

Indus water talks make no headway

The latest round of talks between India and Pakistan on the Indus Waters Treaty has ended without any agreement, the World Bank has said, while asserting that it will continue to work with complete impartiality to resolve the issues in an amicable manner.

Islamabad's objection

Amid a chill in bilateral ties, the second round of discussions between India and Pakistan on the Ratle and Kishanganga hydroelectric projects, over which Islamabad has raised objections, took place at the World Bank headquarters here on September 14 and 15 under the aegis of the World Bank.

"While an agreement has not been reached at the conclusion of the meetings, the World Bank will continue to work with both countries to resolve the issues in an amicable manner and in line with the Treaty provisions," the World Bank said in a statement.

"Both countries and the World Bank appreciated the discussions and reconfirmed their commitment to the preservation of the Treaty," it said after the conclusion of the Secretary-level discussions between the two countries on the technical issues of the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric power plants within the framework of the Indus Waters Treaty.

The World Bank remains committed to act in good faith and with "complete impartiality and transparency" in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Treaty, while continuing to assist the countries, it said in its statement.

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed in 1960 after nine years of negotiations between India and Pakistan with the help of the World Bank, which is also a signatory.

World Bank's role

The World Bank's role in relation to the "differences" and "disputes" is limited to the designation of people to fulfil certain roles when requested by either or both of the parties.

The Indian delegation was led by the Union Water Resources Secretary Amarjit Singh.

It also included India's Indus Water Commissioner and representatives from the ministry of external affairs, power, and Central Water Commission.

The Pakistani delegation was led by Secretary, Water Resources Division, Arif Ahmed Khan along with Secretary of Water and Power Yousuf Naseem Khokhar, High Commissioner of Indus Waters Treaty Mirza Asif Baig and Joint Secretary of Water Syed Mehar Ali Shah.

The last round of talks were held on August 1, which the World bank said were held in a spirit of goodwill and cooperation.

World Bank says it will work with both countries to resolve the issues amicably

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