

Government of India and ADB sign \$125 million loan to upgrade urban services in Assam

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Project will enhance urban livability and bolster climate resilience in six district headquarters and Guwahati, in the State of Assam

With a strong emphasis on supporting women and girls, women self-help groups in water operations will be given training, internships for college-age women will be established, and school outreach programmes to promote awareness of water, sanitation, and hygiene will be conducted under the project

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The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) today signed a \$125 million loan agreement with to enhance urban livability and bolster climate resilience in six district headquarters and Guwahati, in the State of Assam.

The signatories to the loan agreement for the Assam Urban Sector Development Project were Ms. Juhi Mukherjee, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance for the Government of India, and Ms. Mio Oka, Country Director, India Resident Mission, for ADB.

The project will benefit 360,000 residents of Assam by delivering continuous metered water supply and upgrading stormwater management systems. It also seeks to strengthen urban governance through institutional reforms and capacity building.

Key infrastructure investments include the construction of six water treatment plants with a combined capacity of 72 million litres per day and 800 km distribution pipelines in the district headquarters of Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Dhubri, Goalpara, Golaghat, and Nalbari. The project will also deploy a real-time monitoring system, aiming to maintain nonrevenue water below 20%.

In Guwahati, the project will enhance stormwater management in the Bahini Basin with flood diversion channels, upgraded drainage systems, and a nature-based retention pond to reduce flood discharge and improve groundwater recharge.

The project also includes the establishment of the Assam State Institute for Urban Development in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. Additionally, it will roll out a GIS-based property tax database, digital water billing systems, and a volumetric water tariff structure across project towns to improve financial sustainability and service delivery.

A strong emphasis on supporting women and girls and social inclusion is embedded in the project. Activities include training women self-help groups in water operations, establishing internships for college-age women, and conducting school outreach programs to promote awareness of water, sanitation, and hygiene.

NB/KMN

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