

## Dong System of Assams Bodo community

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### Dong System of Assam's Bodo community

Dong is a decades-old **water management system** practised by people in rural Assam using indigenous knowledge.



[Ref: ICIMOD]

### **About Dong system:**

- **Traditional water management system** is practised by the **Bodo community** in rural Assam used to channelise river water into villages.
- Such structures are popular on the **Pagladiya river**, flowing along the Indo-Bhutan border of Assam. The water from the **river is diverted towards** the villages through earthen canals.
- The diverted water is **stored in ponds** locally called **pukhuri**. Sometimes, the water is directly lifted from the earthen canals for irrigation.
- The mountainous rivers are **captured in these canals** and at that point **convex dams are created** so that the flow of water in the canals can be regulated.
- The dams are made up of tree branches, stones and boulders. The dams also help in **increasing the water level at the feeder point**. This ensures enough water in the canals.
- Several sub-canals called **shakhas** and **prakhshas** are constructed from the main canal. The network thus created **ensures water** to every corner of the village.
- There is a **fixed time for the release of water** into these sub-canals from the main canal, normally done twice a day by the communities in charge of the canals.

### **Administration of Dong system:**

- The administration of the Dong system is democratic. The region's **Dong committees** administer and handle operations and management of the water resources supplied through dongs.
- **Water distribution**, canal repair, labour mobilisation from each village, conflict resolution and other activities that fall under the **command area** of the individual major canal is done by the group committees.
- The **funds requirement** for operations and maintenance of dongs is met by fees paid by the village communities. They are required to pay **Rs 10 per 'bigha'** of agricultural land per year.

- **Paddy** is the main crop sown in the region which requires a lot of water for irrigation, supplied by dongs.