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Analyzing the Effects Right of Water of the Hirmand River on the Political Relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan

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Abstract

Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan are two countries that are facing the issue of ownership of common rivers in their international borders. Although the current land of Afghanistan has been part of the territories of Iran for a long time, but after the formation of this country, the relations between the two countries have entered new stages. The borders of the two countries, in addition to the issue of conflict, also face the phenomenon of drug and human trafficking. Necessarily, these issues have caused the border guards to face different managements of these borders. The dependence of parts of the eastern region of the country on water resources on the common borders with Afghanistan and Turkmenistan and Afghanistan's non-compliance with the laws related to border waters, the movement of water resources

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between regions, the heavy decline of underground water resources and their pollution, the drying up of water resources Like wells and springs, the emptying of rural settlements and group displacement of the population are among the most prominent challenges in the field of water, followed by security challenges in the region. The main problem between Iran and Afghanistan started when the political leaders of Afghanistan supported by Britain in the early 20th century assumed the Hirmand River as an internal river and considered any use of it as their exclusive right. Iran shares border rivers and water resources with all its neighbors, the war of neighboring countries over water resources is one of the dangers that threatens many of these countries and can be a potential source of differences between Iran and its neighbors. The problems of transboundary watersheds clarify the importance of studying and investigating the issue.

Methodology

This research is practical in terms of purpose and based on the nature of the subject, the main question and the hypothesis of the research, it was carried out in a descriptive-analytical method using the document collection method. The question raised in this article is, what are the effects of the Hirmand river conflict on the political relations between the two countries?

Result and discussion

In terms of hydropolitical indicators, Hirmand River is the only river among Iran's border rivers whose estuary is in the inner regions of Iran, and in this respect it is different from other border rivers of Iran. As the 10th largest river in Asia, this river is the main source of water supply for Lake Hamon and Sistan region. In recent years, the fluctuation of Hirmand water has been one of the factors influencing the political relations between Iran and Afghanistan. Some of the geopolitical and hydropolitical challenges that have been created for Iran due to Afghanistan's exclusive ownership of the Hirmand River are:

In the last one hundred years, Afghanistan has reduced the amount of water flowing towards Iran (Sistan) by building reservoir and diversion dams on Hirmand and separating numerous channels from it. This has aggravated the water shortage in Sistan during droughts in the upper part of the river.

The location of Sistan at the end of the Hirmand basin and its strong dependence on Hirmand water has made the Sistan region extremely vulnerable. The increase in water consumption of Hirmand in Afghanistan in the last hundred years and the decrease of water flowing towards Sistan has caused the area of Hamun to decrease, the size of agricultural lands in Sistan has

decreased and finally caused the migration of a large number of the population of this region.

The location of %95 of the Hirmand river in Afghanistan, the use of Hirmand water by most Afghans and the high dependence of the southern and southwestern provinces of Afghanistan on the water of this river have caused the issue of the distribution of Hirmand water to become a national issue that is of concern to the people of the country. This case has made it difficult for the Afghan government to decide on the distribution of Hirmand water and to solve this problem between the two countries.

Conclusion

The Hirmand River in the east of the country originates from the upstream watersheds in Afghanistan, and this has caused Iran to consider this issue in its relations with Afghanistan. Cities and villages in eastern Iran are facing water problems. By examining the two countries of Iran and Afghanistan, it can be seen that the situation of Iran is better in terms of development, but both countries have challenges in the way of exploiting the waters of these two rivers. Always, when the sources of a river in the upstream country are accompanied by other characteristics such as weak management, lack of development, being in the third world, etc., it causes the statesmen of that country, to compensate for their weaknesses and their land, in such cases, i.e. exploitation show unjustified strictures from the shared waters. Like what we see in relation to the behavior of the Afghan government or Iran's lack of attention to the issue of Hirmand and Hariroud. These issues have had a negative impact on the situation of the border cities of the two countries in such a way that the agricultural and horticultural products of Sistan region have faced a decrease during these years. However, the governments of Iran and Afghanistan have a difficult way forward in reaching a comprehensive and practical agreement on the exploitation of border rivers.

Key words: Right of Water, Hirmand, Border River, Water, Hydro-Hegemony, J.A. Iran, Afghanistan.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in conducting this research study.