



## The Reflection of River Warfare in Pakistani and Indian Press: Dispute, Management and Strategies

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### Abstract

*This study provides an overview of Pak-India River warfare over the sharing of water and management failure which led to serious water crises and disaster especially in Pakistan. Water resources are diminishing day by day water is become a scarce commodity in the world with every passing day. It is rapidly emerging a source of tension and dispute between two nations (Pakistan and India), which is a destabilizing factor of international peace and regional harmony. The content analysis used as research methodology while data collected from editorials and articles published in “The News” and “The Telegraph”. This research covers the period between 2018 and 2019. The results showed that “The News” gives more coverage and large space related to the Pak-India River Warfare as compared to “The Telegraph”. Furthermore, “The News” has a clear stance for the solution of Pak-India River Warfare rather than Indian newspaper “The Telegraph”.*

**Key Words:** Pak-India River Warfare, Role of Newspapers, Management.

### Introduction

Water is a precious gift of Almighty Allah Water for human being and it is the soul of life. Water is the most valuable commodity on the earth as compared to other natural possessions. Every commodity can be replaced by another source of energy, but there is no substitute for water. Water is a necessary element for the survival of the civilization, as for one thing, it is for agricultural development. The agriculture sector is one of the biggest water consumers in the whole world; apart from North America and Europe. In short, access to water is a basic human right as it is the most compulsory ingredient of life. Water on earth exists as liquid, solid and gas form. It is estimated that water in the entire zones of atmosphere is 338 million cubic meters and if it divided seven billion population; each person would have utilized and receive one trillion gallons equally. It could, therefore, be no longer in problem (Bhatti & Saeed, 2013). According to its significance water management works on multiple objectives and navigating. It could not be utilized for a single purpose; within a nation water use for domestic purpose, forming use in agriculture, security, transportation, hydroelectric uses for electricity and power generation; and utilization in recreational process. For the stability of ecosystem number of experts and stake holder in nationally and internationally accepted the worth of water and suggests for its proper utilization (Gill, 2005). Access to water is a fundamental right of humankind. It is the most precious and basic ingredient of life. As the demand for water increases day by day, expected warfare simmering among the state those share the fresh water reserves located in their boundaries (Rabbani, 2005). River water must be taken in a broader ethnic, political and religious context. Water is not the single and major cause of conflict; but it can increase the intentions between the nations and therefore must be tackled through negotiations and proper deliberation for whole world's larger perspective of welfare and for peace (Aron & Wolf, 2005). Now, a days, the situation is

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very critical, Water reserve is falling day by day, fresh water is becoming a scarce commodity in the world with every passing day. The situation is very critical and crucial which is expected to initiate regional and global clash near future. It is an evolving source of pressure and encounter between nations which is a destabilizing factor of international peace and regional harmony. South Asia, is the home of more than 24% of world populations and its inhabitant economy is largely dependent upon agricultural possessions. South Asian states, particularly Pakistan and India have serious challenges in their river basin system and water management ([Raza, 2013](#)). Water has become a great issue for Pakistan. Due to having a single river basin, Pakistan intensely depends on Indus Basin for the fulfilment of domestic, industrial and agricultural needs. With the growing population and climate changes adding a pressure on water needs and demand (Akhter, 2010). Indus river system is a critical life line for both Pakistan and western India. Pakistan has made various efforts to tackle the problem on different forums, by elevating the priority to water as a core issue and including the composite dialogue but India refused to include water in bilateral dialogue because India is not ready to discard the treaty ([Ahmad, 2013](#)). Pakistan is already facing an acute water shortage and energy, if it is deprived of 34 MAF annually this would severely demolish its economy. Moreover, Indian controversial hydroelectric projects have hostile trans-boundary effects on a friendly environment and Indian term of power generation is clear evidence in the case of Kishanganga hydroelectric or Neelum-Jhelum Projects. Consequently, the whole phenomenon shaped a vacuum of distrust and a complex situation. Today, water dispute has grown into a much substantial issue and got top position in a joint meeting session amid the two states ([Naeem, 2015](#)).

This study will be beneficial to create awareness about the India and Pakistan River warfare. It will also discuss the attitude of national and international press about the present issue Pak-India River Warfare as well as it will suggest how to portray such kind of issues. This study describes the management role in major Indian controversial dams. This study will illustrate the management policies and Pakistan's stance toward Indian controversial hydroelectric projects and also depict Indian justification about using Pakistan's water. This study will also be helpful for further studies about River water issue and similar issues.

## **Indus Water Treaty 1960**

Addressing the Pak-India River warfare, both countries signed the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) on 19 September 1960 in the capital city Karachi by Pakistani president Muhammad Ayub Khan, Indian premier Jawaharlal Nehru and World Bank mediator and representative Mr. W.A.B. Illif. The Indus Water Treaty allotted to Pakistan exclusive rights on three western rivers of Indus Basin (River Jhelum, River Chenab and Indus River) and whereas, three eastern rivers (Sutlej River, River Ravi and River Beas) have been assigned to India for water consumption. This treaty was not allowing India to construct dams for the intention of water storing on the Pakistani western rivers but it is endorsed to limited usage of water containing run of river hydroelectric power generation projects. This IWT agreement allows India for the hydroelectric potential on Pakistan Western River on imperious terms and conditions; the hydroelectric power generation could not interfere with water timings and flowing quantity into Pakistan ([Ifthikhar, 2010](#)).

At the moment when the IWT was signed, it was expected that it would rest an end to river warfare between these two countries endlessly. However today, it appears as the expectation was unproven. The IWT was followed by both Pakistan and India in its proper form and its true spirit for almost two decades.

## **Major Indian Controversial Dams which Enhance Pak-India River Warfare**

In early 1980s, India started difficulties for Pakistan in the water segment in many ways, since, Indus Water Treaty India has violated it several times. Due to Indian violation of IWT, Pakistan faces many difficulties for the flow of rivers water. India has tumbled down the IWT and illegitimately brought under way a number of hydroelectric projects on the three western and Neelum river despite the fact that India already constructed illegally more than hundred dams on Pakistani Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab). At the present Indian state plans to construct further 35 large, 135 medium and more than 3000 small dams. The diversion of Western Rivers could reduce the water flow surface in Pakistan round about 32 to 35 million acre feet (MAF) per annum ([Bhatti & Saeed, 2013](#)). The leading Indian hydroelectric project which are most controversial and in compliance of IWT

including, Wullar barrage, Salal dam, Kishanganga hydroelectric power project, Baglihar dam, Dulhasti project, Uri 11, Nimmo Bazgo and several in pipeline. Although, there is no dam by Pakistan on eastern rivers (Beas, Ravi, and Sutlej), on the other hand, India has constructed more than 5 dozen dams on western rivers and it painstaking matter of serious anxiety and imminent warfare for Pakistan. These Indian controversial projects have got a significance bilateral position and create an environment of warfare between both countries ([Khan, 2011](#)).

### **Public and Government Approach Towards Indus Water Treaty 1960**

In 1960, when IWT signed, both governments were complacent and Pakistan government received huge financial aid in lieu for this loss. On the other hand, public response about treaty is very diverse and Pakistani public criticize the loss of three eastern rivers. The reaction of academicians, mass media, and different group of society and also farmers from both sides are extremely contradictory about treaty. Water expert at both sides also not concede to the treaty. As a result, government is under pressure from different groups of society ([Abbasi, 2012](#)).

### **Pakistani Stances on River Warfare**

This sparkles a debate in Pakistan on every forum that India is stealing Pakistani rivers' water. The Pakistani managements, political parties and mass media have been fairly vocal in communicating their anxieties about Indian controversial hydroelectric projects and violation of IWT, mainly building dams on River Jhelum and River Chenab. In wake of such violation of IWT, many experts and commentators warned that water dispute may lead to water scarcity in Pakistan and stimulate nuclear warfare between the two states ([Khan et al., 2017](#)).

### **Indian Justification's about Usage of Western River Water**

India has been illuminating the international community for its foul play of stealing western rivers' water stated two apologies; 1<sup>st</sup> one, is that Pakistan is incapable to preserve its water reserves due to lack of dams and water storage capacity in its own territory, it subsequently lead to a large quantity of water flowing down to Arabian Sea, so, that's why India is acquiring the water. Meanwhile, the 2<sup>nd</sup> argument is that these dam storage and hydroelectric projects are utilized by Kashmiri peoples under Indian occupation; either for irrigation or for electricity generation. Pakistan rejected these justifications because both these arguments are baseless and without logic ([Nacem, 2015](#)).

### **Pak-India River Warfare and Newspaper Approaches**

Newspapers are one of the best sources of communication that play a significant role to express the human needs (Shabbir, 2015). It plays a glorious role in national and international issues like Pakistan and India river warfare.

Today, it is sparkled debate in Pakistani newspapers that India is violating the Indus Water Treaty and stealing Pakistani water, whereas Indian media and Indian administration claiming that India is not violating the treaty and only using its own water that is allocated under the IWT. Indian print media blaming Pakistan for its water woes, Pakistani poor management of river water resources (Akhter, 2010). Moreover, Newspapers are considered most reliable, responsible and credible media as compared to electronic media in both Pakistan and India (Shabbir et al, 2015a). Newspapers have marvellous catalytic worth to creating an impact on the attitudinal level of those who really stuff in the sphere of strategy establishment from initial to upper level ([Safdar et al, 2018](#)).

### **Rationale of Selected Newspaper**

The researchers selected two English newspapers, one from Pakistan "The News" and another from India "The Telegraph" for content analysis. The researcher selected these newspapers for research purposes because all these national newspapers are popular, main stream, large circulated and claims to be objective and balance regarding their coverage. They have their own value in print media industry of India & Pakistan that's why the result of this research will be credible and reliable (Shabbir et al, 2015b). This study focuses on analysing the Pak-India River Warfare in South Asian sub-continent. In this study researchers will analyse the newspaper role and its coverage about the Pakistan and India River warfare.

## Literature Review

Khan, Javed, and Safdar (2017) in their study analysis the role of print media about Pak-India water dispute. The researchers analysed the content published in the newspaper (The Nation & The Hindu) regarding Pakistani and Indian water dispute. They gathered 5-year data in 2010-2014 from editorial, article and news stories. The result of the study showed that The Nation gave more coverage to issue of water dispute as compare to The Hindu. The writers suggest some innovative way to deal with this issue and depict that just passing the political statement are not the proper way to resolve this issue.

[Ramaswami \(2005\)](#) discussed the history of Pak-India water dispute and its results the Indus Water Treaty in 1960. The author argued that if in 1960, Indus Water Treaty had been not signed between Pakistan and India, then there would have been locked in water war. Iyers claims that treaty was a superb achievement to preventing from war. The study describes that Indus Water Treaty is highly technical and too much complicated even Indus Water Commissioners are not understanding it easily.

[Akhtar \(2010\)](#) in her research explored that river water is a serious controversial issue amid Pakistan and India. The study highlights the importance of Indus water basin in this way that Indus River Basin is a key vehicle for Pakistan's economies and its millions native is indirectly or directly reliant on it. The researcher described the history of Pak-India water conflict very comprehensively and illustrates the World Bank negotiation process which has directed Indus Water Treaty in 1960. The researcher argues that IWT has survived many ups and down in the relation both Pakistan and India. But for the previous two decades due to Indian construction of controversial hydroelectric project and dams, the IWT has been under stress and have large impacts on Pakistan's economic sector, ecosystem and security. The writer suggested that the Indus Water Treaty must be renegotiated with current economic, ecological, and political perspective.

[Vaid and Maini \(2012\)](#) in their research provided a brief overview of Pak-India river water sharing disparities between Pakistan and India. The researcher highlighted policy failures in Pakistan over water management and suggest some advanced approaches to resolve water warfare environments. In their conclusion, writers said that it is very essential for country political leadership, civil society and stakeholders to exhibit confidence in river water issue and both states to counter propaganda and water challenges jointly. They must avoid from pointing fingers at each other.

Gareth Price et al. (2014) explored in their research report river water approach of five major South Asian countries (Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Afghanistan and Nepal. In their research they conducted almost five hundred interviews from the cooperation of NGOs and private sector. It focuses on two river system; the Ganges-Brahmaputra Meghana and the Indus- Kabul basins. They conclude that all the countries face similar challenge and problems relating to these rivers. They suggest that through little amendment in treaties and proper domestic water management water issues can solve.

[Sahni \(2006\)](#) fully complemented on the accomplishment of Indus Water Treaty. The writer says that both state facing water scarcity due to environment changes and some supplementary factors. He argued that water conflict emerged from phase to phase and re poisoning a large confronts to the functionality of IWT. To come out of this sticky situation, the researcher appreciated the role of third-party World Bank mediations for signing the IWT. In last, the author suggested slight modification in IWT so that be useful for both countries as well as Jammu and Kashmir.

[Tariq \(2010\)](#) also discussed universal water laws from the perspective of Pakistan and India's water distribution and utilization mechanism. [Blankenship \(2009\)](#) in his study claims that water is one of the violent conflicts between India and Pakistan and also has a potential of demolishing the political relations and both countries have experienced three wars over it.

[Khalid et al \(2014\)](#) discussed that at present, the whole world has directed great attention and focus towards water possessions. They argue that in many states water scarcity created circumstances of river warfare. The researchers suggest that there is an imperative requirement of making framework and policies at domestic, national and an international levels to deal with the scarcity of water.

## Research Methodology

To keep in mind the nature of the study; primarily content analysis would be applied in order to complete the

research study. For content analysis on Pak-India River Warfare; two national English newspapers (The News from Pakistan and The Telegraph from India) have selected.

## Universe of Study

In this research, the unit of analysis has been all articles and all editorials related to Pak-India river water warfare which are published in English newspaper (The News and The Telegraph) from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019.

## Unit of Analysis

This study considered all editorials and articles published in both newspapers are the unit of analysis.

## Sample Frame

All the editorial, article and news stories of both newspaper about Pak-India River Warfare, water conflict, Indus Water Treaty 1960, IWT violation, Indian controversial project and meetings & negotiation of both side water commissioners during 2018 to 2019 are select as a sample frame.

## Sample Size

The editorial, article and news stories having published on both newspapers on the issue under discussion of Pak-India River Warfare are drawn as a sample size.

## Research Question

- 1) How much total coverage is given on Pak-India River Warfare in both (The News and The Telegraph) from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019?
- 2) How the Pak-India River Warfare water issue is treated by The News?
- 3) How the Pak-India River Warfare water issue is treated by The Telegraph?
- 4) How much total treatment is given by both newspapers (The News & The Telegraph) on Pak-India River Warfare water issue from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to December 31<sup>th</sup> 2019?

## Hypothesis

- H1.** It is more likely that Pakistani newspaper ‘The News’ gives more space to the issue Pak-India River Warfare as compared to Indian newspaper ‘The Telegraph’.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is closely linked with framing theory. According to framing theory media always highlight international issue like Pak-India River Warfare according to their own interest, desire and policy. So, in this study the researchers used Framing Theory. This theory is very helpful to analyse the content for this research.

## Findings

### Data Analysis

Data analysis deals with presentation of collected data and analysis the major finding in opinion of the writers, given coverage and policy of newspaper with slanting in positive, negative and neutral categories and all discussion are based on the approach of editorial and article, published in English dailies The News and The Telegraph.

**Table 1.** Over All Total Publication of Editorial & Article Coverage the News and The Telegraph (2018 to 2019)

News Paper	Total Editorials Publication	Total Articles Publication
The News	30	40

News Paper	Total Editorials Publication	Total Articles Publication
The Telegraph	5	16
Grand Total	35	56

The above table presents numerical description of both newspapers (The News& The Telegraph) editorials and articles. The result shows the editorial and articles publication is more focused in The News rather than daily The Telegraph.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Editorial Treatment of The News and The Telegraph on the issue of The Reflection of River Warfare During 2018-2019.

News Paper	Total Editorials	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
		No's.	%	No's.	%	No's.	%
The News	30	26	86%	2	7%	2	7%
The Telegraph	5	1	20%	3	60%	1	20%
Grand Total	35	27	77%	5	14%	3	9%

The above frequency distribution shows editorials slanting of The News and The Telegraph on Pak-India River Warfare issue. According to the results, Daily the News published total 30(100%) editorials while The Telegraph published 5(100%) editorials during research period of 2 years. The result shows that Daily the News published 26(86%) editorials as positive whereas, The Telegraph published only 1(20%) editorial as positive stance on Pak-India River warfare. The above table depicts that on Pak-India River warfare The Nation published 2(7%) editorials while The Telegraph published 3(60%) editorials as negative stance. The result illustrates that The News published as 2(7%) and The Telegraph published 1(20%) editorials as neutral slant.

The result found that both newspapers written total 35(100%) editorials on Pak-India River warfare in which 27(77%) editorials written as positive stance, while 5(14%) articles slant were negative and 3(9%) editorials written as neutral. The result indicates that overall editorials treatment of both newspapers on research issue of Pak-India River warfare is positive and newspapers play a vital role to overcome the issues.

**Table 3.** Comparison of Articles Treatment of The News and The Telegraph on the issue of The Reflection of River Warfare During 2018-2019.

News Paper	Total Articles	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
		No's.	%	No's.	%	No's.	%
The News	40	32	80%	4	10%	4	10%
The Telegraph	16	5	31%	9	56%	2	13%
Total	56	37	66%	13	23%	6	11%

The above frequency distribution shows articles slanting of The News and The Telegraph on Pak-India River Warfare issue. According to the results, Daily the News published total 40(100%) articles while The Telegraph published 16(100%) articles during research period of 2 years. The result shows that Daily the News published 32(80%) articles as positive whereas, The Telegraph published only 5(31%) article as positive stance on Pak-India River warfare. The above table depicts that on Pak-India River warfare The News published 4(10%) articles while The Telegraph published 9(56%) articles as negative stance. The result illustrates that The News published as 4(10%) and The Telegraph published 2(13%) articles as neutral slant.

The result found that both newspapers wrote a total of 56(100%) articles on Pak-India River warfare in which 37(66%) articles were written as positive stance, while 13(23%) articles slant were negative and 6(11%) articles written as neutral. The result indicates that overall articles treatment of both newspapers on research issue of Pak-India River warfare is positive and newspapers play a vital role to overcome the issues.

## Research Finding

This specific study has been proficient to evaluate the Role of newspaper in Pak-India River Warfare. To fulfill this motive two English newspaper (The News and The Telegraph) have been chosen for research study. For this concern newspaper (editorial and article) from 2018 and 2019, have been considered for content analysis and research question answers were tried to find out.

**R.Q.1:** How much total coverage is given on Pak-India River Warfare in “The News & The Telegraph from January 2018 to December 2019?

The researchers found that both newspapers (The News & The Telegraph) published 35 editorials and 56 articles from 2018 to 2019. The result found that The News” published 30 editorials& 40 articles related to the River Warfare between Pakistan and India, Whereas, The Telegraph published 5 editorial, 16 articles about the Pak-India River Warfare.

**R.Q.2:** How the Pak-India River Warfare water issue is treated by The News?

The News gave the importance of Pak-India River Warfare as published 30(100%) editorial and 40(100%) article on the Pak-India River Warfare. In its editorial 86% contents were positive, 7% editorials were negative, and 7% editorial was in neutral tone. Its 80% articles were positive, 10% were negative and 10% articles were neutral. The researcher found that on the issue The News was published in more positive coverage to resolve the Pak-India River Warfare Pakistan and favor of Pakistan’s government policy toward the issue.

**R.Q.3:** How the Pak-India River Warfare water issue is treated by The Telegraph?

The Telegraph gave the significance to Pak-India River Warfare as published 5(100%) editorial and 16(100%) articles on research issue. In its editorial The Telegraph 20% contents were positive; 60% editorials were negative and 20% editorial in neutral. Furthermore, the researcher found that The Telegraph 31%article was positive, 56 % were negative and 13% articles were neutral. So, result illustrates that on Pak-India River Warfare the Telegraph was published more negatively and deny the Pakistani stance toward the water issue.

**R.Q.4:** How much total treatment is given by both newspapers The News and The Telegraph on Pak-India River Warfare water issue from 2018 to 2019?

All the results analysed by the researcher and result shows that both newspapers (The News & The Telegraph) published total 35(100%) editorials on research issues Pak-India River Warfare from 2018 to 2019. From the total 35 editorials, in which 27(77%) editorials slanted as positive, 5(14%) editorials were found as negative approach and whereas 3(9%) editorials were treated as neutral stance.

Furthermore, all the articles were also analysed by the researcher and results found that both newspapers published a total of 56(100%) articles on research issues of Pak-India River Warfare from 2018 to 2019. From total 56 articles, 37(66%) articles are slanted as positive, 13(23%) articles are framed as negative approach and while 6(11%) articles were treated as neutral stance.

**H1:** “It is more likely that Pakistani press gives more coverage to Pak-India River Warfare rather than Indian press also proved that Pakistani newspaper “The News” published 30(100%) editorial and 40(100%) article and while as compared “The Telegraph” published 5(100%) editorials& 16(100%) articles during 2018 and 2019 regarding Pak-India River Warfare. So daily “The News” gave more coverage as compared to The Telegraph and that result proves the Hypothesis **H1** which was formulated by the researchers.

## Conclusion

This research has presented a content analysis on Pak-India River Warfare in two leading English newspapers (The News and The Telegraph) from the year 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. It is concluded that both newspapers published total 35 editorials and 56 articles on Pak-India River Warfare during 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to December 2019. It was found that daily The News published 30(100%) editorial related to Pak-India River

warfare, in which 26(86%) editorials are showing positive stance, 2(7%) editorials were negative and 2(7%) editorials are neutral stance on to Pak-India River Warfare. Similarly, in two-year total number of 5(100%) editorials are published in The Telegraph, out of these 1(20%) editorial were positive, 3(60%) editorials are negative stance and 1(20%) editorial are in neutral tune regarding the issue. It was found that daily The News published 40(100%) articles regarding issue, out of which 32(80%) articles were written as positive approach, 4(10%) articles were negative and 4(10%) articles of daily The News were written as neutral related to Pak-India river warfare. Similarly, in two-year total number of 16(100%) articles are published in The Telegraph, out of these 5(31%) articles were positive, 9(56%) articles are negative stance and 2(13%) articles are in neutral tune regarding the issue. Total result shows that Daily the News published more editorial and article as compared to The Telegraph. Overall, the study found that the Pakistani media representation in Pak-India River Warfare very positive toward the solution of issue while Indian newspaper show the negativity toward the issue of Pak-India River Warfare. Hence, one hypothesis was developed and tested. The data strongly supported the prediction of hypothesis. The research discussed that The Indus Water Treaty was signed as an everlasting solution for river water problem, but now a days under pressure due to rising water shortage and water demand in both states Pakistan and India, it is serious environmental threat to Indus River basin. The Treaty award prospect for future cooperation on Pak-India River Warfare but unfortunately, not any single plan has been started for endowment of upcoming cooperation. Due to Indian violation of IWT, climate changes, and controversial large hydroelectric project on Western River, caused consequential in politicization of Pak-India River Warfare. Due to India's not sharing information and technical engineering detail about contentious project has motivated Pakistan concern. The most terrible situation for Pakistan is, India's capability to stop water in lean periods and released it in a rainy and flood periods. The result found that The News highly favoured Pakistan stance on Pak-India River Warfare and want India and Pakistan should resolve this issue in the circumstances of Indus Water Treaty. Meanwhile, The News also deliberates that Pakistani management is not playing efficient role to present its stance against Indian water violations in International forum. On the other hand, Indian newspaper The Telegraph stance is much different from The News, The Telegraph depict that there is no Indian violation and argue in this way that if Pakistan are facing water crises then it is totally Pakistan's administrative and management fault of lack of storage capacity and improper way of utilization of available water. Furthermore, Pakistan newspaper The News has strong argument that the Indian hydroelectric projects have a clear indication for the violation of Indus Water Treaty. Pak-India River Warfare issue now has become a core issues these days and it got top position in bilateral meeting and relations. Consequently, newspapers must play their progressive role to highlight the Pak-India river warfare issue and Pakistani administration must take it seriously otherwise upcoming generation will be face the severe water problems and scarceness. Thus, it is finally concluded that Pakistan and India must tackle's and managed water resources at domestic level with proper planning under the supervision of water governance.



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