



**URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**

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PRESS RELEASE

Jal Diwali - "Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign" launched

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) is all set to unveil a progressive initiative "Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign" under its flagship scheme - Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), in partnership with the Ministry's National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). Odisha Urban Academy is the knowledge partner. This campaign celebrates "Jal Diwali" and commences from, 7th November, 2023. It will continue till 9th November, 2023.

The campaign aims to provide a platform for inclusion of women in water governance. They will be given first-hand knowledge about water treatment processes through visits to Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) in their respective cities. These visits will elucidate the vital procedures involved in delivering clean and safe drinking water to households. Additionally, women will gain insight into water quality testing protocols which ensure that citizens get water of the required quality. The overarching goal of the campaign is to instil a sense of ownership and belonging among women towards water infrastructure.

India has more than 3,000 Water treatment plants, with a designed water treatment capacity of more than 65,000 MLD and operational capacity of more than 55,000 MLD. During the said campaign, women Self Help Groups (SHGs) will visit more than 550 water treatment plants, with a combined operational capacity of more than 20,000 MLD (more than 35% of the country's total).

The women play a significant role in household water management. By empowering women with knowledge about water treatment processes and infrastructure, MoHUA aims to enhance their ability to ensure access to safe and clean drinking water for their households. The campaign aims to address issues of gender equality by promoting inclusivity and diversity in sectors traditionally dominated by men.

The phase I of "Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign", "Jal Diwali" shall witness participation from all States/ UTs (barring the 5 States under Model Code of Conduct), with an expected participation of more than 15,000 SHG women, nationwide. The focus areas of the campaign include:

1. Familiarizing the women with functioning of Water Treatment Plants & water testing facilities
2. Promote inclusivity & involvement through souvenirs & articles created by Women SHGs
3. Familiarizing & educating the women about AMRUT scheme & its impact on water infrastructure

The anticipated outcomes of the campaign include increased awareness and knowledge on water treatment, sense of ownership and responsibility, promotion of inclusivity, empowerment of SHGs, positive community impact and model for future initiatives.

State officials from AMRUT and NULM will be facilitating these visits by identifying Water Treatment Plants. Sikkim will be observing the “Jal Diwali” campaign at three locations namely, Gangtok Municipal Corporation, Nayabazaar-Jorethang NagarPanchayaat and Gyalshing Nagar Panchayaat from 7th November to 9th November 2023 respectively.

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