



ATULYA GANGA
-AN EPIC JOURNEY ON FOOT-

An unprecedented
6000 km walk for
Ganga, over 220+
Days by Veterans



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IT IS OUR LAST CHANCE to SAVE GANGES

MILITARY VETERANS TAKE UP THE LONG BATTLE

Here is a rare display of undiminished passion by military veterans to serve the nation, even after retirement - to Rejuvenate Ganga. That's the ingrained spirit of Indian Armed Forces, every Indian must emulate.

Allow me to present an audacious, unprecedented, continuous, multi-faceted and record making - 5530 km, 190 Day long Atulya Ganga Parikrama. It was an unbroken walkathon for Ganga Rejuvenation, which was flagged off by Her Excellency Anandiben Patel, Governor of UP, on 16 Dec 2020 at Prayagraj, and was successfully accomplished on 23 June 2021.

Having served the national frontiers in the prime of their youth, these indefatigable veterans have now dedicated rest of their lives to enable rejuvenation of degrading Ganga Maa.

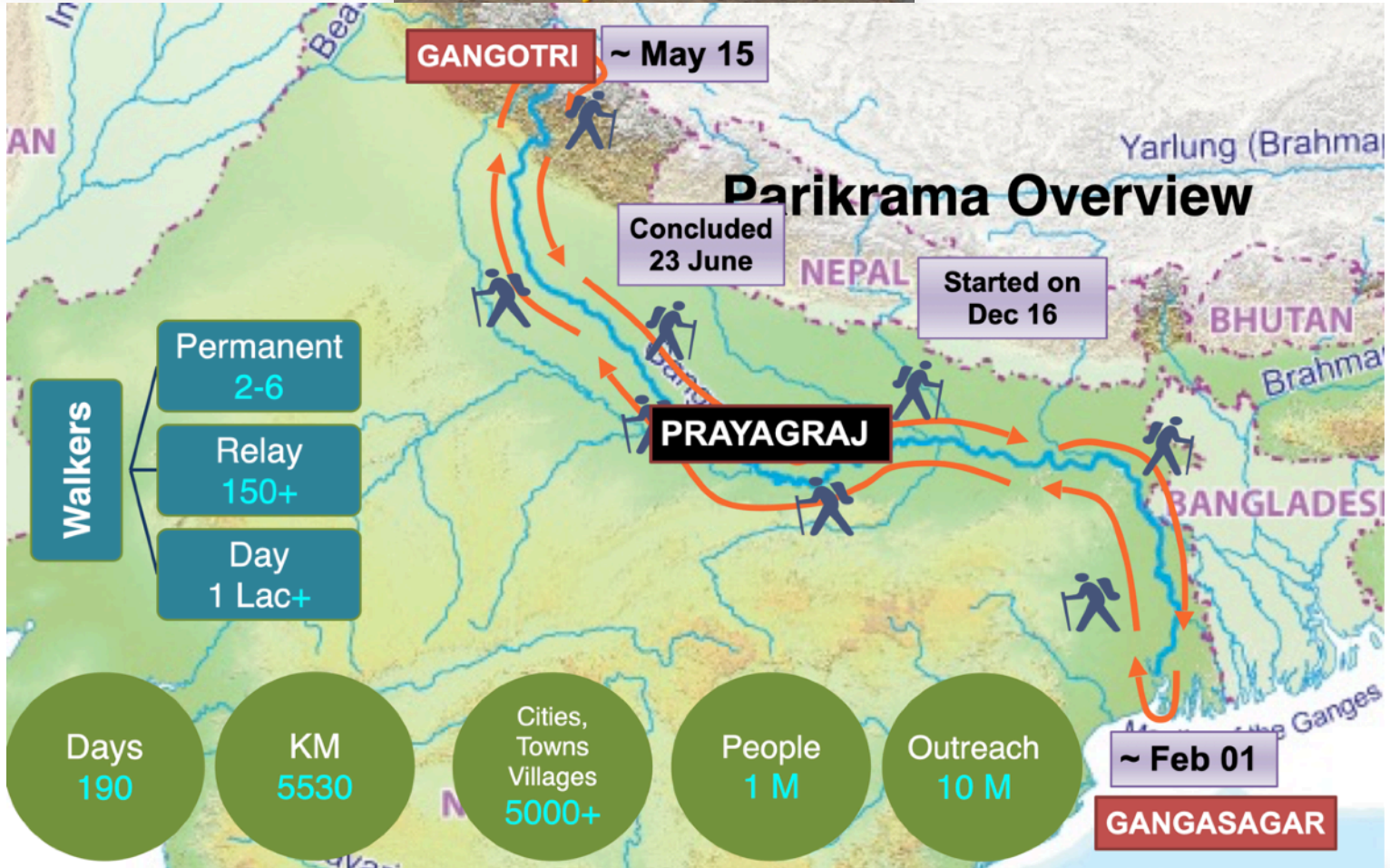
Atulya Ganga - is an Indian military veterans' first ever initiative in social sector - to save our Ganga on which Indian civilisation was born, nurtured and has thrived over the ages. Without rivers, there will be no future of civilisations.

The idea was founded by **Sh Gopal Sharma**, age 79 (ex Military Engineer and a Mountaineer), **Lt Col Hem Lohumi, SM** age 70(Antarctica pioneer and seasoned mountaineer), **Col Manoj Keshwar**, age 53(a multifaceted adventure organiser). Maj Gen Brajesh Kumar, AVSM, VSM & Maj Gen Vinod Bhatt, SM, VSM have been the chief mentors. Lt Gen SA Cruze, VSM** was the chief trainer and Lt Gen SD Duhan, AVSM, VSM has been the medical advisor of the walkathon.

The aim of **Atulya Ganga** project is to synergise all efforts of the government, non-government, volunteers and common public for rejuvenating Ganga to its pristine glory. And to do it fast, as the time is running out for Indian Rivers. It is the most sure-footed people's project underway right now addressing multiple dimensions of giving clean Ganga to future generations in 11 years (2020-30).

The foundation of this Atulya Ganga Project stands on 4 solid pillars -

- **Ganga Parikrama** -5530+ km, 190 days walkathon, the biggest ever Indian walk for the cause of vanishing Indian rivers - attracted wide attention and media coverage. Thousands of walkers joined the Parikrama and the message of urgency towards Ganga reached over 5 million+ people.
- **Pollution Mapping** – During the walk, a team led by Maj Gen Bhatt geo-tagged and measured sources of pollution into Ganga at. A Ganga health dashboard is being prepared to directly help fixing location, amount of work and accountability of pollution.
- **Vrikshmaal Drive** - Rivers need massive forests on its flood plains to conserve soil, retain underground water and rejuvenate flora & fauna. 30,000+ trees like Bargad, Neem and Peepal were planted by our team in flood plains. A tree-mentor were nominated to ensure high survivability.
- **Youth Mobilisation** - Youth is the biggest stake holder on natural heritage of India. Focused on the youth & NCC, a large-scale interaction and sensitization drive ensued- touching schools, colleges, Gram Panchayats and hundreds of public meetings. There has been massive youth support.





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ATULYA GANGA PARIKRAMA 20-21 : BRIEF

Ganga Gyaan - What did we learn.

In these 190 days of Ganga Parikrama, walking both banks of Ganga, we have touch over 10 million people on Ganga belt. This is what we learnt.

- **Gangatva** : Ganga has some magical self cleansing properties. Within 10-15 kms of flow, enables Ganga to clean itself considerably. This is what makes the River unique from the rest of the world.
- **Glass Waste** dumped into Ganga, along with plastic - is the next big problem that Ganga would face in coming years.
- **State of Pollution** : Team measured pollution at 224 points and geotagged 329 Sewerage Nallas, 201 seasonal Nallas on 2500 km Ganga. Government schemes have made some difference to Pollution - but local population believes - its too little, too late. Local municipal corporations have a major task at hand.
- **Homeless Ganga** - Ganga has no demarcated land of itself or or its flood plains. Encroachment for various reasons is common practice.
- **Silt Mountains of Bihar** - A major disaster is waiting to happen in Bihar, due to massive silt deposits that Ganga is unable to push to Bay of Bengal.
- **Ganga Flow is die-ing** - Sad sight of 1-2 feet Water levels are visible in many stretches of Ganges, which conveys a pessimistic story of a die-ing river.
- **Death by Development** - Insensitive and unsustainable development is seen along the entire length of Ganga. And that will in coming years would completely consume Ganga. We have to rethink dams and barrages that are creating un-manageable problems down stream.

Atulya Ganga : First Five Year Plan.

In the coming 5 years, Atulya Ganga Project would relentlessly work towards Ganga Rejuvenation. It would have the following focus areas :

- **Ganga Cyclothon 2022**- Having completed the 5530 km Parikrama of Maa Ganga in COVID year of 20-21, now in 2022 we plan to go back to the banks of Ganga - a Cyclothon is planned for from Gangotri to Gangasagar in 2022.
- **Ganga Health Dash-board** : A tech based Water Quality Index (WQI) is being worked out to provide an authentic Atulya Ganga Health Report - which would give realtime health of Ganga. This data over years will help in evaluating, monitoring, resource allocation and management for Clean Ganga.
- **Rights of Ganga as Legal Entity** : The exploitation of Ganga cannot be stopped unless we legal recognise Ganga as a living entity with its right to live. We shall make efforts for grant of these rights to Maa Ganga.
- **National Fisherman Committee** : The community that has most suffered due to vanishing Ganga is the Nishad or fishermen of Ganga basin. We would work towards formulating of a national committee for upliftment of this community.
- **River Rejuvenation Booklet** : We plan to work with centre and state education ministers to include a brief booklet on Saving Indian Rivers.
- **Close Sewage Flow to Ganga**. We would work with all stake holders to Immediately closure of geotagged 329 Sewage Nallas flowing into Ganga.
- **Sabka Saath**. Generate unprecedented massive synergy and people participation programs in coordination with all agencies working on Ganga.
- **Vrikshmaal** - The drive to massively increased green cover in Ganga basin.
- **Atulya Ganga Awards on Environment Journalism** - in order to encourage national debate on environment and river preservation - a series of awards is planned to boost Jan Bhaagidari.

Namami Gange & Incredible India - have lent invaluable support to this mission.

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