

Day – 10

Day-09, the day we reached Kanpur, was a quite satisfying experience. After witnessing the excitement and willingness of the people to contribute towards the noble mission of restoring Ganga's glory, we have no doubt left in our mind that this herculean task of Ganga Cleaning and River Rejuvenation, which seemed far-fetched when Namami Gange Mission took shape, is very much possible as nothing is impossible if we all come together. After thanking the people for the warmth, love and blessings they have showered on us and appreciating their new infectious palpable resolution to do their bit for the cause, we went to bed relaxed, content and motivated for our future journey. After all, nothing motivates you more than the belief you generate in the people and the smiles you bring on their faces.

We woke up early in the morning and reached Atal Ghat. It was time to bid adieu to Kanpur and its lovely people. We, once more looked at the surrounding areas which is a fertile stretch of alluvial plain between the Ganges and Yamuna rivers, watered by tributaries of the two and by the lower Ganges canal. With the flag-off by Commissioner, Municipal Commissioner and DFO we left for our next destination i.e. Bhitoura, Fatehpur.

Located on the banks of the sacred rivers Ganges and Yamuna, Fatehpur finds its mention in the puranic literature. The ghats of Bhitoura and Asani were described as sacred in the puranas. Bhitoura, the site of the sage Bhrigu, was an important source of learning. Here, flow of river Ganga is towards north direction, which is very important from the religious point of view.

It is situated between two important cities: Prayagraj, (formely known as Allahabad), and Kanpur of the state Uttar Pradesh. The north boundary of the district is limited by the river Ganges and its southern boundary is the river Yamuna. In the Vedic era the region of this district was known as "Antardesh", which means the fertile area between two big rivers. Later, it was known as "Madhyadesh" which means central region. The territory covered by the present-day Fatehpur district was part of Vatsa, which was one among sixteen mahajanapadas described in the Buddhist literature.

Speaking about the rich biodiversity, team leader Wing Commander Paramvir Singh and Shri Rajeev Chouhan, WII were overjoyed to share their experience of sighting Gagnetic Dolphins in this stretch. Shri Rajeev Chouhan, WII explained that Gangetic dolphins live in a zone where there is little or no current, helping them save energy. If they sense danger, they can dive into deep waters. The dolphins swim from the no-current zone to the river edge to hunt for fish and return. He said it is a sign of a 'healthy river ecosystem' as the dolphins can survive only in clean and fresh water.

As we came closer to Dev Ghat, Bhitoura, Fatehpur, we witnessed a massive crowd led by Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti – Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and Member of Parliament - Fatehpur, Shri Sanjeev Singh – District Magistrate, Shri Ramesh – Superintendent of Police and Shri P.N.Rai – DFO, excitedly waiting to receive us.

The multi-layered programming of the entire Ganga Aamantran Abhiyaan deserves a particular mention here. All the other stakeholders, be it at Political Level, State Level, District Administration Level or on ground level (Educational Institutions, Media, Non-Governmental Organization) has been integrated in such a fashion that its resonance effect is for sure going to be felt for long and we are very sure that it will ignite the reverence people have for Ma Ganga into positive behavioral changes.

The cultural program started with Deep Prajjwalan by Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti - Hon'ble MoS, MoRD. Addressing the gathering, the Hon'ble Minister emphasized on the importance of Ganga in our daily lives. Reaching out to the people for their active participation Hon'ble Minister said that incredible change happens in our lives when we decide to take control of what we do have power over instead of craving control over what we don't. The minister was speaking about how a unifying action from the government as well as people is the only way out if we really intend to ensure that Ma Ganga's flow is Nirmal and Aviral.

“At the end of the day, we are solely responsible for our success and failure. And the sooner we realize that, accept that, and integrate that into our lives, we will start being successful. As long as we blame others for the reason we won't be where we want to be. It has to be a collective effort and we cannot afford to let it turn into a failure as with Ma Ganga flows our ancient culture, our identity.” she appealed.

The evening ended with Auspicious Ganga Aarti. As the sun sets for the day, the team for the rafting expedition prepares for an early start tomorrow, where they set out towards their next destination in the 'Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan'.