

India-China border peaceful: Gen. Singh

Attends Water Leaders Summit in Singapore

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SINGAPORE: The situation along the India-China border "is absolutely stable and peaceful" and "there is really no cause for anxiety," according to Governor of Arunachal Pradesh J. J. Singh.

At a media interaction on the margins of the Water Leaders Summit organised by the Singapore government and public utilities (as part of the Singapore International Water Week), General (Retd.) Singh said, "We hope the resolution of the [India-China] boundary issue will take place in due course of time."

The former Chief of the Indian Army was asked about the situation along the India-China Line of Actual Control in the context of Beijing's recent comment on the status of Arunachal Pradesh.

The issue came into renewed focus following the Asian Development Bank's new lending programme for India that was expected to cover a project in Arunachal Pradesh as well under the fi-

nancial institution's relevant norms.

Wishing to "refrain from making any comments on that," Gen. Singh referred to the "decision" of the two countries to "maintain peace and tranquillity on the borders." He said there was a parallel decision at the highest level on both sides to "find, in a peaceful, pragmatic, and mature manner, a resolution of the boundary issue."

Unrelated to these comments, Tommy Koh, Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum Governing Council and the Water Leaders Summit, told *The Hindu* that there was "no problem" at the meeting. Mr. Koh was asked whether any participant from China had voiced dissent over India being represented by the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh at

the "ministerial forum" of the conference. A keynote speaker from China at the plenary session was Yue Zhongming, president of the Pearl River Water Resources Commission.

At the forum, Gen. Singh outlined the relevance of water resources to the development priorities of India with particular reference to Arunachal Pradesh. He later said a development package worth over Rs.20,000 crore was on the cards for the betterment of Arunachal Pradesh in about a decade.

He had proposed to the Centre, the formation of "Arunachal Scouts" with an initial strength of 4,000 to 5,000 young men. This would serve as "a force multiplier" and give the local population a stake in "the defence of their homeland."

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