

The Water News Collectives

From Northeast India (January 2025).

Highlights:

Arunachal Pradesh:

- The state is building an 11,000 MW hydroelectric project on the Siang river to counter China's planned 60,000 MW dam in Tibet.
- The project aims to protect the North-East from potential Chinese water threats and ensure national security.

Assam

- Over 300 families in Kaliabor are struggling for clean drinking water due to a collapsed water supply scheme.
- The Guwahati Metropolitan Drinking Water & Sewerage Board has sanctioned ₹4.80 lakh in compensation to four residents affected by a pipeline incident in Kharguli.
- The state government has approved ₹207.92 crore for urban water supply.
- A PIL has been filed seeking a CBI investigation into alleged irregularities in the implementation of two major water projects in Guwahati.

Meghalaya

- The foundation of a ₹398 crore water supply scheme has been laid in Tura.
- The project aims to address severe water shortages caused by rapid urbanization.

Tripura

- The state government has suspended two engineers due to irregularities in the Nal Se Jal water project.
- A preliminary investigation revealed financial discrepancies of ₹55 lakh.

Nagaland

- A 3-day training program on remote sensing and GIS for water-land management was held in Kohima.
- The program aimed to equip participants with advanced skills in remote sensing and GIS technologies.

Sikkim

- The Environment Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee has approved a proposal to build a new dam in place of the Teesta-III dam destroyed by a glacial lake outburst flood.

Mizoram

- The state's Transport Minister highlighted the transformative potential of inland water transport to address the state's transportation challenges.
- A ₹12.1 crore IWT project was announced for Mizoram.

Arunachal Pradesh:

Headline: Arunachal Pradesh dam can save North East from China hydrocracy: Ojing Tasing

In short by (NEIWT): Arunachal Pradesh's water transport minister, Ojing Tasing, defended the state's decision to build an 11,000 MW hydroelectric project on the Siang river. He cited protecting the North-East from potential Chinese water threats and ensuring national security as primary objectives. Tasing expressed concerns that China's planned 60,000 MW dam in Tibet could be used as a "hydro bomb" against India, affecting regions as far as Bengal. He emphasized the necessity of the Siang dam from an Indian perspective.

Source:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/arunachal-pradesh-dam-can-save-north-east-from-china-hydrocracy-ojing-tasing/articleshow/117135718.cms>

Headline: 'Dam for a dam': India, China edge towards a Himalayan water war

In short by (NEIWT): India and China are engaged in a "dam for a dam" race, with India building an 11,000 MW hydroelectric project on the Siang River to counter China's planned 60,000 MW dam on the Yarlung Zangbo River in Tibet. The Indian government claims the dam is necessary to protect against potential Chinese water threats and ensure national security. However, locals are protesting the project, citing concerns over displacement and environmental damage. Experts warn that the damming of the Brahmaputra River could have devastating effects on millions of people in India, Bangladesh, and China, and could lead to a "water war" between the three countries.

Source:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/1/24/dam-for-a-dam-india-china-edge-towards-a-himalayan-water-war>

Assam:

Headline: Assam: Over 300 families in Kaliabor struggle for clean drinking water

In short by (NEIWT): Over 300 families in Bamuni Pathar, Assam, face a severe drinking water crisis due to a collapsed water supply scheme. Residents rely on streams and wells, posing health risks. Despite appeals to authorities, including the local MLA, no action has been taken. Faulty pumps and mismanagement have led to the scheme's collapse. Residents urge authorities to repair pumps and restore the water supply scheme to alleviate their suffering and prevent long-term health consequences. Immediate action is necessary to resolve the crisis.

Source:

<https://www.indiatodayne.in/assam/video/assam-over-300-families-in-kaliabor-struggle-for-clean-drinking-water-1159678-2025-01-24>

Headline: Assam: Guwahati water board sanctions Rs 4.8 lakh for families hit by Kharguli pipeline burst

In short by (NEIWT): The Guwahati Metropolitan Drinking Water & Sewerage Board has sanctioned ₹4.80 lakh in compensation to four residents affected by a pipeline incident in Kharguli on January 2, 2025. Each resident will receive ₹1.20 lakh for severe property damage. The incident occurred due to a pressure surge caused by a power interruption during preparations for a new surge protection tank at the Kharguli Water Treatment Plant. Assam Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah stated that preliminary findings suggest a pressure surge led to the pipeline burst

Source:

<https://www.indiatodayne.in/assam/story/assam-guwahati-water-board-sanctions-rs-48-lakh-compensation-for-families-hit-by-kharguli-pipeline-burst-1148727-2025-01-03>

Headline: Assam Approves 207.92 Crore For Urban Water Supply

Source:

<https://www.guwahatiplus.com/assam/assam-approves-rs20792-crore-for-urban-water-supply>

Headline: PIL on water project 'irregularities': Assam seeks 2 weeks to file response

In short by (NEIWT): The Assam government has sought a two-week extension from the Gauhati High Court to respond to a petition filed by a senior citizens' forum. The petition seeks a CBI investigation into alleged irregularities in the implementation of two major water projects in Guwahati. The forum, 'Chiriyakhana Patha Jyestho Nagarik Sanshta', filed the petition in 2021, highlighting the potable drinking water crisis in the city. The petition cites a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), which revealed irregularities in the implementation of the South West Guwahati water project and the South East Guwahati water project. The CAG report found that the projects were delayed, and the authorities concerned had incurred additional expenditure due to cost escalations. The report also revealed that the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority lacked the capacity to handle major projects. The petitioners have urged the court to direct the authorities to complete the remaining works of the South Central Guwahati and North Guwahati water projects and ensure water supply to all households under its jurisdiction. The court has listed the case for hearing after three weeks.

Source:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/pil-on-water-project-irregularities-assam-seeks-2-weeks-to-file-response/articleshow/117531423.cms>

Headline: Assam: Residents protest demanding clean drinking water, allege corruption against department

In short by (NEIWT): Over 100 residents of Machimpur Grant protested on January 5, demanding clean drinking water. They gathered outside the Assam Government's water supply center, voicing grievances against stalled operations due to a departmental staff strike. Protestors highlighted the deteriorating water supply system, faulty machinery, and neglected reservoirs, leading to an acute shortage of clean water. They alleged systemic corruption within the Jal Jeevan Mission initiative and urged immediate action from Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Cachar District Magistrate Mridul Kumar Yadav.

Source:

<https://www.indiatodayne.in/assam/video/assam-residents-protest-demanding-clean-drinking-water-allege-corruption-against-department-1149634-2025-01-05>

Meghalaya:

Headline: Foundation of Rs 398 crore water supply scheme laid in Tura; to cover 37 localities

In short by (NEIWT): Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma launched the Greater Tura Urban Water Supply Scheme on January 27 in Tura, Meghalaya, to address severe water shortages caused by rapid urbanization. The Rs 398.48 crore project will cover 37 localities and is designed to meet the water needs of a growing population, aiming to serve nearly 270,000 people by 2055. Previous phases of the project, initiated in 1970, were insufficient, leading to frequent water rationing. The new scheme promises a sustainable and reliable water supply for current and future demands. During the event, Sangma also distributed benefits under the CM Elevate and Tourism Infrastructure Scheme.

Source:

<https://www.indiatodayne.in/meghalaya/story/meghalaya-foundation-of-rs-398-crore-water-supply-scheme-laid-in-tura-to-cover-37-localities-1161694-2025-01-28>

Tripura:

Headline: Tripura government suspends engineers in water project corruption

In short (NEIWT): The Tripura government has suspended two officials, Executive Engineer Karnadata Jamatia and Sub-Divisional Officer Alok Das, due to irregularities in the Nal Se Jal water project. A preliminary investigation revealed financial discrepancies of Rs 55 lakh, which could potentially exceed Rs 1 crore. The probe also found that water points set up by the department were not functioning due to a lack of water supply.

Further investigation revealed that no underground pipelines had been installed, despite the creation of water points. The Nal Se Jal water project aims to provide clean drinking water to rural households. The government's swift action against the officials is a positive step towards addressing the irregularities and ensuring the project's success. The investigation is ongoing, and further action is expected.

Source:

https://nenow.in/north-east-news/tripura/tripura-government-suspends-engineers-in-water-project-corruption.html#google_vignette

Nagaland:

Headline: Nagaland: Training programme on remote sensing, GIS for water-land management held

In short (NEIWT): The North Eastern Regional Institute of Water and Land Management (NERIWALM), Tezpur, Assam, conducted a 3-day training program on 'Remote Sensing and GIS Application in Water and Land Management' from January 22 in Kohima, Nagaland. Organized at the Office of the Chief Engineer, Water Resources Department (WRD), the program aimed to equip participants with advanced skills in Remote Sensing and GIS technologies for effective water and land management, as well as water conservation.

During the inauguration, Chief Engineer Er. K Hutoi Sema stressed the importance of sustainable water and land management in Nagaland, where rivers, streams, and fertile lands are crucial resources. He commended NERIWALM for its efforts in capacity building across Northeast India and highlighted the role of GIS and Remote Sensing in addressing water management challenges. The program also focused on water conservation, particularly in drought-prone regions.

Er. Sobu Angami, Senior Engineer, presented the WRD's initiatives, including the Shiyong micro-irrigation project in Mokokchung, Shemmei MI project in Longleng, Dhansiri MI project in Dimapur, flood forecasting models, and rainwater harvesting projects in Kohima. Participants were encouraged to actively engage in the training and apply the knowledge to their respective areas, fostering sustainable development in the region.

Source:

https://www.indiatodayne.in/nagaland/story/nagaland-training-programme-on-remote-sensing-gis-for-water-land-management-held-1159090-2025-01-23?utm_source=global-search&utm_medium=global-search&utm_campaign=global-search

Sikkim:

Headline: 14 months after glacial lake flood, Sikkim's Teesta dam gets environment nod for rebuild without public hearing

In short (NEIWT): Over a year after a glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) in October 2023 destroyed the 1,200 MW Teesta-III dam in Sikkim, killing 40 people, the Environment Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) has approved a proposal to build a new 118.64-meter-high concrete gravity dam in its place. The approval, granted on January 10, was made under the provisions of 'expansion or modernization' of existing projects, bypassing the need for a fresh public hearing or final design approvals.

The new dam, proposed by Sikkim Urja Ltd, aims to address safety concerns raised by the EAC, including enhanced spillway capacity to handle potential floods and GLOF events. However, the EAC noted that design aspects are still pending approval from agencies like the Central Water Commission (CWC) and Geological Survey of India. The committee also mandated the installation of early warning systems and mapping of glacial lakes and landslide-prone areas.

Critics, including independent experts, have questioned the haste in approving the project without updated flood studies or a fresh environmental impact assessment, especially given the region's vulnerability to GLOFs and changing climate patterns. The EAC justified its decision by citing the absence of new land acquisition or displacement, relying on a public hearing conducted in 2006.

Source:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/environment-ministry-panel-clears-new-sikkim-dam-despite-its-own-concerns-9801048/>

Mizoram:

Headline: Mizoram Minister highlights Inland Water Transport to boost connectivity and economic growth

In short (NEIWT): Mizoram's Transport Minister, Vanlalhlana, emphasized the transformative potential of inland water transport (IWT) to address the state's transportation challenges caused by its hilly terrain. Speaking at the Inland Waterway Development Council (IWDC) meeting in Kaziranga, Assam, on January 10, he highlighted the strategic use of waterways to improve connectivity and boost economic growth. A ₹12.1 crore IWT project was announced for Mizoram, alongside other projects across 21 states and UTs. Vanlalhlana identified the Tuirial Dam in Kolasib district as a potential hub for river cruise tourism and cargo transport. He stressed that IWT development must prioritize local community welfare. Since 2019, Mizoram's transport department has been working to enhance waterway infrastructure.

Source:

<https://mizoramtoday.in/mizoram-minister-highlights-inland-water-transport-to-boost-connectivity-and-economic-growth/>

End of the January 2025 update...

North East India Water Talk Water News Collectives (January 2025)

We are Water, and we keep an eye on water!

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This newsletter is a monthly publication of the North East India Water Talks (NEIWT). We cover all aspects of water, including reports, paper clips, research papers, incidents, and activities done by different actors, such as government institutions, non-governmental organizations, etc.

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Each month's first day of news will feature the latest happenings from the previous month.

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