has met every year, since 1960.
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- The commission has experts who look into issues and disputes on the ground over the utilisation of the waters of six rivers of the Indus system.
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What is the impact of the recent move?

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- Doubts had been raised over India's commitment after the terrorist attack on an army camp in Uri.
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- In the days that followed, senior officials announced the suspension of talks until there was an **"atmosphere free of terror".**
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- Prime Minister also made an infamous remark of "blood and water cannot go together".

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- The atmosphere was also charged after the surgical strikes along the Line of Control and subsequent pulling out from the SAARC summit in Pakistan, leading to fears of a freeze in bilateral ties.
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- But the move is welcome, as it denotes India’s commitment to the treaty that has stood the test of time and war.
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- It also displays India’s sincerity on the issue of water-sharing, given that the IWT is seen to be a model in dispute management.
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What are the other positive moves?

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- There has been a marked reduction in LoC firing.
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- They both exchanged the annual list of their nuclear installations under a bilateral agreement that prohibits them from attacking each other’s atomic facilities.
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- There was a release of prisoners by both countries
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- India was part of the consensus to elect the Pakistani nominee as the SAARC Secretary-General this week.
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- It is premature to expect anything out of the current move.
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- owever, they reaffirm the need to keep certain issues such as water-sharing above the politics of the moment.
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Source: The Hindu

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