

Indus Water Commission meeting commences today



Islamabad: Indian and Pakistani officials will attend a two-day meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) starting here today.

A 10-member Indian delegation led by Indus Water Commissioner P K Saxena arrived here yesterday to attend the meeting. The delegation comprises of Ministry of External Affairs officials and technical experts.

The Pakistan side will be headed by Indus Water Commissioner Mirza Asif Saeed and he will be assisted by officials of Ministry of Water and Power and other experts. Sources said that Pakistan would highlight concerns about the three Indian hydro projects being built on the rivers flowing to Pakistan.

They are 1000 MW Pakul Dul on Chenab, 120 MW Miyar, located across Miyar Nalla which is a right bank main tributary of River Chenab, and the 43 MW Lower Kalnai hydro project on Lower Kalnai Nalla, a tributary of river Chenab.

Pakistan contends that the projects were violating the Indus Water Treaty of 1960, which has come under strain during the current tension between the two sides. Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai are being built in Jammu and Kashmir at a cost of Rs 7,464 crore (November 2008 price level) and Rs 396 crore respectively.

Miyar hydroelectricity project, located in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul Spiti district, is estimated to cost Rs 1,125 crore. Today's meeting is the 113th session of the Permanent Indus Waters Commission which was established in 1960.

The last meeting of the commission was held in 2015. Another meeting planned in September 2016 was cancelled due to tension due to Uri terror attack by Pakistan-based outfits.