

## India, German company ink urban development pact

The urban development ministry has signed an agreement with state-owned German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) for cooperation in the field of urban development, a top ministry official said here Friday.

The agreement will cover a wide range of areas such as sustainable urban management, strengthening municipal institutions, green buildings and energy efficient measures and urban sanitation.

The agreement will also enable India to obtain German help in capacity building, training and financial sustainability through private sector participation.

GTZ will provide India exposure to German and European best practices through training and capacity building programmes.

The country will also get technical support for infrastructure development in satellite towns of cities with a population of more than one million.

M. Ramachandran, secretary, urban development department of the ministry, said: "By 2051, half the population of the country would reside in urban settlements and the number of million plus cities would be 75".

'Urban India is likely to be the engine of this growth. The contribution of urban India to the GDP is likely to be around 75-80 per cent. It is thus essential for cities to be able to support this kind of growth,' he said.

The secretary added, 'I am delighted to note that we have reached a significant milestone in Indo-German technical cooperation in the field of urban development'.

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