

## **A Reverberating Revival Story of Kosi River**

Kosi River in Uttarakhand, which is the lifeline of Almora town, saw a steep decline in its flow (around 20 times decrease) in the past two decades and the very survival of the district became questionable. This led the district administration to launch the largest ever plantation drive which was carried out in one hour as part of phase-1 of its river revival project in Almora district (Hawalbag and Takula blocks) in 2018. More than 1.67 lakh saplings with over 90% survival rate were planted across 110 plantation sites with the help of students, MNREGA workers, Army, SSB force units and government officials. GIS mapping and tracking of the plantation sites is being done. This activity was registered in the Limca Book of Records.

Phase-2 of the Kosi rejuvenation works included construction of groundwater recharge structures; infiltration trenches, infiltration holes, bio check dams, dry stone check dams and ponds. The following numbers of structures were made to hold rainwater and recharge groundwater table:

- Infiltration trenches – 11,95,057 meters
- Infiltration holes – 1,84,64,280 meters
- Bio-check dams – 2,000
- Dry stone check dams – 152
- Ponds – 375

These efforts resulted in conservation of 74 million litres of water for irrigation purposes, which created the irrigation potential of additional 2960 hectares. In total, 225.85 km length of rivers/streams forming part of Kosi river system was revived. The Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation acknowledged these efforts by giving

Almora district first prize in Best District, Revival of River category (North Zone) at the National Water Awards 2018.

### **Rainwater Harvesting in Almora district**

About 80% government buildings (including offices, residences) have rainwater harvesting facilities. In villages, more and more families are assisted with construction of water harvesting tanks. The financial estimates have been prepared for few buildings which don't have rainwater harvesting facilities to make Almora a district with 100% rainwater harvesting facilities. This helps in keeping the revival of Kosi River sustainable as rainwater harvesting decreases the burden of the river to meet the water needs of the town.

This story of revival of Kosi River in Almora district holds immense promise for Jal Shakti Abhiyan being implemented under the leadership of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The action based on scientific studies and people's involvement at the grassroots level is a key to effective management of water as shown by Almora district administration and is worth emulating. Our rivers are our pride and source of sustenance of our civilization. Efforts like these should inspire all of us to do our bit for water conservation.