

Interstate River Water Disputes Amendment Act

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What is the interstate river water disputes Act?

- The Interstate River Water Disputes Act, 1956 was enacted under Article 262 of Constitution of India on the eve of the reorganization of states on the linguistic basis to resolve the water disputes that would arise in the use, control and distribution of an interstate river or river valley.

What are the amendments to the Act?

- Before the amendment, a state government may request the central government to refer an inter-state river dispute to a Tribunal for adjudication. If the central government is of the opinion that the dispute cannot be settled through negotiations, it is required to set up a Water Disputes Tribunal for adjudication of the dispute, within a year of receiving such a complaint.
- After the amendment, when a state puts in a request regarding any water dispute, the central government will set up a **Disputes Resolution Committee (DRC)**, to resolve the dispute amicably.
- The DRC will seek to resolve the dispute through negotiations, **within one year** (extendable by six months), and submit its report to the central government. If a dispute cannot be settled by the DRC, the central government will refer it to the Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal. Such referral must be made within three months from the receipt of the report from the DRC.
- The central government will set up an **Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal**, for the adjudication of water

disputes. This Tribunal can have multiple benches and all existing Tribunals will be dissolved.

- The Tribunal will consist of a **Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, three judicial members, and three expert members**, appointed by the central government. The proposed Tribunal must give its decision on the dispute **within two years, which may be extended by another year.**
- The amendment also provides that the central government will appoint or authorise an agency to **maintain a data bank** and information system at the national level for each river basin.