



TATA WATER
MISSION
A TATA TRUSTS INITIATIVE

ZILA SWACHH BHARAT PRERAK

India's new sanitation warriors



ABOUT TATA WATER MISSION

Tata Water Mission (TWM) is a programme initiated by Tata Trusts to tackle the water crisis with a multi-pronged approach. The three core areas supported by the programme are: technology innovations; improved service delivery through sustainable and integrated development, and through water conservation and water supply; and behavioural change communication models. TWM aims to provide better access to pure water to 6 million people in 7,000 villages across 12 states, within the next three years.

ABOUT TATA TRUSTS

Since inception in 1892, Tata Trusts, India's oldest philanthropic organisation, have played a pioneering role in bringing about an enduring difference in the lives of the communities it serves. Guided by the principles and the vision of proactive philanthropy of its Founder, Jamsetji Tata, the Trusts' purpose is to catalyse development in the areas of healthcare and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, energy, rural upliftment, urban poverty alleviation, and arts, craft and culture. Tata Trusts' programmes, achieved through direct implementation, partnerships and grant making, are marked by innovations relevant to the country.



**JANUARY
2017**

**Tata Trusts
collaborates with
Swachh
Bharat Mission**



400+

**Total number of
preraks deployed
in India**



421+

**The number of
open defecation
free districts
as on date***

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

Rosali Panigrahi

Improved open defecation free targets in Puri district in Odisha with sustained effort

Akshant Nagar

Helped Pipariya block in Madhya Pradesh become open defecation free with out-of-the-box strategies

Sourav Mukherjee

Overcame language barriers and prejudices to make Bellary district in Karnataka open defecation free

Rohan Kumar Jha

Aligned priorities of preraks and the government to achieve admirable results in open defecation free targets in Bihar

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Preface

The Swachh Bharat Mission has become a massive movement that is progressing successfully towards its targeted goal of an open defecation free rural India by 2019.

We present you with the fourth issue of *Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks – India's New Sanitation Warriors*, in which we have compiled some of the many success stories of the young professionals, who are bringing about a 'toilet revolution' through the world's largest sanitation programme. Through these stories, we get to explore their

journeys first-hand and gain insight into the experiences which they encountered as a Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak.

The fourth issue features four preraks — Rosali Panigrahi in Odisha, Akshant Nagar in Madhya Pradesh, Sourav Mukherjee in Karnataka and Rohan Kumar Jha in Bihar. Their stories and experiences have inspired their colleagues, subordinates and bosses, and we hope that they lead the way for many more young Indians to participate in this national movement. ●





DIVINE INTERVENTION

An all-round effort helped Rosali Panigrahi improve the open defecation free targets in Odisha's temple district of Puri

Home to the famous Jagannath Temple and the annual *rath yatra* (chariot festival), the district of Puri is a popular tourist and religious hub with its temples, beaches and historical sights. It was here that Rosali Panigrahi, a resident of nearby Bhubaneswar, was assigned as a Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) in March 2017. An MBA from NIT, Rourkela, she had previously worked in social sector projects for tribals as an engineering student with the Biju Patnaik University of Technology.

Now armed with all the tools and templates that she picked up during her induction training, Rosali was confident that her work here would be quite simple. The reality, however, was entirely different.

Rosali found that awareness on sanitation was quite high among Puri's residents but not everyone could afford to spend money on building toilets in their homes, despite the assurance of the ₹12,000 incentive. It was the low-income families in the district who suffered the most, managing with makeshift structures and limited or no access to basic amenities.

Through door-to-door surveys and meetings, Rosali observed that education and awareness did not necessarily translate into good sanitation practices or even receptiveness to the messages of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin (SBM-G). Political and bureaucratic roadblocks had further slackened the pace of progress to achieve the district's open defecation

“It is tempting to sit in an air-conditioned corporate office, doing a 9-5 job. But it is far more exciting to understand the problems of people below the poverty line and find solutions for them.”

Rosali Panigrahi, prerak
Puri, Odisha



free (ODF) goals, with many of the toilets lying defunct or unused. Even the *swachhagrahis* in the district were de-motivated due to lack of guidance and monitoring, and delay in payment of their monthly dues. As a result, only 27% of the built-up toilets had been geo-tagged so far.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Rosali decided to tackle these issues using innovative means. She knew that involving schoolchildren could have a major influence in families that had been stubbornly refusing to build toilets. A school sanitation campaign with teachers and students was implemented across the district by *swachhagrahis*. Once they understood the message, the students became active ambassadors in convincing their families to build and use toilets in their homes. With a team comprising *swachhagrahis*, ayurvedic medical interns and workers, Rosali visited gram panchayats (GPs) to educate women about menstrual hygiene, health hazards of poor sanitation and the health risks that open defecation posed.

Women were more receptive than men. When the men in Dhumal village refused to build toilets, the *swachhagrahis* enlisted the help of women to bring about change. The women went on a month-long protest and refused to cook till toilets were constructed in their homes. This worked, and within a month the GP was declared ODF. In another campaign, around 200 ayurvedic interns received training for 15 days before heading to Puri's villages to educate people on the SBM-G goals. Rosali also roped in *aanganwadi* workers and ASHA (accredited social health activists) workers to inform residents about the health hazards of open defecation. The concerted efforts bore fruit and Puri was the first block to be declared ODF.

TOILET COVERAGE

- Till March 2017: **35%**
- Till April 2018: **53%**



Touching lives through the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak programme has been rewarding for Rosali Panigrahi

All this was backed by surprise visits by district SBM-G officials. Local *nigrani samitis* (monitoring committees) kept an eye on daily progress. Campaigns were organised to teach people the use of dustbins as an added measure to increase overall sanitation. Payment issues of *swachhagrahis* were sorted and streamlined, so that they could focus better on their work and report on the progress made. To maintain synchronicity between officials and ground-level workers, Rosali also set up a core group comprising the district magistrate, district education officer and SBM-G district officials.

The results are showing. Geo-tagged toilets now stand at 82%, and 23 GPs are self-declared ODF and 12 are on fast-track mode to achieve the status. What's more, of the 3,276 non-functioning toilets, only 916 toilets remain unused today. Rosali also managed to get 60% of the dysfunctional toilets meant for the handicapped also made operational.

Rosali feels that being a prerak has helped develop her patience and self-control when dealing with people. Touching lives through the ZSBP programme has been rewarding as well: "It is tempting to sit in an air-conditioned corporate office, doing a 9-5 job. But it is far more exciting to understand the problems of people below the poverty line and find solutions for them." ●

PUTTING YOUNG MINDS TO WORK

Thinking out of the box, Akshant Nagar has helped Pipariya block of Madhya Pradesh become open defecation free



Akshant launched campaigns to train villagers in sustainable sanitation and the maintenance of new toilets. He also convinced them to pay a cleanliness tax to help their gram panchayats raise money to ensure sanitation

It is said that children have the power to change the world. For Akshant Nagar, 23, this aphorism proved true as schoolchildren turned out to be his biggest driving force in helping to make Pipariya block in Hoshangabad district in Madhya Pradesh become open defecation free (ODF) in just seven months. Akshant learnt about the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) fellowship in the final year of his MBA course at Devi Ahilya University in his hometown Indore. “I applied for the programme as it offered me the chance to work with the administration and see from close quarters how welfare measures are implemented,” says Akshant.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Pipariya was proving to be a tough nut to crack for the local Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) stakeholders. As of April 2017, only one out of 52 gram panchayats (GPs) had been declared ODF. Financial constraints, ignorance about the importance of toilets and the perils of

open defecation resulted in people continuing to relieve themselves in the open. The largely agrarian populace migrated for work making canvassing difficult. The challenge could be gauged from the fact that unlike other preraks who are assigned to an entire district, Akshant was assigned to just one block.

Sensitising the community was the first step. Using statistics such as the amount spent on hospitals and the savings that could accrue if open defecation was avoided, Akshant was able to create a conducive environment for change. He then enlisted the support of women and children, along with government welfare functionaries to drive change. A brigade of schoolchildren formed the vanguard

TOILET COVERAGE

Coverage: 100%

Geotagging: 99.82%

Dysfunctional + unhygienic toilets: 6+
Swachhagrahis: 850

Number of divyang toilets: 393

of Akshant's troop. He also conceptualised a *Jidd Karo Abhiyan*, encouraging children to demand toilets from their parents and families. Once the strategy gained traction, Akshant enrolled the children in an innovative campaign, *Lota Ludkao Abhiyan*, where the children toppled the water carried by people going to defecate in the open.

Dongarwada is a shining example of Akshant's strategies. Once ranked among the worst GPs on sanitation and health metrics, it also had to deal with rampant alcoholism. With the active support of a 120-strong posse of schoolchildren, Akshant succeeded in putting an end to open defecation and bringing down alcoholism. The campaign catapulted him to fame, with Unicef teams from Nigeria and Germany seeking his guidance.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

From organising night meetings for people who worked during the day, engaging forest officials to reach out to forest-based communities, tailoring communication strategies to suit audiences, enlisting village revenue officials to create awareness – Akshant exploited all possible avenues to meet his objectives. The efforts bore fruit and Hoshangabad district was declared ODF on October 2, 2017. Sustainable sanitation was the next goal. Akshant launched campaigns to train villagers in the maintenance of new toilets. He also convinced them to pay a cleanliness tax to help their GPs raise money to ensure sanitation. About 50 villages agreed to contribute, raising a sum of Rs16 lakh so far.

For his exemplary work to make Pipariya ODF, Akshant was felicitated by the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan. With his work in Pipariya done, Akshant has been posted to the district headquarters where he brings out a monthly magazine titled *Vikas Ke Badhte Kadam* on projects of the district SBM-G team. ●



“I applied for the [ZSBP] programme as it offered me the chance to work with the administration and see from close quarters how welfare measures are implemented.”

Akshant Nagar, prerak
Pipariya block, Hoshangabad,
Madhya Pradesh

“I was eager to become a prerak as it promised valuable experience and opportunities to serve the nation.”

Sourav Mukherjee,
prerak Bellary,
Karnataka



FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Sourav Mukherjee overcame multiple challenges - from language barriers to prejudices - to make Bellary district in Karnataka open defecation free

Ask not what the country has done for you; ask what you can do for your country. Sourav Mukherjee's odyssey to find meaning in life and contribute to nation-building could well have been inspired by John F Kennedy's famous speech. "My mother taught me about one's duty towards one's country and responsibilities towards society," says the 25-year-old. Lessons from his mother played a big role in Sourav deciding to apply for the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) fellowship. "I was eager to become a prerak as it promised valuable experience and opportunities to serve the nation."

Born and raised in West Bengal, Sourav shifted to Bengaluru to pursue his education at

Christ University for an undergraduate degree in humanities. He not only acquired knowledge but also utilised the opportunity to volunteer with the Centre for Social Action, the institute's development wing. Graduation in humanities was followed by a master's degree in development with specialisation in law governance and policy from the Azim Premji University.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The experiences would come in handy later as a prerak in tackling problems and challenges. The volunteering work also gave Sourav practical insights on implementing welfare programmes and working for the community.

Sourav was posted in Bellary district in

TOILET COVERAGE

Till October 2017: **48%**

Till July 2018: **100%**

central Karnataka in October 2017 after training. Bellary is a textbook example of the challenges that the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) seeks to address. Lack of awareness, absence of financial assistance and illiteracy had resulted in the district lagging behind in health and sanitation metrics, including a toilet coverage of only 48%.

There were many misconceptions among Bellary residents about toilets, including one that they were meant only for women. These influenced a good chunk of the district's populace to defecate in the open. Though the SBM had succeeded in creating a buzz, nudging people to give up traditional defecation methods proved to be an uphill task.

There were other practical problems too, such as finding adequate quantities of sand for construction, and securing financial assistance. To overcome the sand shortage, Sourav decided to get toilets constructed using autoclaved aerated concrete (AAC) blocks. AAC blocks weigh three times less than red bricks and also result in considerable time savings. His initiative in securing financial assistance through a tripartite agreement between the banks, the beneficiaries and the contractor helped address the credit challenges faced by potential beneficiaries.

NEW MILESTONES

Sourav also had to work hard on adjusting to the local work culture and environment. "It took me a good two months to fully comprehend the system," he confesses. Where language proved to be a hindrance, Sourav roped in college and school students, NCC cadets, *aanganwadi* workers and other stakeholders, and utilised their services to create awareness at the grassroots level. Nothing could deter or discourage Sourav. Working odd hours, sacrificing weekends and holidays, and overlooking personal hardships, he toiled



day and night. These efforts yielded results and Bellary was declared ODF in July 2018. At its peak, the campaign in the district saw 400-450 toilets being constructed per day.

To ensure sustainability of the mission, Sourav organised campaigns roping in all stakeholders to bring about behavioural change in the populace. His commitment to the cause also had a role in changing the perception of the government officials. The engagement, according to Sourav, has been a big learning experience. "It offered me insights into how the government machinery works; the challenges officials face in implementing welfare programmes and their struggles. Conceptualising welfare programmes such that they reach the beneficiaries is a big challenge, and I have learnt valuable lessons," says the determined young man.

The experiences gained in Bellary as a prerak have cemented Sourav's resolve to join the public services to serve the country. Nation-building is difficult and takes time. However, Rome wasn't built in a day! ●



THE BIG PICTURE

As a Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak state coordinator, Rohan Kumar Jha is now the go-to man for both preraks and the state administration in Bihar

difficulties such as travelling for field visits or ensuring that proposals essential for the success of the Swachh Bharat Mission – Gramin (SBM-G) are approved on time.

In addition, his duties as a nodal officer for ODF (open defecation free) verification include overseeing physical audits of gram panchayats (GPs) and blocks which have completed toilet coverage targets. Rohan also acts as consultant to the Mission Director to communicate the state's SBM-G accomplishments to the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Besides, he serves as a local resource for the team that operates the Swachh Bharat portal.

Under Rohan's guidance, the state has seen exemplary work done by preraks with innovative measures to effect sustained behavioural change. The larger role has also meant greater complexity. "At times it becomes a challenge to align the priorities of the district, the state and the centre with those of the preraks," says Rohan.

This was evident when he had to convince the district administration to eliminate the inflated beneficiary numbers from the database. Erroneous data collection showed households which did not exist as beneficiaries in the database. This was an obstacle in making the state ODF. When this fact was highlighted to district administrations, they were reluctant to delete the entries due to the fear that it might create issues later. A couple of months of deliberations later, Rohan convinced the district administrations. Since November 2017, the

“The fact that the preraks have been driving the mission in Bihar successfully has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation at various forums.”

**Rohan Kumar Jha,
State Coordinator, Bihar**

As a state coordinator, Rohan Kumar Jha, 28, manages a large team of around 40 Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks (ZSBPs) spread across the state of Bihar. His most important task is to look into the issues that the preraks face and help them overcome practical

team deleted over 20 lakh erroneous beneficiary records from the database.

SCORING ON MULTIPLE FRONTS

Apart from galvanising the team to reach the state-level targets, Rohan counts geo-tagging and ODF verification as areas where he has been able to bring about significant improvements.

“Due to growth in the percentage of geo-tagging and ODF verifications, we were able to gain confidence of the local district administrations, which has enabled faster release of the *protsahanrashi* (incentive provided to the beneficiaries),” he says.

Rohan was also part of the planning and implementation process of *Satyagraha se Swachhagraha*, a mega exercise in the state between April 3-10, 2018, that culminated in a grand event with the Prime Minister in Champaran. Over 10,000 *swachhagrahis* from across India joined an equal number of state *swachhagrahis* from Bihar — a total of 20,000 *swachhagrahis* to trigger behaviour change across Bihar’s 38 districts and build momentum towards achieving ODF status for the entire state. The state ZSBPs, led by Rohan, were all involved in drawing up and executing the logistics and itineraries for *swachhagrahis* during the week-long exercise, which fuelled the momentum of construction of toilets in Bihar.

TOILET COVERAGE

● August 2017: **32%** ● March 2018: **45%**

Geo-tagging

● August 2017: **1%** ● March 2018: **50%**

ODF verification

● August 2017: **600** villages declared verified

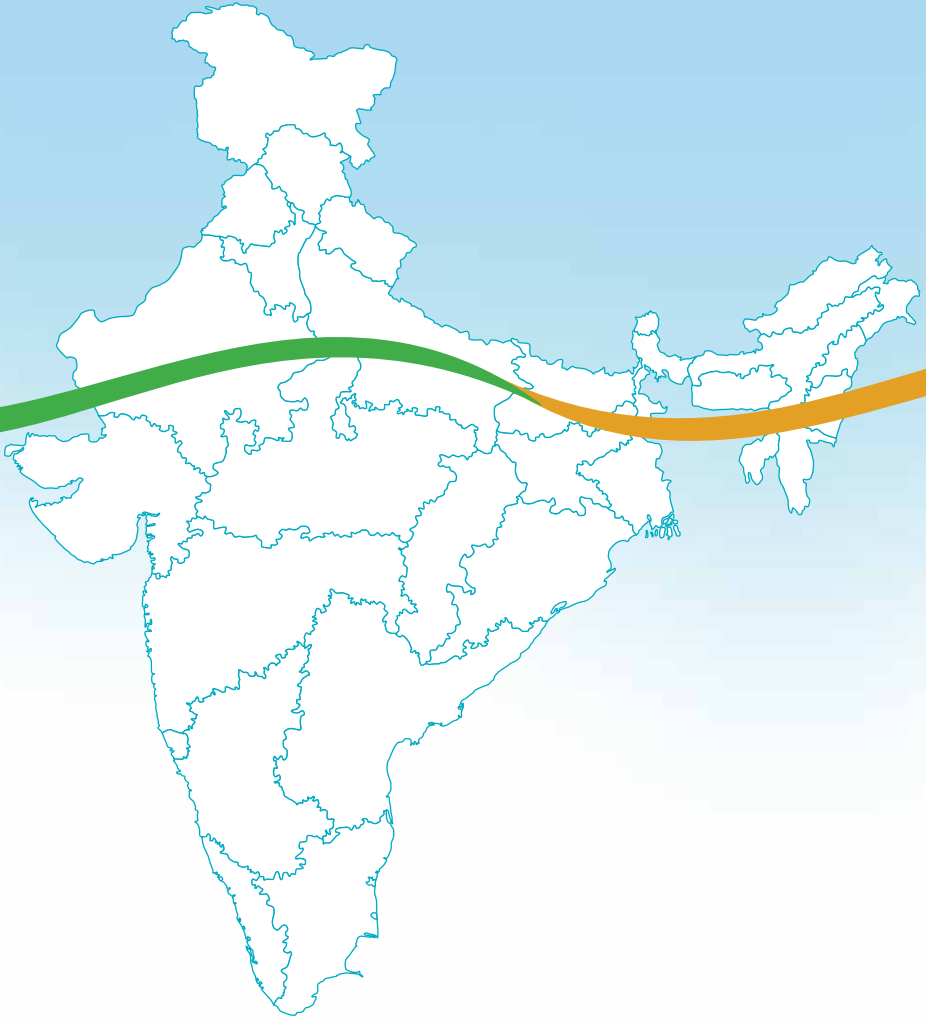
● March 2018: **400** villages declared verified

An instrumentation engineer and software developer turned entrepreneur, Rohan had previously worked with a social enterprise organisation in creating rural sanitary marts, which provide material and resources at lower costs to economically disadvantaged people for construction of toilets and local drainage facilities. The experience helped him understand some of the issues around sanitation and open defecation, and the work of the SBM-G in this area.

Now, his role as a state coordinator gives him an opportunity to be directly involved with the state administrative machinery in contributing towards making the country ODF, with plenty of help from the preraks of course. As Rohan says, “The fact that the preraks have been driving the mission in Bihar so successfully has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation at various forums.” ●



Various districts of Bihar have witnessed sustained hygiene and sanitation behaviour change under Rohan’s leadership as state coordinator of the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak programme



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