

World Water Day 2011 Activities in INDIA

Rivers of the World Foundation

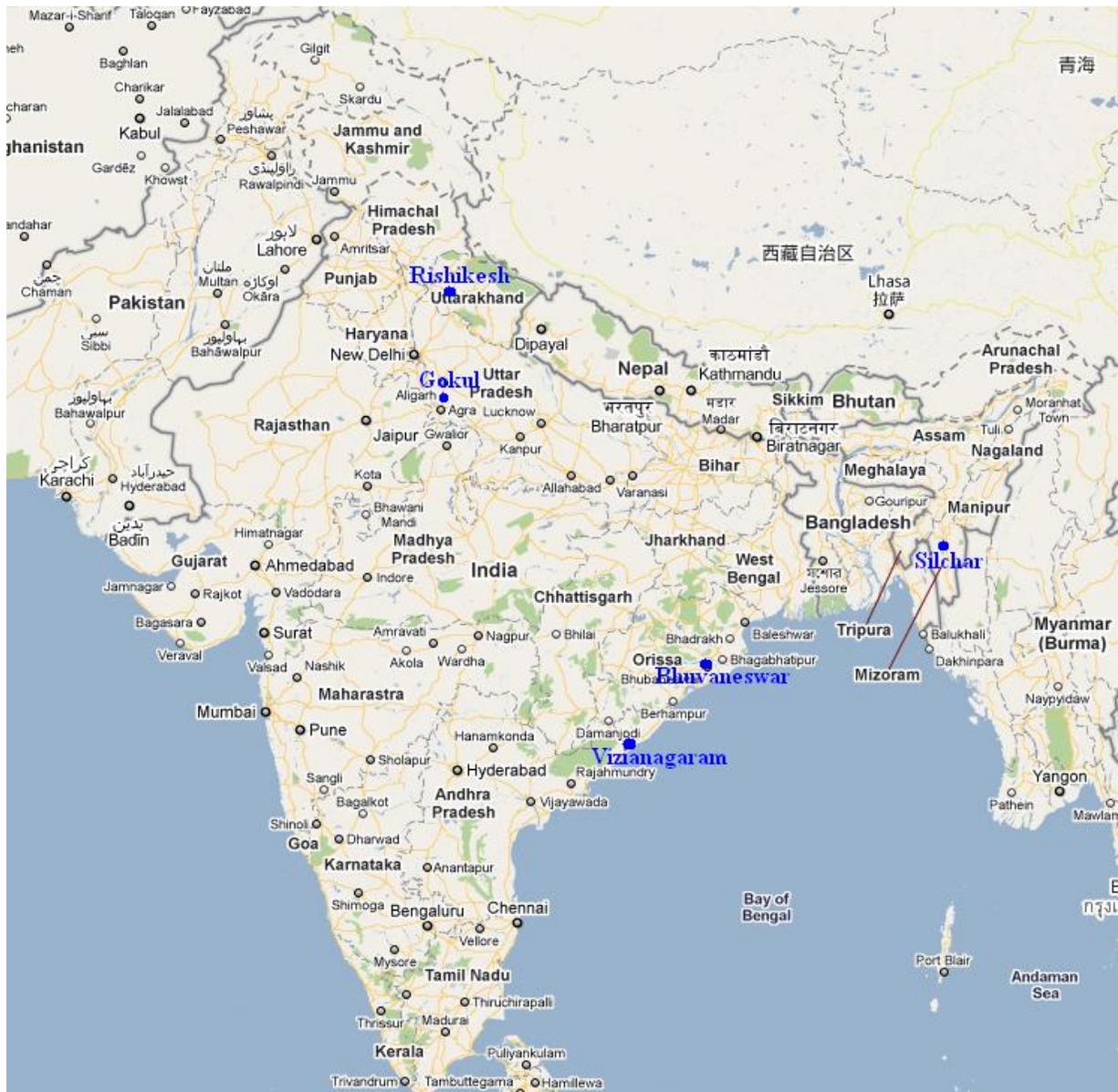
Gokul, UP; Silchar, Assam; Rishikesh, Uttaranchal; Bhubaneswar, Odissa, Vizianagaram, AP, India

In INDIA -

22-26 March 2011

The Rivers of the World (ROW) Foundation (www.rowfoundation.org) has conducted River Trash Cleanups and Other activities at the following River locations:

1. **Bhubaneswar, Odissa**
(**Daya River**)
2. **Gokul, UP;**
(**Yamuna River**)
3. **Rishikesh, Uttaranchal;**
(**Ganga River**)
4. **Silchar, Assam;**
(**Barak River**)
5. **Vizianagaram, AP, India**
(**Nagavali River**)



1. Bhubaneswar, Odisha (Orissa) – Daya River Trash Cleanup Activity

The local communities from the banks of Daya river near Bhubaneswar Odisha, were guided and led by the local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) - Fakir Mohan Foundation (FMF) in close collaboration with the leading NGO, Bharat Integrated Social Welfare Agency (BISWA – <http://biswa.org>) to carry out a river cleaning and awareness program on April 22, 2011. This was a follow-up of the World Water Day 2011 activity planned and supported by the Rivers of the World Foundation. A large group of villagers participated in the event besides local leaders and a few eminent people, such as Mr. Ambica Prashad Nanda, UNDP state program Office, Mr. Dilip Routrai, Senior official from Bhubaneswar Municipal Commission, Mr. Prafulla Dhal, Director BISWA, Prof. Monica Das, Delhi University. Environmental awareness messages were conveyed to the local people in the local language.



Monica Das



A total of about 150 people gathered together and joined hands in cleaning up the garbage from and around the river. The river trash cleanup program plan and the needed supplies such as the gloves and garbage bags were sent from Maryland, USA by Rivers of the World Foundation

(<http://rowfoundation.org>). The following results were compiled from verbal communication with Prof. Monica Das, who lead the effort on Daya River Trash Cleanup.

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1. A total of 150 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 180 kgs (11 big size bags) of garbage.
3. Garbage was picked up along the 1 kilometer-long Daya River bank
4. Approximate cleanup location is shown in the picture above.

A follow up action involving a seminar on Yamuna and Daya River cleanup and protection is being planned for the last week of November 2011 in New Delhi India.

2. Gokul, U.P – Yamuna River Trash Cleanup Activity

Gokul is a small town in Uttar Pradesh on the east side of the Yamuna River. A general location of Gokul in relation to Mathura and Agra is shown in Figure 1. below. Gokul is located 15 km south-east of Mathura in Uttar Pradesh between [27.45° North Latitude and 77.72° E / 27.45; 77.72](#)ast Latitude. It has an average elevation of 163 m (534 feet). Gokul encompasses a small area of about 2 sq km.

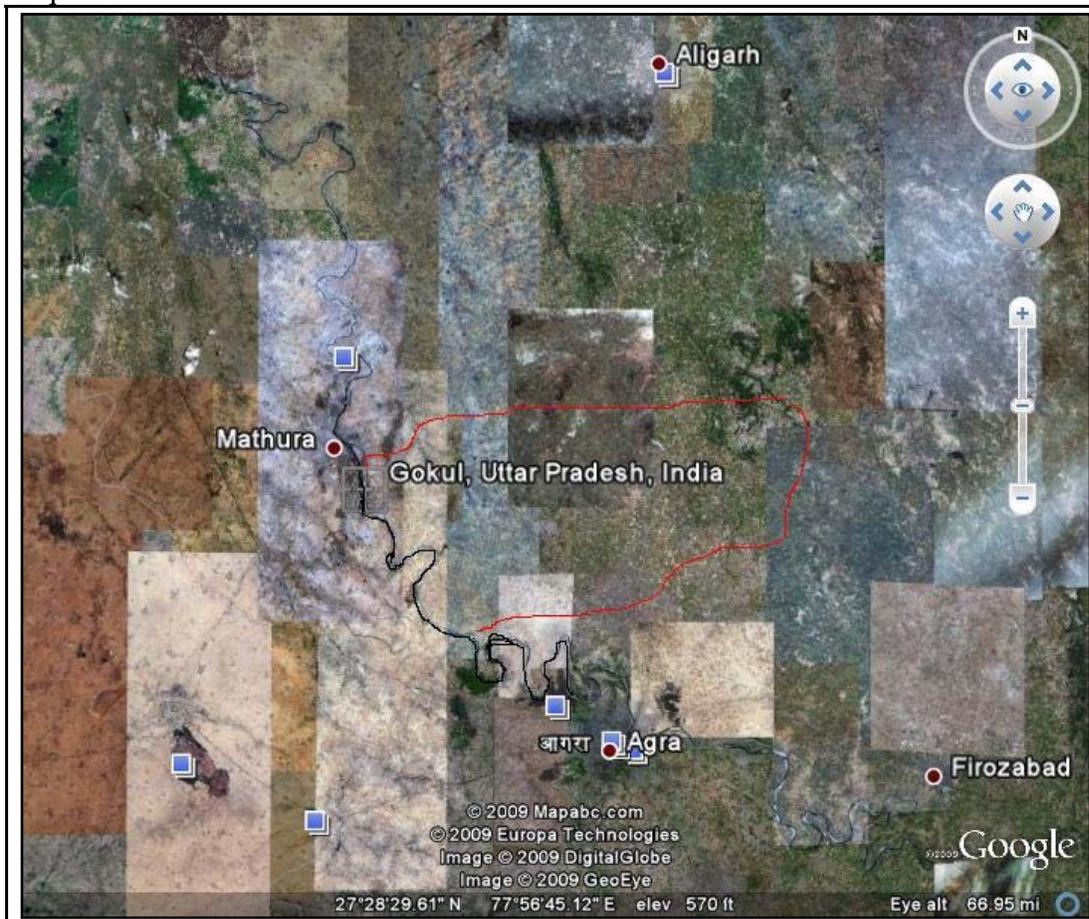


Figure 1: Satellite map of Gokul (courtesy of Google Maps)

According to Vedic Scripture, Lord Krishna was brought up under the care of Nanda and Yoshoda, the first family of the village. Since Kangsha, Krishna's uncle, used to kill every baby born to Devaki, Nanda exchanged his own new born daughter with Vasudeva in order to smuggle Krishna away without raising Kangsha's suspicion. During his stay at Gokul, Krishna spent his time in fun and frolic, though his life did come under threat a few times.



The spirit and culture of people in Gokul are very much Krishna-centric, and the **Gokul Trust** is making an effort is to bring awareness and understanding of water quality, sanitation, and proper environmental management of waste for protecting the health and livelihood of local people there.



Members of the Gokul Trust with Mr. Sahadeo Singh, President, Ms. Pratibha Chaudhry, and Mr. D.K. Mital (from R-L, Front row)

A seminar was arranged on Feb 20th in Gokul where many local people participated and discussed the issues about their wastewater discharges directly to River Yamuna without any treatment. Other issues about improper management of their municipal solid waste were also discussed at the meeting.

As a follow-up to this seminar, Mr. Pawan Sharma, a local lead for the Gokul Trust undertook the **Yamuna River Trash Cleanup** with active assistance and support from the Trust (Mr. Ashwin Patel) as part of the WWD-2011 activity.



Mr. Pawan Sharma by River Yamuna (Gokul) with Floating Foam (Feb2011)

The following results were compiled from verbal communication with Mr. Pawan Sharma, who lead the effort on WWD-2011, Yamuna River Trash Cleanup in Gokul.

1. A total of about 800 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 500 kgs of garbage.
3. The trash collection was conducted along the Roadside of the Yamuna River bank for about 1 Km.
4. Approximate cleanup location is shown in the picture below.

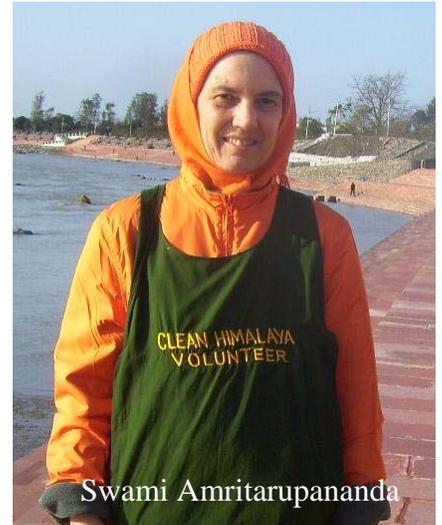


3. Rishikesh, Uttaranchal – Ganga River Trash Cleanup Activity

The Ganges River trash cleanup in Rishikesh area was led by Swami Amritarupananda and Jittender Kumar, who have been pursuing local trash removal in Rishikesh under the Clean Himalaya organization.

Clean Himalaya organized three events in honor of the World Water Day 2011 in conjunction with the NGO, Rivers of the World foundation.

On March 13th one of Clean Himalaya's regular local volunteers brought together about 15 students from a local Ram Jhula School to join Clean Himalaya in cleaning up the Muni-ki-reti area at Ram Jhula and the bank of the Ganges there. The kids joined with great enthusiasm as they were picking up the garbage shouted "Polythene bandh karo!" (Stop plastic bags!). A special sponsored lunch was also prepared for the kids using the Madras Café kitchen in Ram Jhula and was later served at the school.



Swami Amritarupananda



On March 24th the second event was specially dedicated cleaning to World Water Day of the regular Thursday morning volunteers (and more!)



Finally on March 27th many students of the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy at Sivananda Ashram picked up garbage out of the dry drain along the main roadside from Ram Jhula to Tapovan. If this garbage is not picked up, it ends up in the Ganga when it rains.







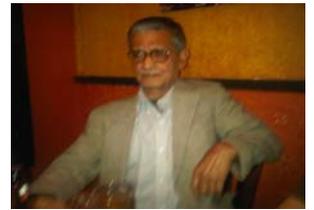
Please visit <http://cleanhimalaya.org/article.php?aid=7&sid=42> for further details and more pictures.

4. Silchar, Assam – Barak River Trash Cleanup Activity

The Barak River flows on the North/North East side of Silchar , Assam through a floodplain commonly known as the Barak Valley. During monsoon the Barak valley is routinely impacted by floods. The River receives discharges from mostly agricultural fields and some non-Agricultural industrial discharges from a few industries in its vast watershed as it passes through its floodplain in Cachar area. A reconnaissance of the Barak River was undertaken during February 3-5, 2011 where various intakes and discharges into the River were looked at and screening level measurements of water quality were conducted at various points to look into the changes in water quality between various intakes and discharges. See detailed report at [Barak River Water Quality Screening Report February 2011 New!](#)

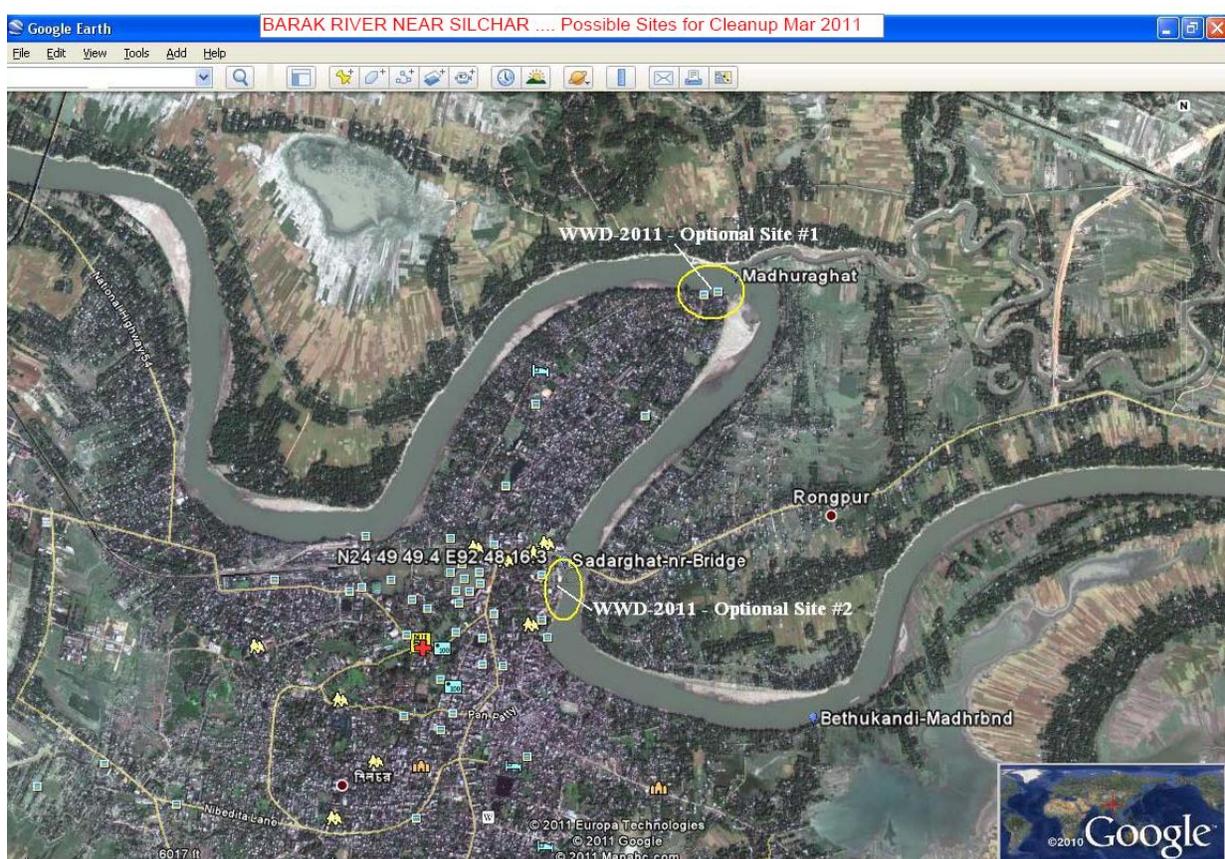


The trash cleanup activity was a follow up on the water quality exploration. The Nagarik Swartha Raksha Sangram Parisad with the active leadership of Mr. Haridas Dutta and coordination support of Dr. K.K. Das observed the WWD 2011 by conducting the trash cleanup. They collected all different types of trash thrown on the river bank and the river water of the Barak River from the Annapurna ferryghat towards upstream from a stretch of about 1 Km. Volunteer badges, trash collection bags, and gloves were sent by Rivers of the World Foundation from Maryland to Silchar in support the activity.



The following approximate results were compiled from communication with the local people, who lead the effort on WWD-2011, Barak River Trash Cleanup in Silchar.

1. A total of about 110 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 85 kgs of trash.
3. The trash collection was conducted along the Roadside of the Barak River bank for about 100 meters.
4. Approximate cleanup location is shown in the picture below.



Some of the volunteers involved in planning the event are shown in the adjacent pictures.



Typical trash along the bank of the Barak River are shown in the pictures below..



5. Vizianagaram, A.P. – Nagavali River Valley – Awareness and Protection Activity

In Vizianagaram area, Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Tata Prakasam, founder president of the NGO Bharati Teertha, based in Vizianagaram, coordinated a number of events including a Workshop on Industrial Wastewater Treatment, Reuse, and Recycle. A number of International experts from US and other countries participated in this workshop on March 23, 2011. Dr. Prakasam is also a Distinguished Professor of Environmental Sciences and Health at Maharajah Institute of Medical Sciences, Nellimarla, District, Vizianagaram, A.P.



Rivers of the World Foundation communicated with Dr. Prakasam on some of the issues discussed at the workshop and other events pertaining to the WWD-2011.

The rural communities (below) of Vizianagaram have been provided with various health and sanitation help by the Bharathi Teertha organization. Two separate public toilets for men and women have been installed there with the help of Dr. Tata Prakasam. Rivers of the World Foundation (Subijoy Dutta) visited the facility on January 30th, 2011.





Two Public Toilet Facilities for Men and Women constructed by Rotary International in Vizianagarm with the initiative of Baharati Teertha Organization



To celebrate the World Water Day 2011 Bharati Teertha had organized and participated in several different events. These are listed below.

1. March 18: Gayatri Vidya Parishad (Participation): Wealth from Waste – Presentation
2. March 19: Nightingale College of Engineering (Women): Inauguration of EWOB: Participation in inaugural and lecture.
3. March 20: Visit to Kakinada to understand the problem of flooding and sea water intrusion.
4. March 21: Book Release: BuddhaGhalib and The Enemy Within (Ajatshatru)- organized by Bharati Teertha
5. March 22: World Water Day Celebration; Organized.
6. March 23: Industrial Waste Treatment, Recycle, and Reuse Workshop: organized by Bharati Teertha
7. March 24: International Desalination Conference, Vizianagaram: JNTU Organizing and Bharati Teertha participating.
8. March 26: World Water Day Celebration, Hyderabad; organized by BharatiTeertha.

No trash cleanup activity was arranged for the Vizianagaram site.

For all trash cleanup activities in the above four sites (other than Vizianagaram), coated gloves were arranged for the volunteers to protect hands and plastic bags were used to collect recyclable items and trash to be disposed. The recyclables were transported to the municipal recycling center; where available. Arrangements were also made for the non-recyclables to be picked up by the city garbage collection system in some locations.