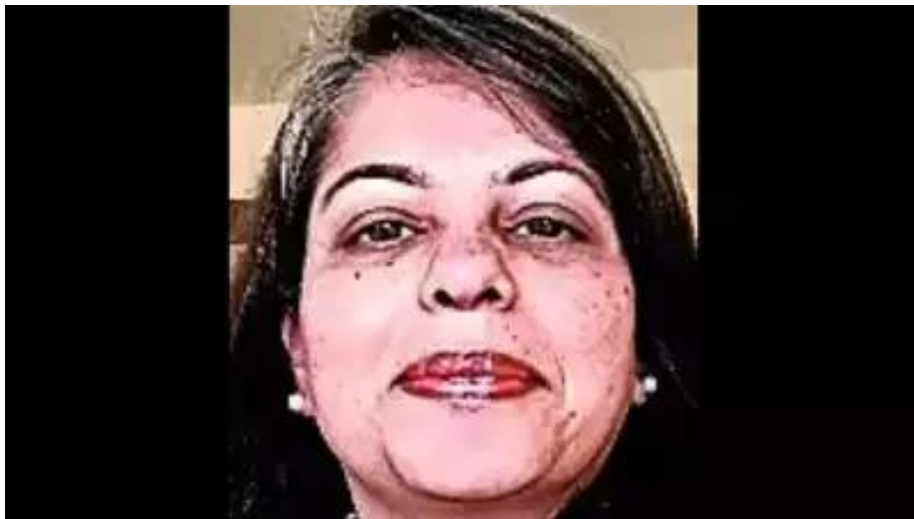


Delhi-born Geeta Batra is 1st woman director of World Bank body

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MUMBAI: Geeta Batra, an India-born economist, has been named as the new director at the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF), making her the first ever woman from a developing country to hold the coveted post. Batra, 57, is currently the chief evaluator and deputy director for evaluation at the GEF IEO, affiliated to the World Bank.

Batra's name was unanimously recommended for the coveted position at the 66th GEF council meeting held in Washington on February 9 and was announced last week. "My top priorities will be to deliver sound evaluative evidence on the results and performance of the GEF, provide leadership to ensure that the GEF IEO stays at the forefront of environmental evaluation and strengthen the IEO teams and invest in skills," Batra told IANS from Virginia, US. She will also build partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies, foundations and networks, and share knowledge of what works, where and why.

Born in New Delhi, Batra studied at the Villa Theresa High School (1984) in Mumbai, then completed her Economics from the [Stella Maris College, Chennai](#) (1984-1987), followed by an MBA in Finance from the NMIMS, Vile Parle (1990) in Mumbai.

After her MBA, she was inspired by one of her professors, Harkant Mankad, to go to the US (August 1990) to pursue a PhD in Economics. Armed with a doctorate, she worked for a couple of years as Senior Manager, Risk, at American Express, before joining the World Bank's Private Sector Development Department in 1998.

In 2015, Batra joined GEF's IEO, which assesses the progress and impact of GEF interventions, where she manages a team of evaluation professionals, providing oversight on the design, implementation and quality of evaluations. Since the Rio Earth Summit (1992), GEF has been one of the largest players in the environmental sector, providing \$24 billion in grants, plus marshalling an additional \$138 billion in co-financing over 5,700 projects in 170 countries till 2020.

Batra has also co-authored books and articles. She lives in the US with her husband and daughter. Agencies