

Indus water talks between India, Pakistan begin in New Delhi

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NEW DELHI: India and Pakistan on Monday began another round of the Permanent Indus Commission meeting that is held annually under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) 1960. The Indus talks have survived the freeze in ties as both countries see it as mandatory under the IWT. According to the ministry of external affairs, under the provisions of the treaty, the two sides are required to meet at least once every year, alternately in India and Pakistan. The last meeting, held on March 23-24, 2021 in New Delhi, saw discussions on the exchange of hydrological and flood data.

In March, India and Pakistan had reiterated their commitment to implement the Indus Waters Treaty in its true spirit and expressed the hope that the next meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission would be held at an early date in India.

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A five-member Pakistani delegation is here for the talks that will be held over two days. Both countries don't see the Indus talks as a precursor to a more substantive engagement between them. The two countries last had diplomatic talks in December

2015, and while they did manage to announce a resumption of dialogue then, the process could never really take off because of the Pathankot attack.

The two countries have been exploring options for restarting dialogue since the new government took charge in Pakistan, but Islamabad has been insisting that India first give a "concession" on the J&K issue.

