

## Success Story – DM Mirzapur

### Giving Life to Ponds and Rivers in District Mirzapur

The water conservation efforts in the Mirzapur District revolve around three aspects, the first being revival and rejuvenation of a small River Karnavati which originates from Prayagraj and 24 Km downstream merges into the River Ganga. The situation in the district was such that water tankers were being sent to a few blocks of the district, 90% of the villages used hand pumps for drinking water.

Work was started for deepening of the Karnavati River and digging pits for planting trees on both sides. These actions and works were routed through **shramdaan** engaging people all the way. In July, 2019 efforts begun as people's movement with active support from Political class, District administration, Centre as well as State Government. The combined efforts started yielding results after merely 15 days.

The district has large number of ponds around 126. For rejuvenating these ponds, each pond was allocated to one officer, who motivated the people to work for its rejuvenation. Jalkumbhis were removed from all ponds under Save the Ponds Campaign. Some of the ponds were even used for fishing.

The works related to water conservation and management were undertaken under MNREGA, with collaboration of 15 Departments, creating a 47 lakh man-days against the target of 22.5 lakh man-days and providing a total of 33 days employment to 1,44,377 families. Massive employment was provided to migrant labourers under MNREGA. Due to the efforts made to maintain the water level, the water level remained stable even during the summer time and the water problem decreased compared to previous years. Sirsi Minors were also identified, desilted and revived.

The results were such that the ground water level increased by around 1.42 metres since 2017-18, no water tankers were required in the district and the area under rice cultivation could also be increased by 10 percent. The District Administration has been hailed for its efforts and involvement for all stakeholders.

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