

Joint Press Release

A meeting of the Secretaries of Water Resources of Bangladesh and India was held in Dhaka on 4th and 5th January, 2010 to discuss issues relating to sharing of waters of the Teesta and other rivers viz., Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla, Dudhkumar and Feni, Dredging of Ichamati river along the common reach, River bank protection works along the common/border rivers and Minor Lift Irrigation and Drinking Water Supply schemes along the Feni river. The Bangladesh delegation was led by His Excellency Mr. Shaikh Md. Wahid-uz-Zaman, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of Bangladesh and the Indian delegation was led by His Excellency Mr. U N Panjjar, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India.

The meeting recognizing the sufferings of the people of both sides in the face of scarcity of lean season flows of the Teesta River discussed at length and expressed that the sharing of the Teesta waters between India and Bangladesh should be concluded expeditiously. In this regard, it was agreed to continue the discussions further. The meeting also agreed to continue discussions on the modalities for withdrawal of water from River Feni by both sides for the minor lift irrigation schemes. During discussions on sharing of the waters of other common/border rivers, the meeting agreed to expedite finalization of the work plans for consideration of the JRC.

The meeting agreed to commence the pending river bank protection works along common/border Rivers from early February 2010. The meeting also took note of the new lists of proposed bank protection works and embankments along common/Border Rivers and directed Members JRC to finalize it for implementation.

As regards dredging of Ichamati river along the common reach, it was agreed that the dredging work may be carried out as per typical section and modalities recommended by the joint technical team from 1st February, 2010.

The meeting also agreed that 1.82 cusec of water may be withdrawn from Feni River for drinking water supply scheme for Subroom Town which would put in to operation immediately after joint verification by the concerned Local Level Committee.

The leader of the Indian delegation invited the leader of the Bangladesh delegation to visit Indian Institutions relating to water resources with a view towards enabling participation from Bangladesh in the training programmes. The leader of the Bangladesh delegation thanked the leader of the Indian delegation and accepted the invitation to visit the institutions in India.

The meeting was held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere.

The Indian Secretary paid a courtesy call on His Excellency Mr. Ramesh Chandra Sen, Minister for Water Resources, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on Tuesday the 5 January, 2010. The Honb'le Minister warmly welcomed the Indian delegation and expressed satisfaction on the outcome of the meeting between the two Secretaries. Referring to the close relations between the two countries, he expressed hope that all outstanding bilateral issues relating to the common rivers would be solved expeditiously through discussions.