

## Rivers of the World Foundation (ROW) Celebrates **World Water Day 2012** in Several Countries Through Awareness Campaigns and River Trash Clean Up Activities

### (Summary Table –All Countries)

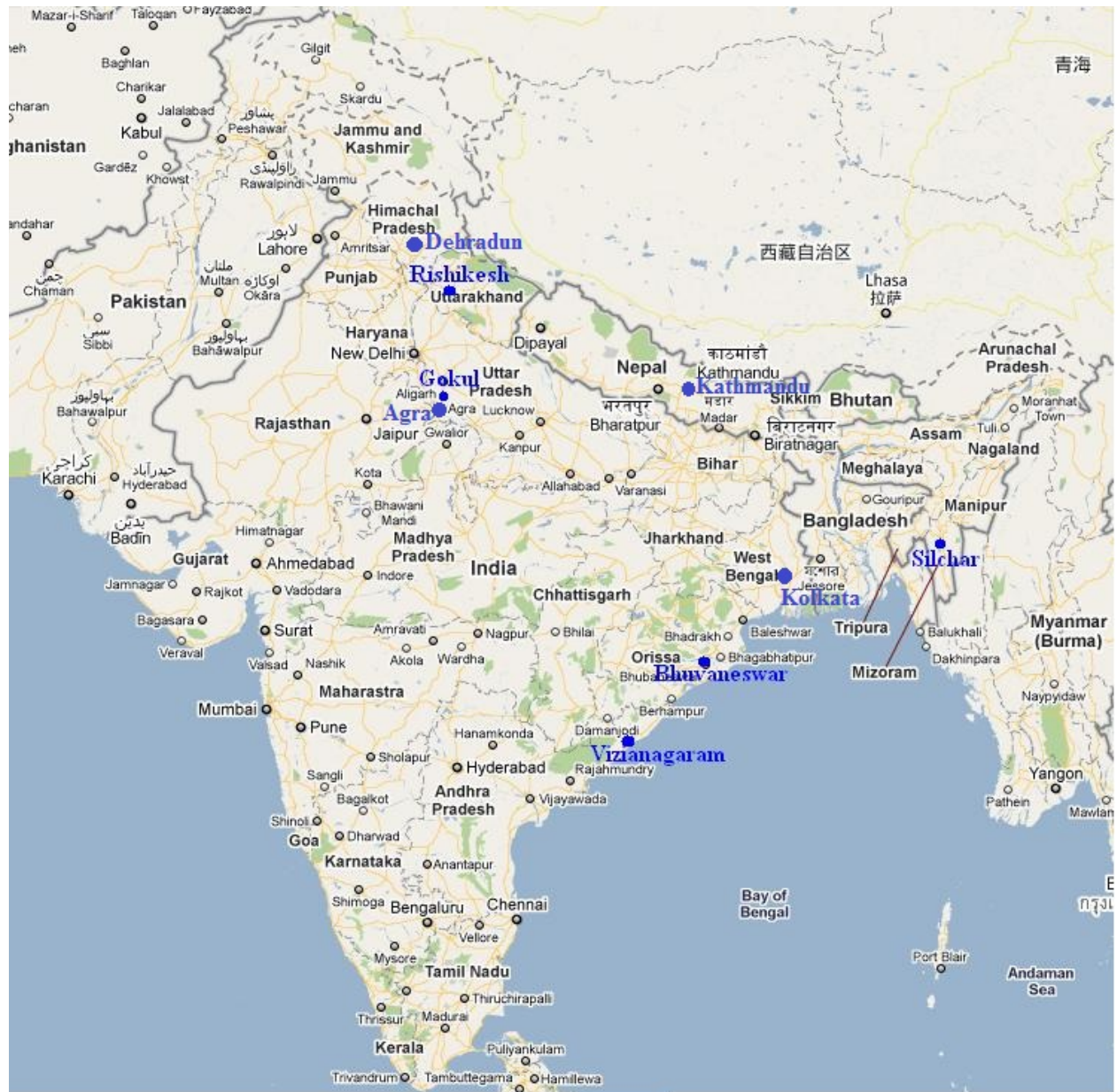
<b>Countries:</b>	China, India, Nepal, Philippines
<b>Rivers:</b>	Yangtze Kiang, Iloilo, Yamuna, Ganges, Barak, Daya, Hooghly and Bagmati.
<b>No. of Participants:</b>	1506 Kids and Adults
<b>Amount of Trash Collected:</b>	5236 Kgs

Rivers of the World Foundation organized and coordinated river trash clean-up activities across 11 places in four different countries, China, India, Nepal and Philippines, to mark the **World Water Day (WWD2012)**. The program was a much larger scale effort this year than the previous years, with an impressive and encouraging turnout of hundreds of youth and community volunteers participating in trash pick-up along the banks of their local rivers. The program was a huge success and drew attention of city officials, businesses and communities toward the need for collective responsibility in keeping their waters clean and pollution free.

Following is the reports from our local trash clean up organizers in India and Nepal:

#### **INDIA and NEPAL:**

WWD2012 activity locations in India and Nepal are shown below



**In India,** The Rivers of the World (ROW) Foundation ([www.rowfoundation.org](http://www.rowfoundation.org)) has conducted River Trash Cleanups and Other activities at the following River locations:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Agra, U.P. ( <b>Yamuna River</b> )              | 5. Bhubaneswar, Odissa ( <b>Daya River</b> )     |
| 2. Dakpatthar, Uttaranchal ( <b>Yamuna River</b> ) | 6. Kolkata, West Bengal ( <b>Hooghly River</b> ) |
| 3. Gokul, U.P. ( <b>Yamuna River</b> )             | 7. Silchar, Assam ( <b>Barak River</b> )         |
| 4. Rishikesh, Uttarakhand ( <b>Ganges River</b> )  | 8. Vizianagaram, A.P. ( <b>Nagavali River</b> )  |

**In Nepal,** the trash cleanup was conducted in

9. Kathmandu, Nepal (**Bagmati River**)

**1. Yamuna River, Agra, India**

*ROW Coordinators: Mr. Shravan Kumar and Brij Khandelwal*

Roughly over 100 eco-activists turned up the week of March 18-25 to pick up trash to mark the 2012 World Water Day and to “pressure the new rulers of UP to accord top priority to cleaning up of rivers and community ponds.” The program was joint initiative of Rivers of the World



Foundation and the local Braj Mandal Heritage Conservation Society.

The trash clean-up was undertaken close to the controversial Taj Corridor, sandwiched between two world heritage monuments, the Taj and the Agra Fort. From business owners to home-maker women and young students, several volunteers demonstrated frustration and concern over the filthy





waters flowing in the scared Yamuna and the urgent need for attention and action from the state government of Uttar Pradesh.

Clean-up of around 200 sq meter area filled up 10 trash bags, each weighing 20 kg approximately. About 99% of the trash was polythene and plastic, which was severely blocking normal seepage and percolation of waters.

## 2. Yamuna River, Dak Patthar (near Dehradun), India

***ROW Coordinators: Ramchander Thapliyal and D.K. Mital***

An awareness workshop was arranged by Ramchander Thapliyal in Dak Patthar. He visited the Rishikesh area and met with Swami Amritarupananda to learn about the river trash removal program and plans to pursue similar effort in Dakpatthar. The Yamuna upstream protection effort is lead by Mr. D.K. Mital in Delhi who has been mentoring Ramchander Thapliyal, our new volunteer in the Yamuna River cleanup effort.

### 3. Yamuna River, Gokul, India

*ROW Coordinators: Pawan Sharma and Ashwin Patel*

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.

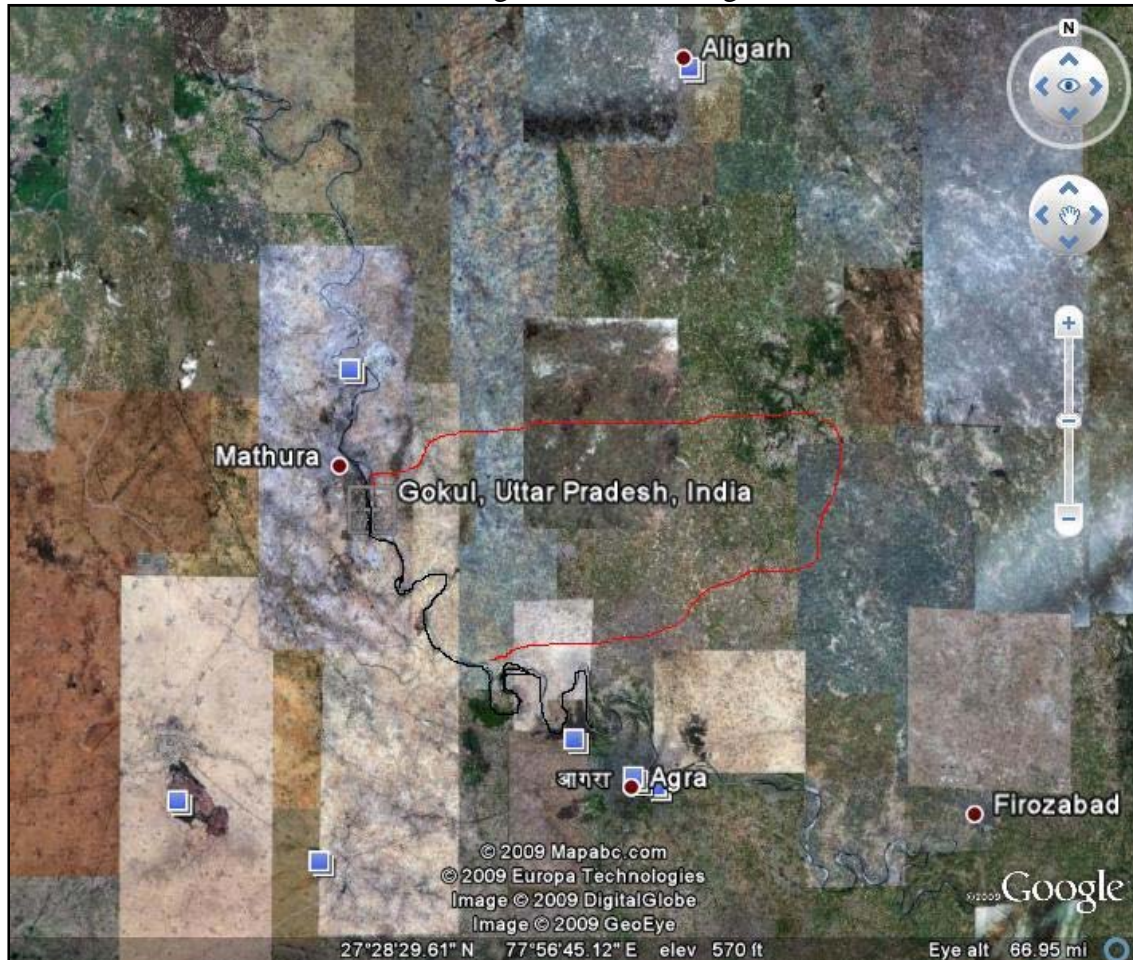
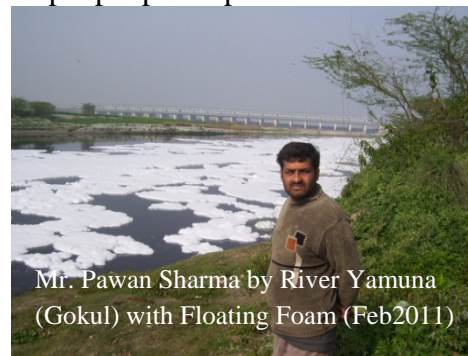


Figure 1: Satellite map of Gokul (courtesy of Google Maps)

A seminar was arranged on Feb 20<sup>th</sup> 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-2012 activity.





The following results were compiled from verbal communication with Mr. Pawan Sharma, who lead the effort on WWD-2012, Yamuna River Trash Cleanup in Gokul.

1. A total of about 350 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 400 kgs of garbage.
3. The trash collection was conducted along the Roadside of the Yamuna River bank for about 1 Km.

#### 4. Ganges River, Rishikesh, India

***ROW Coordinators: Swami Amritarupananda and Jittender Kumar***

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

This special activity in honor of the WWD2012 was held March 18, organized by the local Sivananda Yoga Vedanata Forest Academy and supported by Rivers of the World Foundation. About 25 volunteers participated in the activity. Since the local organization holds weekly trash clean up, there was not a massive amount of garbage collected. However, the special World Water Day program was inspiring and drew enthusiastic response from students, raising awareness on keeping river waters clean and trash free.



Swami Amritarupananda









Volunteers at the Ganges Trash cleanup, Rishikesh, India

## 5. Daya River, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

***ROW Coordinators: Mr. Prafulla Dhal, Director BISWA, and Prof. Monica Das, Delhi University.***

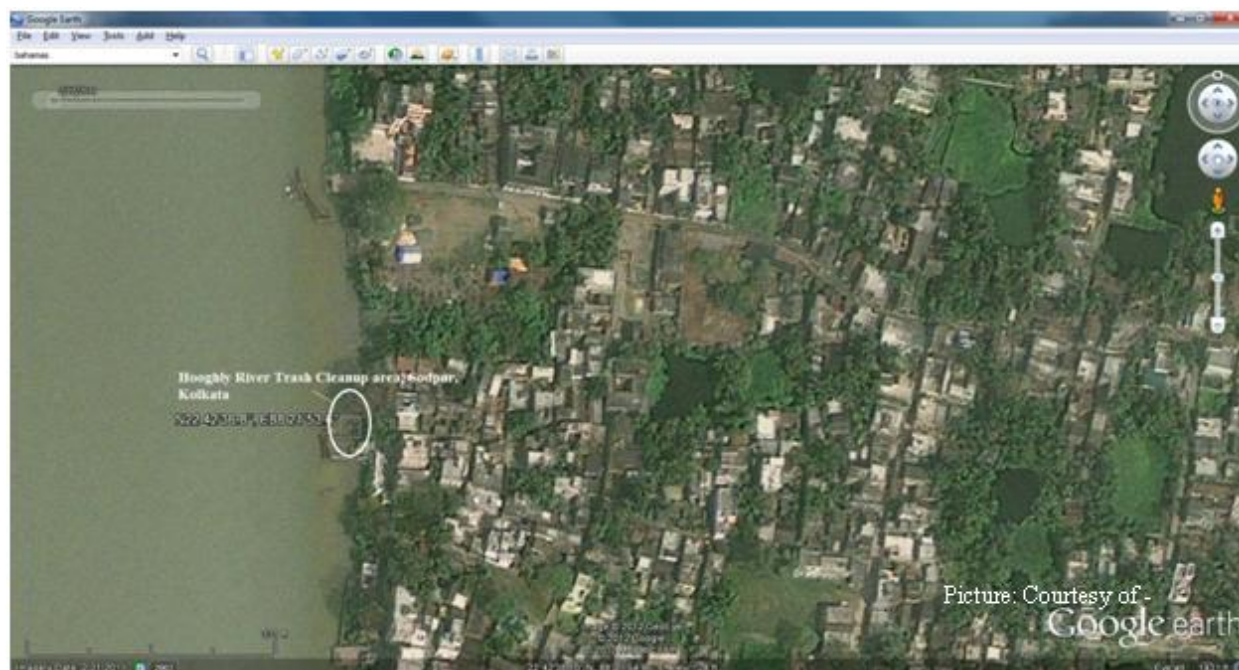
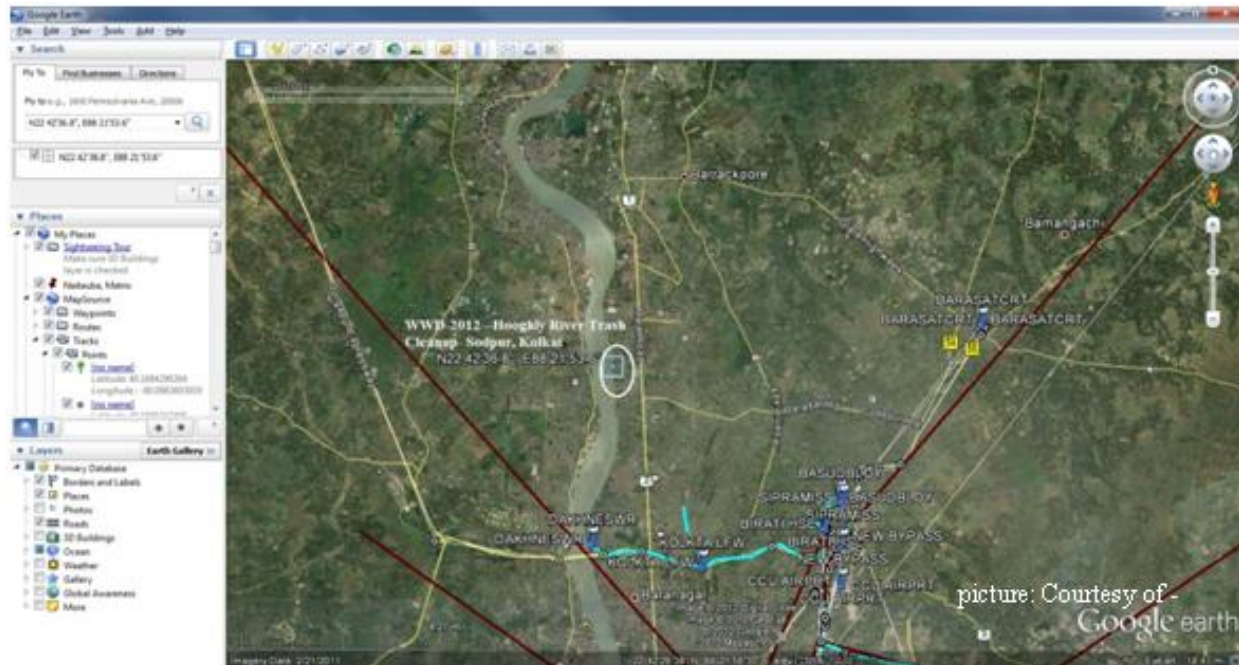
The local communities from the banks of Daya river near Bhubaneswar Odisha, were guided and led by the local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) - Fakir Mohan Foundation (FMF) in close collaboration with the leading NGO, Bharat Integrated Social Welfare Agency (BISWA – <http://biswa.org> ) to carry out a river cleaning and awareness program from March 22- 25, 2012. Mr. Prafulla Dhal indicated that they had a successful event.

## 6. Hooghly River, Kolkata, India

***ROW Coordinators: Sucharit(Diplu) Dutta, Phalguni Sankar Bhattacharya, and Jayanta Saha***

This is the first time Rivers of the World undertook such awareness activity in Kolkata, India. The WWD2012 Trash cleanup activity in the Hooghly River watershed was undertaken on March 25<sup>th</sup> by a group of volunteers coordinated by Sucharit Dutta, Phalguni Sankar Bhattacharya, and Jayanta Saha. The cleanup location (general) and the detail are shown below.





A few other volunteers who participated in the trash cleanup are - Swapan kumar Dey, Raju singh, Rajesh Kundu, Gopal Chandra Roy and Sudip Home Choudhury.

The following approximate results were compiled from communication with Sucharit Dutta, and others involved in WWD-2012.

1. A total of about 10 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 90 Kgs of trash.



3. The trash collection was conducted along the bank of the Hooghly River as shown in the pictures below.













## 7. Barak River, Silchar, India

*ROW Coordinators: Mr. Haridas Dutta, and Dr. K.K. Das*

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 industrial discharges 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 at various points. See detailed report at [Barak River Water Quality Screening Report February 2011\\_New!](#)



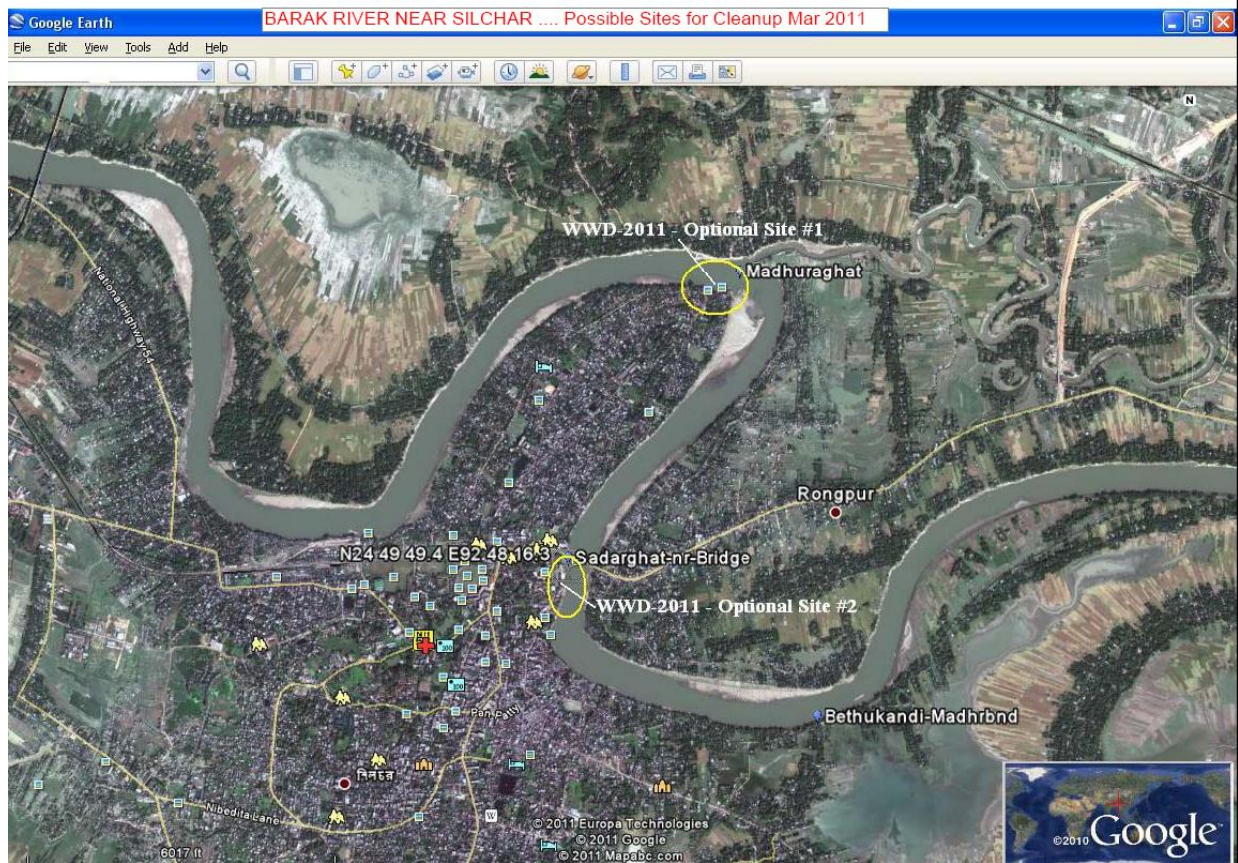
The trash cleanup activity was a follow up on the water quality exploration. The Nagarik Swartha Raksha Sangram Parisad with the active leadership of Mr. Haridas Dutta and coordination support of Dr. K.K. Das observed the WWD 2012 by conducting the trash cleanup. They collected all different types of 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. Our new volunteer participant **Ms. Abanita Sen**, a science teacher from a local Girl's College got her students actively involved in this awareness activity.



The following approximate results were compiled from communication with the local people, who lead the effort on WWD-2012, 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 90 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.





## 8. Nagavali River Valley – Awareness and Protection Activity, Vizianagaram, A.P., India

*ROW Coordinator: Dr. Tata Prakasam*

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. 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-2012.

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 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011.







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





To celebrate the World Water Day 2012, Bharati Teertha had organized and participated in organizing seminars in eight colleges. The location for 2012 seminars included some of the facilities from 2011 activities as listed below:

1. Gayatri Vidya Parishad (Participation): Wealth from Waste – Presentation
2. Nightingale College of Engineering (Women): Inauguration of EWOB: Participation in inaugural and lecture.
3. Kakinada sea water intrusion.
4. Industrial Waste Treatment, Recycle, and Reuse Workshop.
5. International Desalination Conference, Vizianagaram: JNTU Organizing and Bharati Teertha participating.

No trash cleanup activity was arranged for the Vizianagaram site.

### 9. Bagmati River, Kathmandu, Nepal

This was the first time Trash Cleanup/Awareness activity was coordinated by Rivers of the World in Nepal. The event took place on March 17th, 2012. A water-heart from Nepal providing Him Shikhar Mineral bottled water in the area stepped forward to undertake this event as a volunteer. Ms. Hope Shakya, a freelance Maryland-based photographer visiting Kathmandu at that time, also provided active support for the event.



A few other local volunteers, such as Chaitanya Shri, and Mohan L. played a key role for the event. Several saints from the Pashupatinath Temple provided a major support for the event.

The following approximate results were compiled from communications with the local volunteers, who lead the effort on WWD-2012, Bagmati River Trash Cleanup in Kathmandu.

1. A total of about 90 people from Local communities, citizen volunteers and others participated in this activity.
2. The group picked up about 500 kgs of trash.
3. The trash collection was conducted from the Bagmati River along a span of about 150 meters.





Pictures from the event, sent by Pranuj Malla, are shown below.















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.