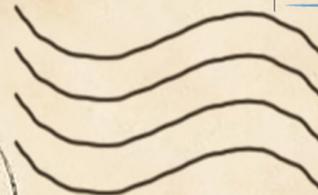
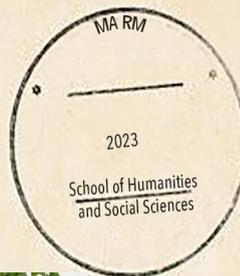


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MA Rural Management

Student Profiles

2023-24



Despite efforts ever since the Second Five Year Plan (1956) to move more and more people out of rural areas, latest UN projections show that even in the year 2050, there will be 800 million people living in rural India. Over the last 3 decades more than 350,000 farmers have committed suicide, a phenomenon unprecedented in Indian history. Rural India faces a crisis of very serious proportions. It is also clear that the "rural" is itself undergoing a profound transformation. This is an ever-changing, very dynamic economy and society.

Even as this crisis deepens and rural reality changes rapidly, the human resources required to tackle these new and emerging challenges, as also the old unattended ones (like health and education) are missing in action. A review of all comparable rural management, development studies and social work programs shows that none of them appear to offer the multi-disciplinary understanding and skill-sets required by rapidly changing rural India and its primary stakeholders, whether they be farmers, governments, corporations or civil society organisations.

Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence (SNIOE) has, therefore, decided to launch a first-of-its-kind 2-year MA in Rural Management program, beginning September 2023. The aim of this multi-disciplinary program is to create a cadre of 21st century professionals, with a holistic understanding of the multifarious challenges of rural management.

What is unique about our program is that it will not only provide students with an in-depth multi-disciplinary understanding of the problems of rural India but it will also nurture their capacity to find innovative and far-reaching solutions. The program is based on a unique pedagogy, combining innovative class-room and studio teaching, with two full semesters devoted to field education, including internships with the very

best practitioners in rural India. All students will have mentors through and beyond the program. Another distinguishing feature of the program is that all its courses will not merely aim to build professional competencies but will pay equal attention to cultivating the necessary value-systems that develop compassionate human beings, with the capacity for deep listening and necessary sensitivities to the world-views of those they will be working with in future.

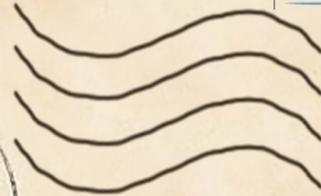
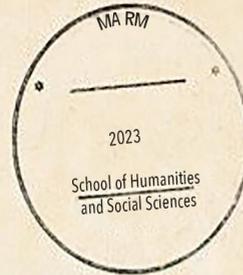
There are many talented young people in rural India who, with the appropriate training, can lead this dynamic, rapidly transforming region in the years to come. These are the professionals our program aims to create: gen-next innovators and creative leaders with the requisite understanding and skill-sets demanded by the emerging challenges and opportunities of rural India, which no other comparable program offers.

From the hundreds of applicants for this program, we have selected 46 students. We consider ourselves deeply fortunate that we have such an excellent first batch of students, who have the qualities of head and heart demanded by this program. We believe that their unique life experience, values and insights will make the classroom a powerful learning arena for all of us, students and teachers alike, and contribute to making SNIoE an even more vibrant university.

Many of these students have already been working in the remote areas of India, having dedicated their lives to the upliftment of those left out of the mainstream development process. These students represent the diverse richness of this country, coming as they do from across 12 States of India. 16 of them are women and 22 belong to India's neglected Adivasi communities. For us, these are the future leaders of our country, providing a new vision for participatory, sustainable and inclusive development based on an ethics of care, not only for India's deprived regions and communities, but also for the country and even for the planet as a whole.

We are thrilled to bring to you a brief introduction to these 46 pioneers.

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AKARSHIT KUMAR SINGH

Kechki

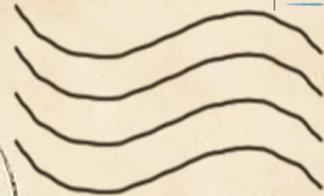
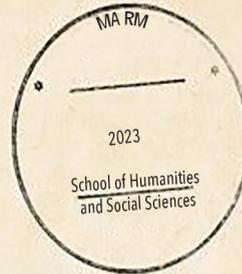
Jharkhand

The 22-year old Akarshit's sole aim in life is to work for the public and uplift his Adivasi society. Belonging to a small village called Kechki in Jharkhand, he managed to complete his bachelor's degree in History from GLA College Medininagar in 2022. Since then, he has been privately tutoring students who are interested in competitive exams such as SSC at his home. He was inspired to undertake this because of his maternal uncle, who also provides tuitions to students from the area. The tuitions are completely free of cost; however, over the months, the students volunteered to pay him a monthly fee.

Being from the Chero adivasi (ST) community, he understood early in his life that in order for the community to progress, higher education of the people was imperative. His provision of the free of cost tuitions is guided by such an aim. Besides, child marriage of girls is extremely prevalent in the area and amongst his community and he believes that only through education, such evil practices can be stopped.

Though a manual laborer, his father pushed him to go for higher education and never forced him to discontinue his studies and lend him a hand. Now, after completing his graduation, he wants to give back and uplift his community in whichever way possible. He sees his admission in the MA in Rural Management program in such a light - a tremendous learning opportunity. Using the skills acquired from this exposure, he plans to go back to his village and create more opportunities for the youth of the community. He also believes that his admission in the program would encourage many other young men and women from the community to aspire and work towards their goals. When not working, Akarshit loves to relax by playing cricket - in fact, he admits to being a big cricket enthusiast and hopes to find new friends in a city much bigger than and far away from Kechki, through a shared love for cricket.

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AKSHAY HABULAL DHIKAR

Amravati

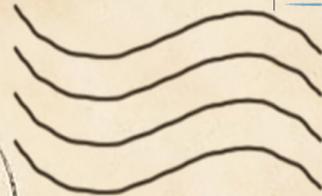
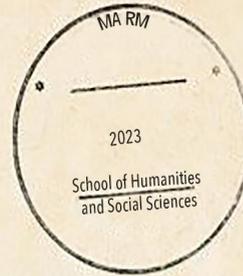
Maharashtra

Akshay Habulal Dhikar is a quiet and determined 22-year-old from Mehariaam, Amravati, Maharashtra. He belongs to the Korku Adivasi (ST) community. The Korku people, who belong to the Munda ethnic group, are primarily located in the districts of Khandwa, Burhanpur, Betul, and Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh. They also reside in the adjoining areas of Maharashtra, near the Melghat Tiger Reserve. The Melghat region boasts a rich cultural heritage and traditions such as tribal folk dances like the Tarpa dance and Gondhal. The traditional art forms often depict stories of nature, hunting, and village life. Akshay is especially proud of Melghat's calm atmosphere and the general tendency of people to help each other.

Akshay has done his BA in History, Politics, and Sociology from Amravati University and has completed one year of his Master's in Social Work from the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule College of Social Work, Yavatmal. He plans to complete his remaining year of the program after completing his master's degree in Rural Management at Shiv Nadar IoE.

Akshay is interested in the areas of education and health. When asked why, he replied that he has seen some trends in his areas that need attention such as a high dropout rate after completing the 12th grade which according to him defeats the purpose of getting an education. According to him, it's key that the youth of today pursue higher education, however, they are unaware of the existing options or are unable to afford the education. Akshay wishes to spread awareness by organizing workshops to spread awareness regarding the government schemes that help the young population pursue higher education. He also feels that social dynamics need to change to improve the status of girls' education. He has seen that a typical family does not value girls when compared to boys, they lack independence, and the mindset of considering them 'paraya dhan' (when daughters leave the house of their parents upon marriage) hinders any progress in improving their education status.

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AMBUJ CHATURVEDI

Azamgarh

Uttar Pradesh

Ambuj Chaturvedi hails from Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh. He has three elder sisters, and lives with his parents. His education prospects were limited due to financial constraints, leading him to work towards bringing positive change to rural communities. He pursued Commerce in his under-graduation and has been associated with the NGO Gramin Punarnirman Sansthan (Rural Transformation Society) (<https://gps-india.org/>) for the past three years. His ultimate dream is to work towards achieving 'gram swaraj'- the model for rural transformation advocated by Mahatma Gandhi for self-sustained and self-governing villages. Ambuj's work within the NGO involves various roles, including developing the Management Information System (MIS) for the organization, community mobilization, conducting baseline surveys, and raising awareness about government schemes.

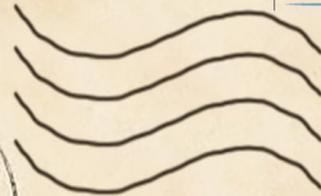
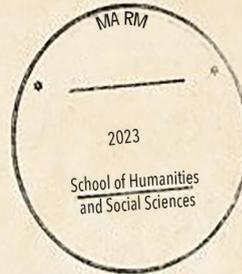
While he is actively engaged in multiple aspects of rural development, the issue of domestic violence against women deeply concerns him. He is determined to empower women economically, believing that this empowerment will enable them to resist violence in their lives. Through his experience in conducting meetings with women farmers to form farmer producer companies, Ambuj aspires to work towards improving the livelihoods of women. Ambuj is an expert in data management and can process large data sets in short span of time. He has recently completed a 5-day course in 'Environmental Data Analytics using R' conducted by the Azim Premji University.

His sincere and empathetic nature drives him to find joy in others' happiness and motivates him to serve others. He excels in connecting with people and enjoys meeting different individuals from various walks of life. Ambuj loves to travel, spend time with his father in their field supervising farming, and riding his bike. Ambuj is a dedicated and passionate individual committed to rural transformation and women's empowerment. His work in the NGO, along with his personal experiences and values, shapes his vision to contribute towards the development of gram swaraj and the betterment of women's lives in rural communities.

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AMIT ANIL DARSIMBE

Amravati

Maharashtra

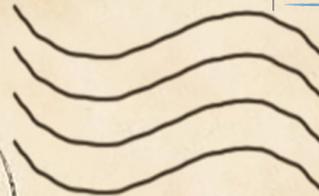
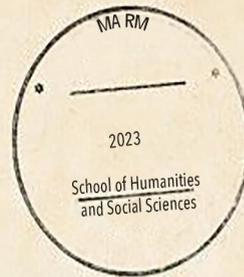
Amit comes from village Tingriya near Dharni town in the Melghat region of Amravati district, Maharashtra. He belongs to Korku (ST) community, a Munda ethnic group, found in western Madhya Pradesh and adjoining region of Maharashtra. The name 'Korku' comes from two terms 'Koro' and 'Ku' whereas 'Koro' means person and 'Ku' means alive. In the Melghat region, which spreads over the Satpura hills, Korkus have been the majority within the tribal population. Though endowed with bountiful forests and scenic beauty, the region has been infamous for chronic malnutrition, child mortality and debilitating destitution, due to persistent social and economic vulnerabilities.

In such a context with low literacy levels, Amit did his schooling in his village, BA in 2016 followed by an MA in Political Science in 2019 from Amravati University. Amit's mother is a home maker, father a long-distance truck driver who is away most of the time and he has a younger sister who is married. For the last one and a half years he has been working with Vikas Sahyog Sansthan, (<https://www.vspindia.org/>) a civil society organisation working in Maharashtra. His work involves working on disseminating awareness and facilitating access to government development schemes among the deprived and marginal communities living in this region that have been largely devoid of development opportunities over decades.

Of gentle disposition and a composed character, Amit is looked upon by friends and fellow colleagues as somebody who can lead them because of his abilities in logistic planning and taking initiatives. A good listener and of a friendly nature he is respected among the Korku community villages in the region. He likes Korku music and dance, especially the modern-day adaptations of a rich traditional Korku heritage of more than fourteen dance forms, choreographed with an elaborate ensemble of musical instruments and songs.

Amit wants to work towards spreading awareness on higher education in his region as he believes education is a powerful medium for individual and societal transformation.

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ANITA GOND

Bilaspur

Chhattisgarh

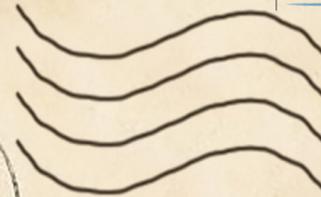
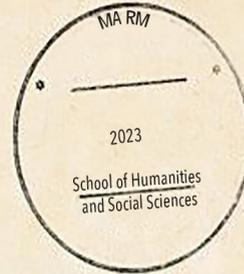
22-year-old Anita comes from a small village Birkona in the Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh. Anita is a Gond, one of India's largest Adivasi (ST) communities, with a population of over 13 million, spread across several states of central India, primarily MP, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. She is confident, energetic and has learned to be independent from a young age. Anita's parents are daily wage workers and she has four sisters and two brothers. After 9th grade, she was asked to not attend school anymore. Anita, however, was determined to learn. She has fully funded her own education ever since then and has been supporting herself and her younger sibling by providing private tuition. Now, she proudly holds a B.Sc degree in Microbiology which she completed in 2022.

Anita noticed in her district a dire situation relating to children and education. She saw the young population losing their ways and noticed they are struggling with smoking, alcohol, and behavioural problems. Therefore, in 2019, Anita co-founded the organization 'Aadiwasi Akshar Utthan Samiti' where she serves as a President. Her NGO focuses on children's overall well-being and academic success and pays special attention to the role played by mental health in it. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Anita's NGO offered free education to 150 children. Presently, they are also running free karate coaching.

Through her work in this organization, Anita has come to learn a great many skills including management and leadership of NGOs, mobilizing people, and collaborating with other organizations. Anita soon realized that women still face resistance from their families when joining such movements when she saw the female members dropping out of the NGO. After completing her Master's in Rural Management, she wishes to focus on providing training and education to children and women regarding agriculture and inspire them to formulate new plans and policies, all the while growing her NGO. In addition, she is interested in joining hands with the government for economic development, specifically by formulating a project to contribute to the National Children's Science Congress (NCSC).

Anita's family has supported her in being independent and her NGO work has made her understand the complexity of human relationships and the importance of empathy. She is also thankful to the principal of her school and her guide teacher at NCSC, Farhana Ali, who has supported and mentored her extensively.

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ARJUN CHAUHAN

Alirajpur

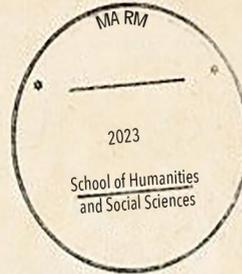
Madhya Pradesh

Arjun belongs to Bhilala Adivasi (ST) community of Alirajpur district in Madhya Pradesh. His father was a school teacher with less than an acre at their disposal. Dire straits did not result in dearth of parental motivation though. His mother has been an ASHA worker.

Arjun's higher education in the Mangalore University was funded by an NGO. Much of Arjun's interest in social work is focused on and around enabling education for the needy. He wants to facilitate the impoverished and the deprived to be literate, and also make personal sacrifices and contributions to raise funds for that purpose. In his own words, "I have started my savings at Rs. 1000 per month. Even before I joined the MP CM internship, I worked as a labourer and made my savings to fund my vision. It will take me several more years to accumulate a relatively large amount. But one day, it will come true. Today I earn only Rs. 8000 per month, yet I am managing to educate three girls—paying their fees, and providing some other facilities to them.

He is saddened by the lack of awareness regarding the government schemes amongst the villagers. He is determined to spread such awareness and help people secure what they deserve. That awareness itself is capable of being quite revolutionary, he believes.

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ATHRAM MARUTI

Asifabad

Telangana

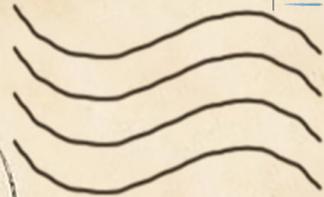
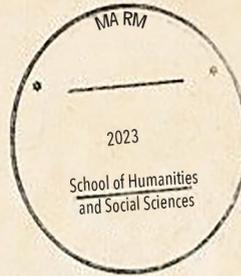
Athram Maruti comes from a village Samthulagundam in the Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district of the state of Telangana. He belongs to the Kolam Adivasi (ST) community whose habitats are mostly along hill-slopes and forests of north Telangana bordering Maharashtra. Kolams are considered as PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group) with high levels of deprivation and a declining or stagnant population. Kola signifies "stick" or "bamboo" in their language, hence Kolam name comes from the fact that they make wattles, baskets, & winnowing fans out of bamboo. The Kolam community people are tidy, soft spoken and ecologically sensitive.

Athram has done B Sc in Agriculture and has been working for the last one year with Centre for Collective Development, [<https://ccd.ngo/>], one of India's leading NGOs operating since 2003. He is a field officer responsible for facilitating community forest rights in 42 villages of Sirikonda mandal, Adilabad District. His work also involves mobilising community on collecting and marketing NTFP, millets and soyabean.

He lives with his mother in a modest house with a thatched roof deep inside the forest area. The two elder sisters are married and live nearby. Honesty and speaking upfront are his values. In the last one year, he has learnt a lot in terms of coordinating between people and Govt depts especially those responsible for Tribal Welfare, the art of negotiation, convincing and reaching consensus. He feels the PVTG communities need to be more aware, come out of their isolation and engage with the outside world. Athram has immense knowledge about the biodiversity of his region and wants to hone it further by keen observation and interacting with elders. He lives in nature and enjoys its beauty.

The Masters in Rural Management would give him an opportunity to improve his knowledge in areas he wants to dedicate himself to working further on, such as facilitating education and increasing awareness among PVTGs.

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BHARATI MARUTI NAITAM

Yavatmal

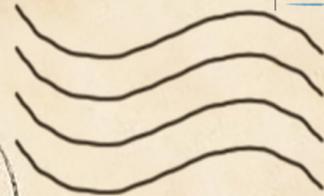
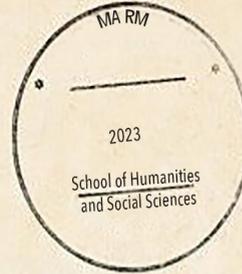
Maharashtra

Bharati comes from a village Swangi in Yavatmal district, Maharashtra. She belongs to the Gond Adivasi (ST) community. Among the tribals in India, Gonds stand out by their numbers, their internal differentiation, and vast territorial spread of their habitats (Madhya Pradesh and Telangana being the major regions). Traditionally they have been described as Raj Gonds, though in their own language they call themselves Koitur.

The family has no agricultural land of their own and depend on agriculture labour in the village and casual jobs in the nearby city. A person with a gentle and calm disposition, Bharati has two brothers who are vegetable vendors and a sister, who is a nurse in a private nursing home in Yavatmal town. Since childhood Bharati has been suffering from weak eye muscles that has affected her eyesight and she has also developed a slight squint in the left eye. But this has not deterred her from taking admission in an Ashram school meant for Adivasi children. She did her 12th standard from Anandwan that was set up by Baba Amte in 1949 with the hope of giving marginalised people a dignified life through self-reliance and restoring a sense of belonging in them [<https://anandwan.in/index.html>]. This was a turning point in Bharati's life as the inclusive and caring environs of Anandwan exposed her to other children with far greater physical disabilities than hers and yet were carrying on with life. It was at Anandwan that she met teachers who encouraged her to pursue a bachelor's degree in social work. Bharati likes writing diary and doing yoga exercises.

After finishing her Masters in Rural Management, she wants to work on counselling children from marginalised backgrounds to pursue higher education. Coming from Vidharba, a region reeling under persistent droughts and spate of farmer suicides, she wants to work with women farmers and agricultural labourers on restoring watersheds and encouraging them to practice natural farming.

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BIRENDRA KISKU

Hazaribagh

Jharkhand

24-year-old Birendra comes from Kasiyadh village in Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand. He belongs to the Santhal Adivasi (ST) community. Despite facing several hurdles, he successfully managed to complete his Bachelor's in Geography from St. Columbus College, Hazaribagh in 2022.

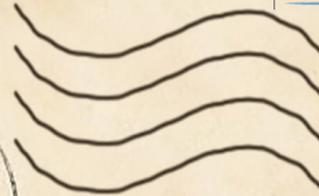
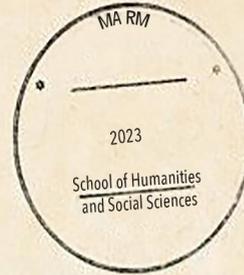
During college, he joined the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and got involved in its many activities such as visiting the villages in the district and conducting cleanliness drives along with making people aware about the importance of hygiene. Besides, he also received training regarding water harvesting techniques and he even conducted sessions on rainwater harvesting in his village prior to the arrival of monsoons. This was particularly helpful in a region that has been suffering from water shortage in recent years that has severely impacted farmers.

After his graduation, he has been involved in the activities of SUPPORT (Society for Upliftment of People with People's Organization & Rural Technology; <https://supportjharkhand.org/>) that works in the areas of Women Empowerment, Natural Resource Management, Livelihood provision, Education, etc. Being passionate about farming, Birendra has been taking care of one of SUPPORT's nurseries that is located next to his home and has learnt techniques such as flower grafting among others. He also helps in seed plantation in fields managed by SUPPORT, particularly during off-season. During monsoons, besides working on his own farm, he also provides his labor to other people's farms. Working with SUPPORT has made him learn about farming better along with knowledge about Watershed management techniques.

"There are too many problems with farming in our area. Animals like elephants destroy the fields, there is water shortage and what not. Hence, nobody now wants to do farming. But the joy of planting rice saplings in the monsoon - all working and singing together, I truly love that!" - was how Birendra expressed his love for farming.

Besides education, his region suffers from the challenge of rapid out-migration of young men due to unemployment. His own younger brother left his studies and migrated to work as a laborer in Mumbai. Through the MA in Rural Management program, he wishes to better his understanding on animal farming - the various requirements and techniques to start his own animal farm and start something promising in his own village. He believes that if successful, this would inspire other young men in his village to stay back and work for the development of their own area.

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DEBLAL MURMU

Bankura

West Bengal

Deblal comes from Simaldihi in Bankura district of West Bengal. He belongs to the Santhal Adivasi (ST) community. The Santhal community is largely concentrated in Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. With a population of over six million in India, the Santhals are the third largest Scheduled Tribe community in the country, after the Gonds and the Bhils.

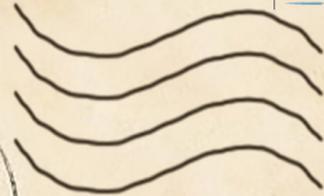
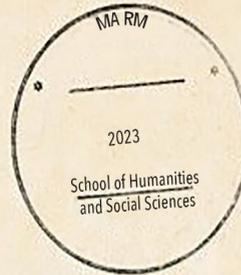
Deblal completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in 2011. He has worked with Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) West Bengal as a volunteer for some months. He is an alumnus of the 2018 3rd batch of Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation's (BRLF) [<https://www.brif.in/>] "Certificate Programme in Rural Livelihoods" (CPRL). Following the completion of CPRL, he worked in a NABARD funded project in Bankura district, with a focus on the horticulture WADI development and initiated backyard poultry and piggery ventures on his own land.

Deblal is ever ready to associate himself for a collective cause. This includes proper and timely implementation of MGNREGA in his region and leading the community for negotiations with GAIL company for adequate compensation for use of their agricultural lands for laying pipeline. Over the years, he has learnt that beyond this ability to mobilise community members, he needs to upgrade his knowledge, and equip oneself and the community on proper planning and execution of development programs.

Deblal is a social reformer at heart and has a deep yearning to relate to his roots and yet be in the modern world. Intensely passionate about the Santhali script "Ol Chiki" that has been recognised and placed in the 8th schedule of the Indian Constitution, Deblal has been composing poetry and short essays in his mother tongue. Most of his writings are aimed at sensitising the Santhal community about the drudgery and everyday tribulations associated with mindless rituals.

A passionate quest for social change and to undertake well informed and planned development interventions motivate him to pursue Masters in Rural Management at SNIoE.

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DEEPA THAKUR

Khargone

Madhya Pradesh

Deepa comes from Nagjhir, a village in Barwah block of Khargone district in the state of Madhya Pradesh. She belongs to the Bhilala Adivasi (ST) community that is mostly concentrated in the central region of Madhya Pradesh.

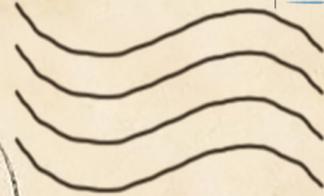
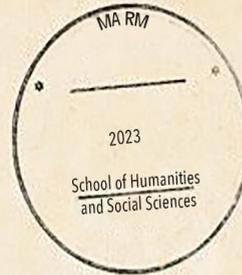
She has seven brothers and sisters, and she is the eldest sister. The family does not own land and has been working as farm labourers on other's fields in the region. Deepa has done her Graduation in 2017 and Masters in Social Work (MSW) in 2021. Since 2019 she has been working as a mitaan (SHG facilitator) in Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS) [<https://samajpragatisahayog.org/>], one of India's leading grass-roots NGOs, working on water and livelihood security. Her work involves managing 17 women SHGs in 6 villages.

Her thick rapport with more than 270 women members of these SHGs has given her lot of understanding about the challenges and issues faced by women, both in their social as well as economic empowerment. Having learnt to be a good listener, Deepa's proactive participation in her work has often been awarded with incentives and slowly she is being able to develop an integrated perspective on development work with communities, especially women.

Deepa is fond of swimming and sprinting. She is keen to learn and completing work on time are her unique qualities. Her steely determination to pursue Master in Rural Management from SNIoE has triumphed as she was able to convince her father after she broke her marriage engagement as her would-be in-laws were not supportive of this opportunity in Deepa's life.

After completing her Masters, Deepa wants to devote herself to facilitating opportunities for higher education, especially the new digital technology, to children, especially girls of her region.

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DHIRAJ SHIVDASIA

Mandsaur

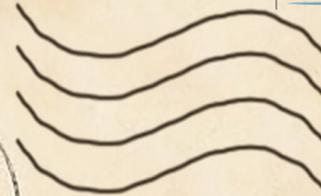
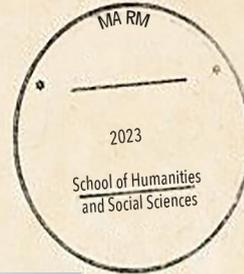
Madhya Pradesh

Dhiraj finished his Bachelor's in Computer Science from Government College, Mandsaur with a First Class in 2020. In college, he got deeply involved with the National Service Scheme (NSS), conducting camps and programmes surrounding voting awareness. In 2020, he took part in an online training workshop that dealt with the issue of providing psycho-social support to youth. The workshop was jointly conducted by NSS and UNICEF. His enthusiasm in that workshop opened up an internship opportunity for him that was jointly conducted by NSS, UNICEF and AAWAJ (a Bhopal based NGO). The Internship program dealt with the issue of 'Child Protection Awareness'. That program besides making him aware of child safety and security, also taught him vital skills such as writing slogans, performing street plays, etc. As part of the internship, they visited schools and colleges to spread awareness about child protection, while also forming their own groups to report any incident of child abuse, child marriage or child labor.

Having come from a background of lack and seeing various problems around him, his exposure and experience at the NSS taught him that things can be changed even at the individual level. This was an eye-opener for him and has acted as a guiding light for him to want to continue to work at the grassroots. He was particularly inspired when he met Rajendra Singh and learnt about his efforts on saving water and the results they brought. At present, his engagement as a 'Jan Seva Mitra' under the MP Chief Minister's Youth Internship Program has given him the opportunity to extensively work and understand rural people's challenges.

He is passionate to work on issues of children and the environment and sees the MA Program in Rural Management at SNIOE as an opportunity to further explore these issues. In his free-time, he loves reading books, particularly poetry and self-help books. One of his favourite author/poet is Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar'. He also loves playing cricket and badminton. Often, he would also help his family out in the field. As he says, "If I want to truly help the rural, knowledge of the field and farming is crucial, but I also enjoy farming".

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GANDHALI DESHMUKH

Aurangabad

Maharashtra

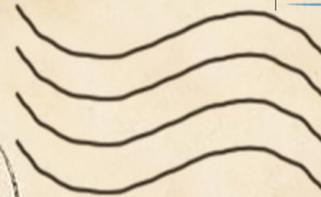
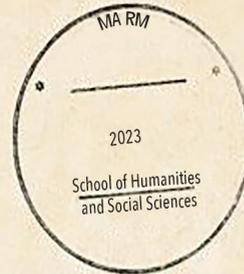
Gandhali Deshmukh is a dedicated and passionate individual from Pishor, Aurangabad, Maharashtra. She is the youngest among three sisters. Raised in her grandparents' home, she was influenced by her grandfather, a freedom fighter and social activist, and her grandmother, who were both teachers. Gandhali imbibed their values of using resources to better others' lives and helping the community.

After studying Sociology and Economics in her undergraduate, Gandhali joined the organization SEARCH in Gadchiroli and later moved to Science for Society Techno Service Pvt. Ltd. (S4S) (<https://s4stechnologies.com/>) in Aurangabad, where she worked for the last four years. S4S is a Solar Vegetable Dryer company that focuses on preserving perishable fruits and vegetables while providing employment opportunities to women in rural areas in collaboration with local NGOs. Through her work at S4S, Gandhali has been able to closely engage with rural and tribal communities, artisans, customers, and government officials.

Gandhali's primary mission has been to generate livelihood opportunities for families in rural villages and prevent out-migration of young individuals seeking work elsewhere. She takes pride in the fact that many families are now able to celebrate important occasions, like Diwali, at home in their villages due to the employment opportunities created by her efforts. Another significant concern that drives Gandhali is the lack of decision-making power for women in their own homes, where men often control the money earned by women. To address this issue, Gandhali conceptualized and implemented a model for women's entrepreneurship, aiming to empower women and keep families together by providing them with meaningful work options.

Apart from her professional pursuits, Gandhali is a people's person who enjoys connecting with others. During her leisure time, she engages in creative activities such as painting, journaling, and writing poetry in Marathi. Additionally, she finds joy in performing the Lavani dance, a traditional Marathi folk dance form. Gandhali is an inspiring individual whose commitment to women's empowerment and livelihood creation has made a positive impact in the lives of many in rural Maharashtra.

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HARIOM DHAKAD

Guna

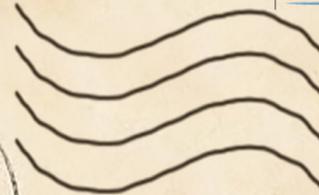
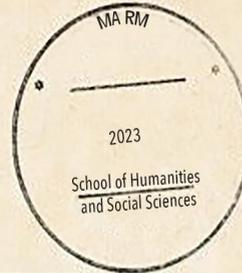
Madhya Pradesh

25-year-old Hariom comes from the small village of Shankarpura in the Guna district of Madhya Pradesh. His engagement with the society around him started when he was just 16 years old. It was primarily driven by his observation and consciousness of his family's and his village's decreasing agricultural productivity and income due to declining water levels and sources. He would visit people's homes to help them fill out forms for applying for ration cards or make them aware of any available farming schemes so that people could compensate for their declining farm income. He was also aware of the dire situation of education in his area but wanted to strive hard to attain a meaningful higher education to contribute to the betterment of his region. Fueled by such desire, he successfully finished his Bachelor's in Sociology in 2020 with a First Class from Govt. College Raghogarh, Guna (under Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University, Bhopal).

In 2020, once COVID hit, he joined the Corona Volunteers Group. His tasks included conducting awareness camps, assisting in vaccination drives and setting up health camps. It was his work during COVID that made him aware that surrounding Adivasi areas, mostly inhabited by the Bhil community, lacked a lot of basic facilities including health, education, electricity, etc. His current engagement as a 'Jan Seva Mitra' under the Chief Minister's Youth Internship Program requires him to help old people in various Gram Panchayats to timely receive their pensions.

For him, his various engagements with society have endowed him with a sense of tremendous satisfaction and that is all that he had been and plans to chase in the future. He mentioned his 70-year old neighbour Bholaram and his wife who lost their land to his brothers and now works as a shepherd to the Sarpanch's cows. He told me that the aged couple would often go for days without food and water. "I prepared their documents and struggled for days to get them benefits of the schemes and finally, I did! When I went to them to tell the good news, they were so happy! I think that is what has kept me inspired to work. You get money everywhere, but not satisfaction" – was how Hariom concluded the story.

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JULI BRAHMA

Chirang

Assam

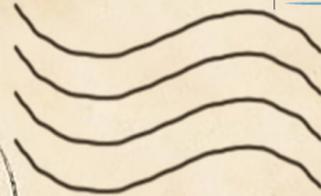
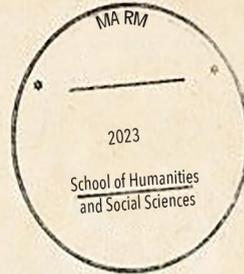
Juli Brahma hails from the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), an autonomous tribal region in Assam. She belongs to the Bodo Adivasi (ST) community. Bodos are the largest ethno-linguistic group in the state. Juli's parents are employed in the cultivation sector. Their earning is not much and, therefore, Juli has taken the responsibility of supporting them and her younger brother's education. She has completed her BA in Geography from Guwahati University. While volunteering at the ANT (the action northeast trust <https://theant.org/en/>), one of the leading civil society organisations in the north-east, Juli made up her mind to build a career in the development and social service sector, with a focus on education policy.

Julie has been working with the ANT since 2014 as an Education Executive. One of her first projects here was engaging the children of a village in alternative teaching methods and extra-curricular activities utilizing art, craft and play. She also remembers working at the youth parliament where she used to supervise their elections and the responsibilities elected leaders had to take up. Another project Juli fondly remembers is going from travel from school to school in a van filled with laboratory equipment for the students of her area to conduct scientific experiments. Juli was trained as a facilitator to help students build a scientific temperament, since schools lacked laboratory infrastructure and scientific concepts were taught only theoretically. Juli says she has "put her whole heart into working in the education projects at the ANT". She has been working with young children for over a decade now. She exclaims "I taught them when they were so small, now I see them pursuing higher education. I am so proud of them".

Juli embodies the optimistic young generation from the North-eastern region who believe in peace embedded in a multi-ethnic co-existence in a region that has been torn with ethnic conflict for last so many decades. After completing her Master's in Rural Management, Juli intends to work towards education and sustainable economic development in Bodoland. She wants to initiate a café-cum-traditional store and an e-commerce platform where crafts-people and artists from different ethnic groups can sell their products such as food, hand-woven clothes, and other traditional items. The café will also be a space where different generations of people can come together and exchange knowledge and ideas about diminishing local knowledge and skills.

In her free time, Juli likes to make sketches. She is thankful that her parents support her in all her endeavors and she feels blessed to have friends who have been supporting and guiding her throughout.

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KOMAL TRIPATHI

Shahdol

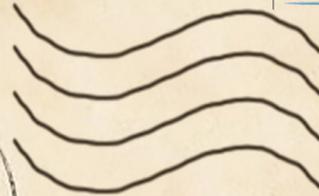
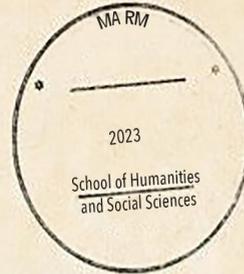
Madhya Pradesh

Komal comes from Shahdol district, which is part of a tribal dominated region in Madhya Pradesh. After completing her school education in her village, she has done BSc in Mathematics. She has worked for more than two years as a volunteer in local civil society organisations working for social and economic betterment of the marginalised. Be it voter awareness campaign or COVID relief, Komal has always taken the initiative to volunteer for the public good.

Komal has two brothers and her father has been working with a civil society organisation Vikas Samvad <https://vssmp.org/>. Her upbringing and close engagement with rural life has made her understand challenges and opportunities in village life. Over the years she has come to understand the importance of cultural traditions for connecting with people and has learnt folk songs, wall decoration art and mehndi etc. Komal is not only aesthetically sensitive, she is a vociferous proponent of equality for girls in every sphere and proper care of mothers and children. She feels very strongly about the need to stop early marriage of girls so that they can realize their full potential as human beings. Her strength is her ability to build good rapport with communities and upholding gender and social equality is most important for her.

Komal feels the most pernicious challenges faced by rural regions are acute malnutrition and declining productivity and returns from agriculture. Strengthening food and nutritional security at the household level is according to her an effective way to overcome malnutrition. Given the rising input costs and land degradation because of resource intensive chemicalised agriculture a shift needs to be made towards adopting natural farming. She feels that would also enhance the quality of food basket at the household level and consequently combat malnutrition. Looking forward for her Masters in Rural Management from SNU, she wants to make the most of it as she feels her online graduation was not wholesome enough. In future, Komal wants to work towards ending gender discrimination and contribute to betterment of quality of life in rural India.

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KRISHNA SHUKLA

Basti

Uttar Pradesh

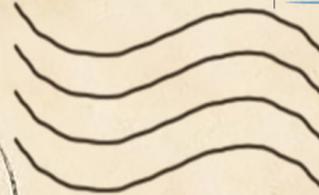
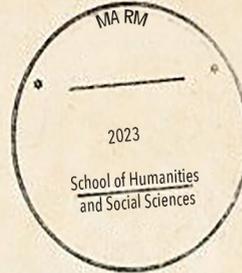
Krishna Shukla hails from Basti, Uttar Pradesh. He has done his undergraduate studies in Sociology, History and Political Science. He is the only child of his parents and is inspired by his uncle's leadership in the village panchayat which shows that he values community involvement and the impact of local leadership.

Krishna is particularly interested in working on the issue of women's empowerment. Through his efforts in motivating women to explore non-farm livelihood options, such as weaving and embroidery, Krishna has been promoting gender equality and economic empowerment among women in his village. Krishna's intervention in a domestic violence matter demonstrates his willingness to stand up against injustice and create awareness about critical issues that affect the well-being of women and families in his community. Krishna has also been motivating his fellow villagers to embrace better agricultural practices, which illustrates his capacity to become a catalyst in the domain of rural development.

He has worked towards improving the quality of school in his village, that has motivated families to send their children to school on a regular basis. He is an excellent communicator and mobilizer. Krishna's belief in the importance of family and the value of education highlights the faith he reposes in human relations and in the transformative power of education.

He believes in the innate equality of all human beings and envisions a world which is free from caste-based discrimination. Krishna is passionate about riding his bike which symbolizes his adventurous spirit and the drive to explore new dimensions in his life. Krishna is an inspiring individual who aspires to contribute to women's empowerment and promote equality and education. With his passion, dedication, and values, he can make a meaningful impact in his community and beyond.

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LEELU TIMS POTHEN

Kottayam

Kerala

Leelu Tims Pothen has an unconventional academic trajectory that is fueled by her passion to understand rural communities and youth culture and behaviour. In December 2022, she even conducted an independent survey to understand youth aspirations among young students (15-22 years old). A Syrian Christian from Kerala, Leelu completed her graduation in History from Jesus and Mary College, Delhi University in 2022. Rejecting a bank job, Leelu instead took up the position of an Intern with Gram Vikas (<https://www.gramvikas.org/>). Based in Odisha, Gram Vikas is one of India's leading NGOs in the field of rural drinking water and sanitation. It works with rural communities to strengthen rural institutions and mobilise community resources effectively. She recently finished work as an Assistant Consultant on a project that dealt with self-managed water systems.

Working with the organization, Leelu has gained the experience and understanding of the challenges that are faced by rural communities in contexts that are very different from her own. She believes that the best part of her work is the creation of this intimate space of interaction with people at the grassroots that has given her the opportunity to learn about many facets and stories of varied people.

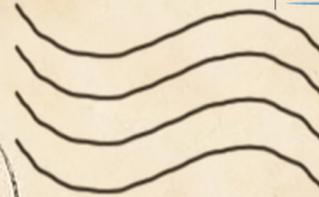
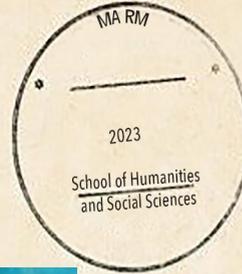
Coming from a family that is engaged and interested in trade and commerce (her family runs rambutan and cardamom plantations), her choices in life have been very different. However, those choices have been possible due to the support from her family.

Her purpose of joining the Masters program at SNIOE is driven by the idea of learning analytical, management and critical skills which will help her in her future journey of working as a development practitioner in grassroot organizations. She strongly believes that a diverse cohort of students in the classroom and the fieldwork orientation of the program will further expose her to the ground-level challenges and help her to collaboratively work towards practical solutions.

SHIV NADAR

INSTITUTION OF EMINENCE DEEMED TO BE
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MANDVI SHARMA

Khargone

Madhya Pradesh

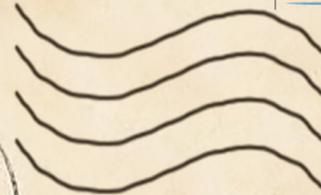
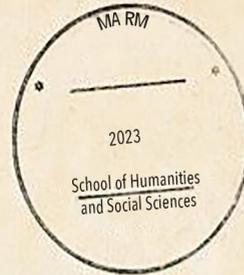
You will find Mandvi brimming with ideas, energy, and dreams. She comes from Katkut, Khargone, Madhya Pradesh, and belongs to the Sutar community. The Sutars are a traditional artisan community found in various parts of India, including Madhya Pradesh. Historically, Sutars have been involved in carpentry, wood-working, and construction-related activities, using their skills to craft furniture, doors, windows, and various wooden items.

Mandvi completed her B.Sc. from Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya (DAVV), Indore (formerly University of Indore) in 2023. Her mother is in the sewing business and her father is a farmer. She is only 22 years old and demonstrates commendable entrepreneurial and creative skills. She wishes to work in the education sector and environmental protection after completing her Master's in Rural Management. She combines her passion for science with her concern for the environment by designing eco-friendly scientific projects such as the one she brought at her interview at Shiv Nadar IoE that aimed to create petrol from plastic waste through pyrolysis. She mentions that she senses discriminatory behaviour in general against people belonging to the LGBTQIA+ group in India, therefore she wishes to advocate and promote their rights and equality.

Since 2022, Mandvi has been working as a school teacher taking English and Science classes for students from 5th to 8th grades. Mandvi loves to teach and has her own YouTube channel (@indianbiology3942) with 279 subscribers where she teaches Biology in addition to taking private tuition for science subjects. Mandvi has developed a business idea for creating sustainable scientific products and wishes to launch it soon. Mandvi asserts that there is a need to have conversations on mental health, especially for students going through stress for academic and personal reasons. She has experienced depression herself and wishes to convey that we must work to reduce pressure on students. Her mother and best friend stood by her and supported her in her depressive episode.

Mandvi's hobbies include sewing, upcycling old clothes and gardening. She loves arts & crafts and conversations on philosophy of education, technology, Mahabharat and the Bhagavad Gita.

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NEERAJ KUMRA

Adilabad

Telangana

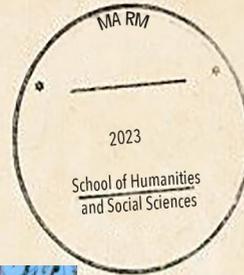
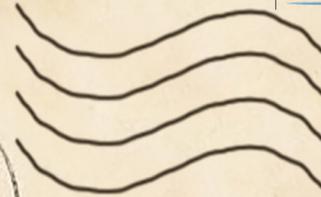
Neeraj comes from a village Gatepalli, 25 kms from Utnoor city in Adilabad district in Telangana state. He comes from the Gond Adivasi (ST) community that is one of the prominent tribal communities in Adilabad region. Among the tribals in India, Gonds stand out by their numbers, their internal differentiation, and vast territorial spread of their habitats (Madhya Pradesh and Telangana being the major regions). Traditionally they have been described as Raj Gonds, though in their own language they call themselves Koitur.

A person with a calm disposition, Neeraj studied in school at his village, did his BA from a college affiliated to Osmania University. It is in the college life that his first experiences of discrimination by the dominant communities made him realize the importance of working for the dignity and development of tribals. Earlier his father who got selected for an engineering job with the government had faced similar aspersions for being tribal.

Neeraj likes to be punctual and plan his daily routines. He is fond of reading stories and news of happenings around him. Although not associated with any organisation, out of his own initiative he has been visiting villages, interacting with villagers and trying to sense their lives. Neeraj feels empathy is important to understand the problems of tribal and rural communities and their way of life. In particular, he likes talking to tribal elders for tales, stories and nuggets of wisdom and then write it down for wider dissemination. Some of his recent writings are based on his learnings from a 70 year old woman about the multiple importance of the Mahua flower, interacting with a farmers group to learn about more than sixty indigenous varieties of jowar in the region to dissuade farmers from mono cropping, about the social enterprise of a womens' group, who has started poultry farming based on only traditional, healthy varieties.

Unscarred by experiences of discrimination, Neeraj continues to be composed and a believer in equality for all. His future vision is of working towards holistic tribal development and lessening the increasing gap between the rural and urban. Growth is important but he strongly feels that basic needs of all, especially tribal communities living in remote interiors should be fulfilled. Neeraj imagines building a career in rural development sector and leading a minimalist life.

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NEHA ROSE TOPPO

Ranchi

Jharkhand

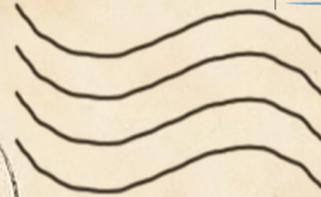
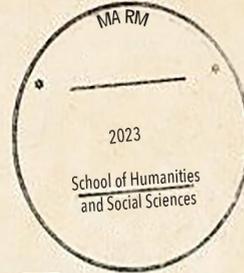
Neha comes from an economically deprived family in Ranchi. Her ancestors converted to Christianity in the early twentieth Century. She is the eldest of four sisters. She also had a brother who died very young due to kidney failure. The medical crisis added to the existing financial stress. Her father went jobless, when Neha was in the second standard, and she was compelled to drop-out from the private school. She took admission in a government school that was 50 kms away from her house. Her mother painstakingly pulled the family and somehow provided the expenses for her sisters' nursing-education from her small-scale snack-business. Neha herself funded her own mess-fees in college by playing the role of a mess-fee-collector.

Not so surprising that Neha is extremely committed towards the cause of empowering rural women. Her commitment towards gender-parity emerges from her own experiences and her awareness of how women are deprived of decision-making. Neha is a strong advocate of economic independence of women to enhance women's decision-making abilities. She believes that sustainable livelihood options with improved market linkages of agricultural and forest products can immensely benefit tribal areas. Neha is extremely vocal about judicious use of forest products in a scientific way to enhance yield and rural income. She has run awareness campaigns to ensure that tribals not receiving fair pricing, making sure that they are not cheated.

Neha Rose Toppo impresses you with her presence and communication-skills. After completing her graduation in Forestry from Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, she joined the social sector to facilitate sustainable livelihood amongst tribal people in Jharkhand. She has worked on a range of issues, such as Women's Empowerment through Agri-based Enterprises, Capacity Building for Enterprise Development, Livelihoods Promotion and Skill Development. She has a commendable experience of seven years and her initiatives have been awarded "Excellent Executive Award-2022" by the CM of Jharkhand. Despite her remarkable experience, she is keen to enhance her knowledge and skills on systems, methodology, techniques related to rural affairs. She is extremely motivated to join the Rural Management program and continue to stand with the deprived and the exploited, thereafter.

Neha is interested in indigenous crafts and spending time with kids in orphanages. She is making a big decision to travel to SNU for two years to pursue her masters despite being the mother of two one-and-a-half year old twins.

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NITESH KUMAR

Purnia

Bihar

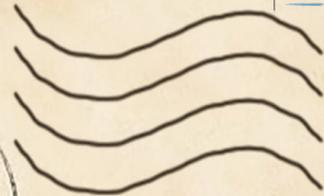
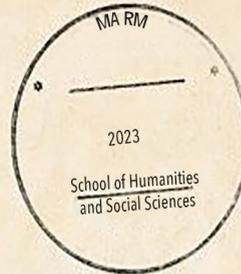
Nitesh Kumar comes from Purnia, Bihar, and belongs to the Amat community. Amat or Amath, a cultivating caste from Bihar, comprises a significant number of individuals who serve as personal attendants to higher and affluent Hindu families. This situation has given rise to the division of the caste into two sub-groups (pangats): Gharbait or "householders" and Bahiot or "bearers".

Nitesh completed his B.Sc in Physics from the Purnea University in 2022 and has been working as a School Mentor at SATHEE (Society for Advancement in Tribes, Health, Education, and Environment) since 2020. SATHEE focuses on socio-economic empowerment of tribes, OBCs and other socially and economically oppressed community including the women, children and other disadvantaged groups through their capacity building and ensuring provisions meant for them. Nitesh loves to work with children and he feels blessed to engage with children on a daily basis at his organization. He looks after the work of seven schools in his region where he ensures that children have a voice and their choices of ways to be educated are heard. He supports children by arranging for their needs such as lab equipment, new books, better services at the libraries, and play activities. He says "Teachers usually have a set pattern, they come to class, teach in the way they think is best, and leave. Someone needs to also listen to what children think of this way of teaching. How best can they learn?"

Nitesh feels passionate about working with children and wishes to provide them with quality education and infrastructure. He wishes to focus on the primary school students since according to him they require guidance and support the most among all age groups. He sees a lot of potential in this area and wishes to address the problems he has recognized in his region such as children who don't attend school and those who go to school but can't pay attention and don't learn anything substantial from the school. He has noticed absenteeism in children from low-income households every time they are needed regarding seasonal farming activities. Nitesh says that many schools have libraries that no one utilizes. He wants to equip them with services and books that can actually benefit students. Nitesh is of firm belief that teachers should have more understanding of the needs of the children and should adapt to their learning styles to deliver quality education. He wishes to keep working with children and focus on their education by reaching out to more schools and influencing children's education at an even higher level.

In his free time, Nitesh loves to play and watch cricket.

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PAVAN KALE

Yavatmal

Maharashtra

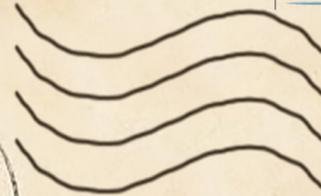
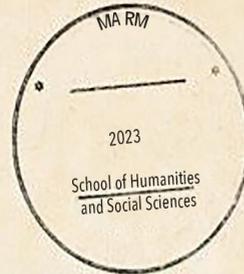
Pavan is from the Pando Adivasi (ST) community in Yavatmal, Maharashtra. He comes from a family of landless agrarian labourers. When he was selected for admission in a state sponsored hostel residency for the tribal youth in 2014, he came in contact with a bunch of social-work students. While studying at the Babaji Datye Kalaani Vanijya Mahavidhyalaya in Yavatmal, his interests in community work intensified. Fortunately, his family was very supportive of his zeal for higher education.

With an experience of over half-a-decade, Pavan has been associated with a wide array of community-work in and around Yavatmal. He began his career as a volunteer in the Pani Foundation, and he spent considerable time in water-conservation projects. He is not only the recipient of Gandhi Fellowship in 2021, but he also encouraged his fellow students to apply for it. The fellowship, aims at developing leadership skills of young professionals.

Pavan has taken up the responsibility to identify, assess, and find local solutions to the issues pertaining to education, health and water. Along with these wide-ranging issues, Pavan also wants to contribute towards the implementation and strengthening of government policies at the panchayat-level.

Pavan is confident of his communication skills. He prides over his convincing and sharp listening skills. Pavan likes to travel to various parts of his neighbouring villages with a strong problem-solving intent.

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PRASANTA KUMAR SAHU

Angul

Odisha

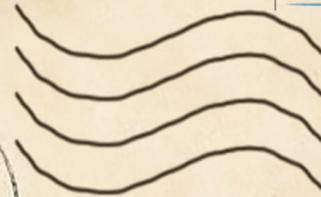
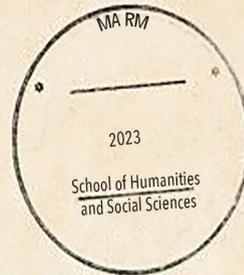
Prasanta Kumar Sahu hails from Angul, Odisha, and belongs to the Chasa community. Historically, Chasas were primarily involved in cultivation, but they have since diversified into various occupations. The Odia word chasa means farmer. They are the third largest caste by population in Odisha. The Chasa community plays a significant role in the agrarian economy of the region. They have their cultural practices and customs contributing to the cultural diversity of Odisha while sustaining their livelihood through agriculture.

Prasanta completed his BA in Political Science from Utkal University in 2018. He has gone through training on groundwater management conducted at Advanced Center for Water Resources Development and Management (ACWADAM), Pune. Prior to his bachelor's, he used to work at a water and soil testing lab. He had previously noted the grave concern regarding water in his area. He recalls having the closest water source at a distance of 1 kilometer and the sight of a dried-up dug well nearby.

Prasanta volunteered at Gram Vikas (<https://www.gramvikas.org/>), one of India's leading NGOs in the field of rural drinking water and sanitation in 2018 and joined them in 2019 as Supervisor. He was eventually promoted as Field Expert in the Gram Vikas' Water Source Sustainability (WSS) programme, where he is now a Thematic Coordinator. He works on several interesting projects in the water source sustainability area. One of those projects is called the 'water passbook'. In this, Prasanta works to measure the water sources and survey aquifer boundaries in the area. The project enables measurement of the precipitation, how much the water level increased due to it, and how much water was consumed by the people. Another interesting task he carried out was the plantation of trees that bear fruits in the watershed catchment area as part of the forestry and agroforestry practices. This was to rejuvenate the soil and improve the groundwater levels. Currently, he is engaged in the pre-monsoon and post-monsoon surveys of water points in the area.

You will find Prasanta to be an enthusiastic, talkative, and cheerful person. He wakes up excited every day to go to work where he receives new projects and gets to know about new technology. Prasanta loves to play cricket and watch Telugu cinema dubbed in Hindi. He likes reading Ramayana and Shiva Purana.

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PRIYANKA YADAV

Ballia

Uttar Pradesh

Priyanka comes from a family of four sisters in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh. Her father, deceased a decade ago, was a farmer, who had a keen interest in social work at the village-level. This seems to be Priyanka's inspiration and also her entry point into social work. She was quite eager and motivated as an adolescent to help others and to resist injustice in her immediate surroundings.

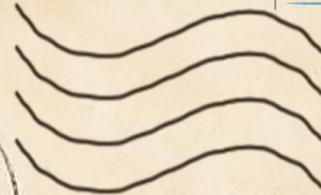
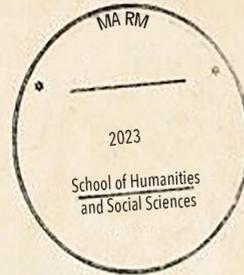
Overcoming severe financial and social barriers, she now holds a master's degree and is also NET qualified. A society obsessed with merit and ultimate outcomes, often forgets decade-long struggles that remain hidden behind success-narratives. Priyanka, like so many other villagers in this country—had to walk for several kilometres to reach school. Later in college, she used to cover a distance of 13kms every day on cycle. To attend examinations in the morning, she had to start quite early on an empty stomach. She self-funded her higher education by giving tuitions.

Priyanka has over eight years of experience in the social sector. Her role as a Volunteer in the Society for Promotion of Educational and Environmental Development (SPEED)—has seen her passionately work towards training and capacity building amongst women. She is an avid promoter of constitutional values amongst young women in the rural areas. Besides running SPEED's library in her village, she is also deeply invested towards environmental protection and organises 'plantation drives' in her village. She often speaks up against harassment faced by women. She also does not shy away from describing an incident of harassment, when she was personally attacked, and how she chose not to remain silent about it.

Priyanka shared three fascinating examples of her bold initiatives that made a huge difference in the lives of the victims. When a newly-married man was shot dead in Arra district, his young wife wanted to commit suicide while pleading for justice. Priyanka reminded her "uske liye apko jina padega", and helped her with all the legal procedures. There was an alcoholic husband, who used to perennially assault his wife. Priyanka convinced her to gather proofs of those injuries, and thereafter launch police-complaints, and build social pressure to prevent such misdeeds. Later, she also helped the woman to become self-reliant. In another horrendous incident, a chemistry professor made attempts to slow-poison his wife with chemicals, while having an affair. Priyanka's interventions over one and a half years ensured a stop to such a horrific act.

Priyanka also specializes in making murabba, jelebis and other snacks and trains others in it. She likes spending time with village kids, planting trees, reading novels, and listening to music.

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RADHAMA KHILLO

Koraput

Odisha

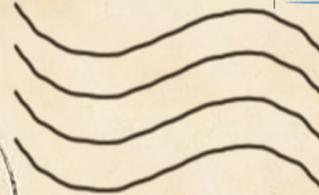
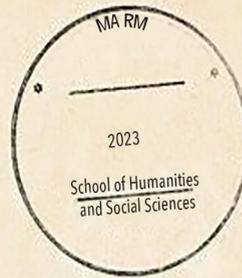
Radhama Khillo is from Pottangi, Koraput district of Odisha, and comes from the Ollar Gadaba Adivasi (ST) community. The Ollar Gadaba is an Adivasi community primarily found mainly in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Traditionally, the Ollar Gadaba people have been a predominantly agrarian community, relying on subsistence farming. They also engage in activities such as hunting, fishing, and gathering forest products. They are well known for their tribal dance, the Dhemsa. Since the early 1980s, the Gadabas have experienced significant displacement from their villages due to the construction of hydro-electric dams and the subsequent formation of lakes.

Radhama completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Behrampur University in 2021. She loves animals and has been working as a Prani Mitra with the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) (<https://www.fes.org.in/>), a leading national civil society organization. She works to ensure that animals are vaccinated and meets with women working in the area to empower them. Mobilizing the community for accessing government schemes and facilities for better upkeep of cattle, goats, and poultry gives her the satisfaction of contributing to the development of local communities.

Determined to pursue the Master's in Rural Management, Radhama courageously stepped out of her region and traveled for the first time on a train to come for the interview at Shiv Nadar IoE. A gentle person with a firm demeanour she wants to continue engaging with challenges of development in a region that has seen chronic poverty and acute malnutrition among tribal communities. She feels the MA in Rural Management would equip her better to work towards gender equality, transparency, and accountability and inspire women and girls from the tribal community to take up opportunities for higher education.

Radhama loves to sing. She is grateful for all the guidance and support she has received from her father. She fondly mentions how he used to drop her at school when she was young and didn't want to attend school. His efforts developed an interest in learning in Radhama. He also encourages and supports all of Radhama's dreams.

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RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA

Mandsaur

Madhya Pradesh

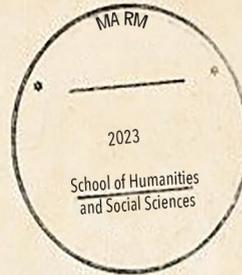
Rajendra Kumar Sharma is from an agrarian family in Mandsaur district in Madhya Pradesh. He holds a masters degree in social work. He is engaged with the CM's Youth Internship Programme as Jan Sewa Mitra. He has lived among people in the village to understand their problem and is keen to find solutions.

Rajendra is deeply concerned about the rural-urban divide. The rural is lagging behind and facing some of the most rudimentary problems of subsistence and survival. He thinks, it is important to build a learning environment in the villages and provide amenities and opportunities of learning and growth. He also acknowledges the need for supplying specific agricultural knowledge and expertise for youth to contribute to rural development.

Rajendra wants to encourage small scale enterprise as a viable earning avenue to generate rural employment, so that the rural youth do not have to go to cities for work. He also calls for policy awareness and implementation, and panchayat efficiency. He envisions to make a drain to divert the water flowing into his village from the nearby hilly terrain.

He likes to play cricket to keep himself fit.

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RAJESH RAGHUWANSHI

Hosangabad

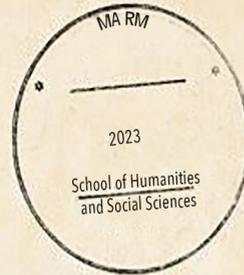
Madhya Pradesh

33-year-old Rajesh comes from Rahatawada village in the Hosangabad district of Madhya Pradesh. Rajesh is deeply passionate about farming. He completed his Bachelor's in Agriculture from Brijlal Prajapati Institute in 2013 with the aim of staying in his village and helping to improve the condition of farming in his area. He categorically was against working in corporates as he believed that agro-companies never genuinely cared for the farmers and instead were doing more harm to their interests.

He joined the Green Foundation (<https://greenfoundation.in/>) around 2017 and the organization provided him the platform to work with farmers. He has been providing advice and support to the farmers while making them aware of healthy cropping techniques, better marketing of their produce etc. At present, he is working towards promoting natural farming. He, along with others in the organization, have successfully managed to set up a 'Seed Bank' of mostly indigenous/traditional seeds. He has been encouraging farmers to adopt mixed and multiple cropping cycles. He called one of these cycles as 'Satgajra' – a kind of mixed cropping technique wherein the farmer takes seven different types of crop seeds and sows them together in a particular cropping cycle. Such mixed cropping cycles not only increase productivity but also improve the health of the soil. Besides promoting mixed cropping cycles, he has been actively working with women Self Help Groups who have been encouraged to take up natural farming.

Rajesh is an experienced and a dedicated worker of the organization, who is also a loving father of two young children. In his free-time, he loves playing cricket with his children. Through the MA in Rural Management program, he wishes to learn skills of report writing, writing funding applications, understanding the process of applying for grants, along with managerial skills. After the completion of the course, he wishes to continue working with Green Foundation, an organization where he has already contributed six years of his life.

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RISHABH UPADHYAY

Varanasi

Uttar Pradesh

Rishabh's family is based out of Varanasi. His father worked in a private electrical company. Rishabh's entry into the social sector has been facilitated by his elder brother, who has his own NGO. Increasingly, Rishabh got attracted towards social-work due to the social responsibility it involves and also due to the social respect that it attracts.

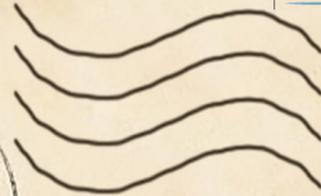
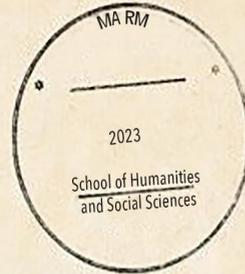
One of Rishabh's early engagement was the sanitary renovation of Kasturba Gandhi Chhatravas. For the last two years, he has been working with WaterAid (<https://www.wateraid.org/in/>), where he works as a cluster coordinator in Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM). Earlier he was with National Institute of Women, Child and Youth Development (NIWCYD) (<https://www.niwcyd.org/>), where he was a technical supervisor for sanitation, and rainwater water management.

He has played a crucial role in the installation of Monoblock Pumps in Pithampur, Madhya Pradesh. He and his organization mobilized several villages to repair and reconstruct septic tanks. In a span of two years, they have reconstructed over hundred defective or damaged tanks. He has worked very closely with mohalla samitis to prevent polluted-water-contamination.

Rishabh is also a great advocate for constructing treatment plants to convert solid waste into manures. His efforts have been recognized by the local MLA. Rishabh firmly believes that good leadership is not just about making speeches and gaining prominence, but it is primarily about following the right processes with integrity, while executing an action-plan. Rishabh can vouch for the fact that each of the construction under his supervision will earn a green chit in the audits.

Rishabh keeps interest in cricket, and is convinced that the next two years at SNU will further enhance his enthusiasm and commitment for social work.

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ROJALIN PANGI

Koraput

Odisha

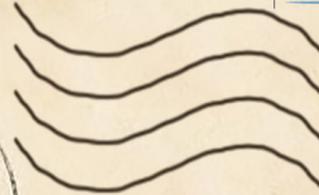
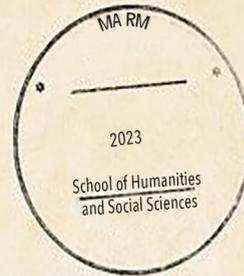
Rojalin comes from Kandha Adivasi (ST) community from Koraput district in Odisha. Kandha is derived from the Telugu word Konda meaning hill, and the community are originally hill dwellers. The Kandhas mainly come from Rayagada, Kondhamal, Kalahandi and Koraput districts of Odisha. Rojalin has two other sisters, and they both work in an NGO. Her parents go to a brick kiln of Andhra Pradesh as migrant workers.

Rojalin has recently completed her graduation from Berhampur University. Soon after graduation, she started working as a Community Resource Person in her village panchayat with one of India's leading civil society organisations. Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) (<https://www.fes.org.in/>). She has done community work even while pursuing her higher education. She has experience of over six years.

She has played a crucial role in mobilizing villagers to procure MGNREGA job cards, pensions cards, and also helped illiterate and old villagers to fill up the necessary forms. She is good at organizing Mahila Sabhas and bringing women out of their home. But that is not an easy task, as she realises. It often meets stiff resistance from the men in the household. Rojalin sounded confident with her abilities to convince. However, she is well aware of the fact that while women and men are supposedly equal in today's world, women are paid less wages than men. Women are also ignored during decision-making—both in the private and in the public realm. She would like to work towards making women's voices heard, and she calls for women's reservation in every field.

She takes special interest in teaching village kids.

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ROSHAN PATIL

Chhindwara

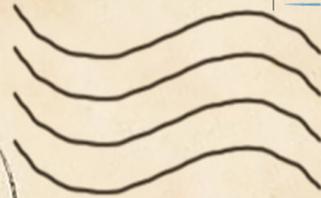
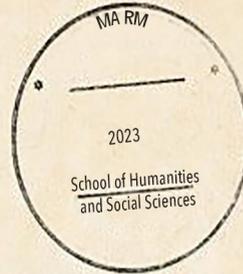
Madhya Pradesh

Roshan Patil's journey is deeply rooted in his family's sacrifice and determination to provide him with an education, which has shaped his aspirations and passion for rural transformation. Coming from an agricultural background, Roshan values education and sees it as a pathway to empower people in rural areas like his village, Raybasa in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh. He completed his undergraduate degree in Agriculture from Agra and has been associated with Vrutti (a farmers' producer company) (<http://vruttiimpactcatalysts.org>) and GREEN Foundation (<http://greenfoundation.in>) for the last 8 years.

Roshan critiques the way education has been reduced to being only an instrument to fetch government jobs, and instead advocates for an education that teaches people to live with purpose and meaning. His encounter with his parents' and elder brother's hidden struggles and aspirations instilled in him a desire to make a difference in the lives of others. Roshan's dream revolves around creating models for rural development, particularly focusing on the empowerment of the Adivasis, who he believes lack representation and power to better their lives. He envisions fostering leadership among Adivasi and rural youth so that they can advocate for their rights on their own terms, creating 1000 Adivasi leaders during his lifetime. Roshan's ability to connect with people, address large gatherings effectively, and engage them on matters related to various dimensions of life, gives him a platform to influence and inspire others. He believes in the transformative power of education and political empowerment, recognizing that these are vital prerequisites for the genuine development of the majority in rural areas.

Meditation, particularly Vipassana, is an essential aspect of Roshan's life, which helps him stay grounded, focused, and mindful of his purpose. He looks up to visionaries like Babasaheb Ambedkar, who worked tirelessly for the betterment of the underprivileged masses and draws inspiration from Mr. Pramel Gupta of GREEN Foundation- someone who has made significant strides in the field of rural development and sustainability. He likes meeting and connecting with people and enjoys watching period films and historical fiction. Roshan's journey is characterized by his determination to create positive change, particularly by empowering Adivasi youth and advocating for rural development, education, and economic empowerment. Through leadership and social engagement, he aims to bring about meaningful transformations in his village and beyond.

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SACHIN SUNIL ATRAM

Chandrapur

Maharashtra

Sachin is from Panchgaon in Chandrapur district, Maharashtra. He belongs to the Madia Gond Adivasi (ST) community, one of the endogamous Gond tribes living in Chandrapur and Gadchiroli Districts of Maharashtra and the Bastar division in Chhattisgarh.

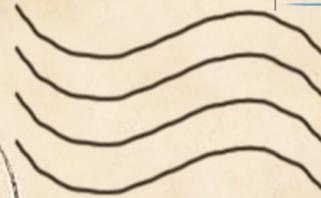
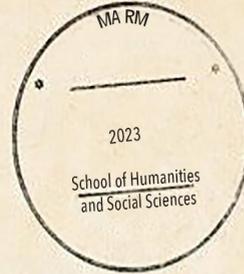
Schooling in an Ashram school helped him come out of the isolation most of his community lives in. He has done his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 2020.

Apart from the formal education, Sachin is a self-learner and has been keenly interested in the history and rich heritage of the Gond people and cultural traditions of the Gondwana region, comprising eastern Vidarbha in Maharashtra and adjacent parts of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, often considered to be the region of origin of Gond tribe. He has been actively associated with groups like Gondwana Jongham Samiti that works for fostering awareness and revival of cultural traditions, including the Gondi language. He is also actively participating in public forums and spaces that celebrate the intangible cultural heritage and identity of indigenous people. Sachin lives in a joint family with his uncles and grandfather and helping people come together for collective causes has been his passion and an important value he has inherited from his elders.

The collective efforts of tribals made Panchgaon the second village in Maharashtra to be granted Community Forest Rights (CFR) in June 2012. Since then, they have been collectively working towards conservation of the forest. Sachin has been associated with organisations like ATREE <https://www.atree.org/> a non-profit organisation working on policy and practice towards conservation and sustainability. As an important community resource person, he has travelled to forest areas of Chhattisgarh and Telangana to facilitate community forest conservation and claiming of entitlements.

After pursuing his Masters in Rural Management, Sachin wants to commit himself to working with tribals from the Bastar region in Chhattisgarh, with whom he has developed close affinity over the last few years.

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SAMARTH NAUDIYAL

Delhi

Samarth is a remarkable person with a compassionate and empathetic nature. He hails from Uttarakhand and grew up in Delhi. His upbringing in Delhi and his exposure to different realities have shaped his perspective and inspired him to make a positive impact on the lives of less fortunate people. His gratitude for his parents' hard work and guidance reflects his strong sense of humility.

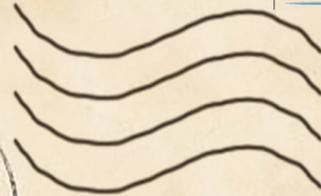
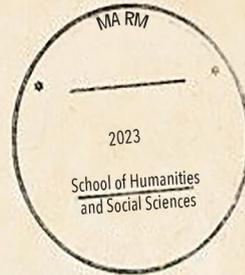
Samarth completed his undergraduate studies in Political Science from Delhi University and obtained a B.Ed. degree from IP University. He has developed a robust educational background, which can serve as a strong foundation for his aspirations to create change. He values education immensely and aims to improve its quality in rural areas.

Samarth's admiration for his father, who achieved success despite humble beginnings, has played a significant role in shaping his values and work ethic. He is concerned about the disparities between metropolitan regions and rural areas, which shows his social consciousness and willingness to address social problems.

An excellent communicator, Samarth's ability to connect with people will be crucial in his endeavours to create livelihood opportunities and empower communities in rural areas. He is curious and eager-to-learn, which will help him adapt to new challenges and seek innovative solutions. Samarth's love for motivational books indicates that he seeks inspiration and wisdom from others' experiences, which can help him work towards his goals, while keeping a realistic approach. By combining his dreams with hard work and pragmatism, he will be able to make meaningful strides in his journey.

Samarth has the potential to make a significant positive impact on society. His focus on improving education, livelihood, and access to healthcare in rural areas reflects his genuine commitment to creating a more equitable and empowered world.

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SAMEER ANIL KALE

Ahmednagar

Maharashtra

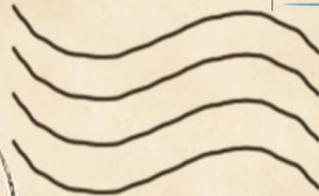
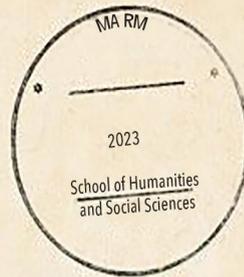
Sameer comes from a hamlet in Koutha village, Shrigonda tehsil of Ahmednagar district. He belongs to the Pardhi Adivasi (ST) community, literally meaning 'hunters'. The Pardhis claim their roots to the hinterlands of the central Indian jungles that date back thousands of years. Once considered children of the forests, they were branded as criminal tribes by the British in the 1871 Act. Though the Act was repealed by Government of India in 1952, the stigma of being treated as habitual offenders persists and the community is routinely subjected to harassment at the hands of the police and ostracization by mainstream society.

Living in camps outside village limits, the Pardhis are an itinerant community always on the move in small- to mid-sized groups carrying with them essential items of daily needs – cattle, goats, hens and plastic sheets on bamboo poles to make their temporary homes. Often the victim of police atrocities and societal abuse, and with almost no access to food security, water, and healthcare, the tribe is in a precarious situation, risking malnutrition and disease.

Sameer has three brothers and three sisters, and he is the eldest. Traditionally his family has been brewing and selling liquor, collecting honey, tamarind, seasonal fruit from the forest for eking out their living. His association with the Punarutthan Samarasta Gurukulam [<https://gurukulamonline.org/>], in Chinchwad, Pune, a residential hostel for children of the de-notified tribes has been life changing. Association with a pioneer like Girish Yashwant Prabhune, the man behind the Gurukulam, has given him a new direction and mission in life. Sameer completed his BE in Mechanical Engineering in 2021 but is committed to work towards socio-economic upliftment and dignity of his community.

He is intensely passionate about Pardhis and has translated the Marathi masterpiece Pardhi by Girish Prabhune into Pardhi language. He has extensively travelled in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Adilabad region to understand closely the plight of de-notified communities. Since last six months he has been coordinating a project aimed at training Pardhi youth in marketable industrial skills. This project being implemented by the Gurukulam with support from Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation (BRLF) has taken him to around 150 settlements of Pardhis in the Ahmednagar-Pune region. This has honed his skills in community counselling and collective mobilisation. Of cool disposition and patient demeanour, Sameer wants to continue working for the dignity and empowerment of de notified communities, especially Pardhis.

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SANGITA MAUHARI

Dindori

Madhya Pradesh

Sangita comes from a small village Kanchanpur in the Samnapur block of Dindori district, Madhya Pradesh. She did her B Tech with a specialization in Bio Engineering and has been working as a Block Coordinator in Chief Minister Youth Internship Program (CMYIP) for the past few months. The work involves making people aware of the different govt welfare schemes as well as facilitating access to them. She is leading a team of 15 members and works in 48 Gram panchayats. For her outstanding work she was awarded as the best janseva mitra by the District Collector.

A person of cheerful demeanour, awards are not new for her. Right through her education she has been awarded scholarships for her academic excellence. She topped the district in 12th and then after her B Tech got an excellent placement opportunity in Bangalore. Sangita even got selected in the prestigious Gandhi fellowship, Piramal Foundation. But she could not go for these opportunities as the family was not willing to part with Sangita.

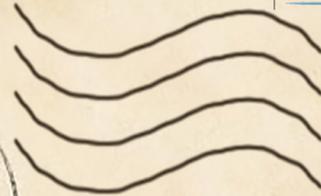
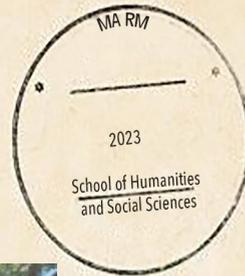
Sangita has a younger brother and her parents. Her father was a guest teacher and has no job for some years now and mother is a home maker. The family depends on small agricultural land for their subsistence. Sangita contributes to family incomes and financial support for studies of her younger brother. She is a responsible person who firmly believes in crafting one's own life journey through her hard work and natural talents she has been gifted with. A self-learner and a team worker Sangita has been working with her fellow student mates to write papers on molecular docking, novel portable devices for soil testing for STEM journal.

Inquisitive and ready to take up new things, despite coming from a non-tribal community, from childhood she has been attracted to Gond art and is quite proficient at doing wall painting, stone art and Digital art that she is currently perfecting. Her aesthetic sensibilities come natural to her and are honed by the beautiful and compassionate human being she is. Loved by her fellow girl student mates, who have all got married, she is a role model.

Sangita dreams of fostering a unique living space that would house working children, widow women and old age people who would help each other. The dream so eloquently represents the compassionate human being she is.

This opportunity of doing Master in Rural Management at SNIoE, to which her parents have finally agreed, would take Sangita in the wider world, a much-awaited journey that she is excited about and well-prepared for.

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SANJAY SINGH

Bilaspur

Chhattisgarh

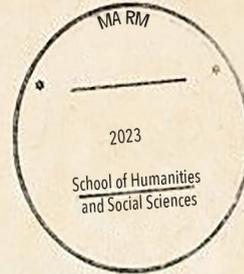
Sanjay belongs to the Gond Adivasi (ST) community and comes from Gerasa village in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh. He finished his bachelor's in Management Accounting from K.R. Technical College, Ambikapur in 2021 and is currently pursuing his M.Com. "I always wanted to work in the social sector and wanted to take up such a course but either the colleges in our area did not have such a course or I did not have any idea which course to pick up. Which is why the MA in Rural Management course excites me. I will finally be learning things that I have always wanted to!"

In 2019, he got involved with an NGO called Chaupal and worked with them with regards to provision of potable drinking water in every household as part of the 'Jal Jeevan Yojana'. His task was to survey the villages and conduct meetings making people aware of the scheme. In 2022, he joined 'Green Hub' (<https://www.greenhubindia.net/>), an NGO involved with environmental conservation through films. There he learnt the basics of camera and videography and assisted them in making documentaries. One of his memorable projects included visiting the village Khaira where they documented the story of the village's successful replenishment of groundwater.

One of the major challenges in the villages in the region is the growing depletion of forest cover. He noted how due to unemployment, villagers now cut down trees and sell the wood in the markets. This loss of vegetation has also impacted the animal population. Many animals and birds such as peacocks that were earlier found in the area in large numbers, are now no longer to be seen. Besides, the condition of education is extremely poor. Post COVID, it has become worse as the student drop-out rate has increased. Thus, he wants to use the opportunity of attaining a Masters in Rural Management from SNIoE to later open his own NGO in his village. He wants to work with the women and children in the villages to save the forests. Besides, he also wants to increase awareness regarding the importance of education and against alcoholism amongst his community members. He is equally keen on making a documentary about his region and his people so that people outside could see and understand the world and the challenges that his people have been facing. He is hoping that he can build on his documentary-making skills at SNIoE.

This 24-year old's future plans are fueled by the passion to bring change in his region and amongst his community instead of simply earning an income. In his free-time, he loves running and meeting new people and talking to them and learning from their experiences.

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SATYAM RAI

Ballia

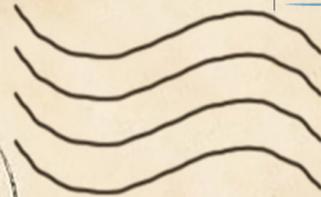
Uttar Pradesh

Satyam's journey of wanting to work for the betterment of society around him started when he was in the 8th standard. He was already a good speaker but the day his school teacher, Rampit Sir told him that 'speeches alone cannot change the world', it left a deep impression on him. He, along with his younger brother Shivam, started a small non-registered organization called, 'Bharatiya Yuva Sangathan' that conducted plantation drives and spread awareness in the surrounding villages about issues such as hygiene, environmental pollution, etc. They even started a local village library. He comes from the small village of Jamui in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh and has completed his bachelors from Sri Narheji PG College, Narhi in 2022.

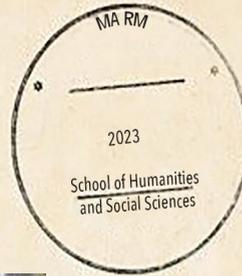
Besides environment, he is passionate about agriculture, particularly dairy farming. His working as an Assistant in the Veterinary Medical sector equipped him with the skillset to understand better about cows and dairy production. He admits to coming up with a dairy farming model that he has discussed with other young men interested in the sector. He believes that dairy farming could be a solution to the rampant out-migration of talented but unemployed young men from his village. He had even started a Youtube channel, 'Its reality', to spread information surrounding various political and agrarian issues.

In his free-time, he loves reading, listening and writing ghazals, shayaris, 'nazms' and some of his favourite shayars are Sarvat Hussain, Anis Mueen and Jaun Elia.

In the future, he wants to work in an organization that specializes in the sector of environment or farming. He wants to use that opportunity to gain the understanding and knowledge of running an organization professionally or the process of applying for funding, etc. This exposure, he believes, will be critical for him to later open his own organization in his village.



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SAURABH SHRIRAM MADAVI

Yavatmal

Maharashtra

Saurabh belongs to the Gond Adivasi (ST) community and is from Yavatmal, Maharashtra. Saurabh received his initial inspiration for social work from his sisters, who held degrees in Bachelors in Social Work. Coming from a family of landless farmers, he has always been keen to support his community.

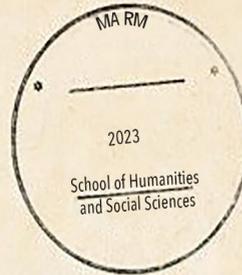
After finishing his initial schooling from his village, his real struggle began, when he had to travel 40 kilometres to the Yavatmal city—to pursue higher education. He received a post-metric scholarship of Rs 4000 and also worked part-time in a clinic to fund his under-graduate studies.

He has varied interests in social work. Though his primary areas of interest are health and education awareness, he has also worked towards helping women to train in the unorganized sector. He also has keen interest in issues related to forest-rights. He has adopted and enacted performative methods such as street plays to spread awareness. He along with his collaborators have organized local movements to inspire villagers to opt for higher education. He acknowledges that convincing parents plays a huge part in reducing school drop-outs. One of his other interests in social work branches towards making villagers more aware of the existing government policies, and to encourage them to make best use of it.

Saurabh is vehemently against the usage of heavy doses of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and happens to be a proponent of organic farming and mixed farming. Given the monopoly of Bt-cotton and Soya in the Vidharba region over the last two decades, he is well aware of the disastrous impacts of commercial mono-cropping, and its adverse impacts on soil fertility. He is also sensitive towards the issue of health and fodder for cattle.

Saurabh loves to roam in the forest and relish the greenery of forests and listening to chirping birds.

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SHIVAM MANKAR

Chhindwara

Madhya Pradesh

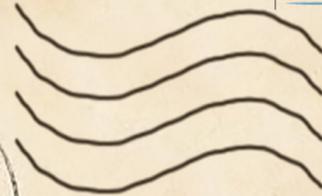
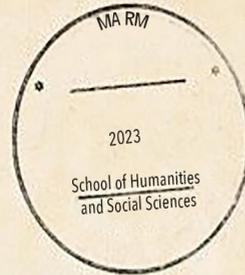
Shivam completed his bachelors in Mathematics from Government Autonomous Post Graduate College, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh in 2021. Though an ardent lover of literature, his interest in the social sector arose when he became involved in the activities of the Nehru Yuva Kendra. It was through the organisation's activities that he became acutely aware of the deplorable condition of women in the region.

At present he is working as a Block Coordinator as part of the Chief Minister's Youth Internship Program. This program has given him the opportunity to directly engage with the women in various villages and work towards their empowerment. One of his key responsibilities include increasing the participation of women in democratic spaces like the Panchayat and ensuring that women receive benefits of various government schemes. He has been actively working with women-led Self-Help Groups that have tremendously contributed in improving the financial condition of women in the region.

Shivam also loves debating, cycling and writing speeches. He is an avid reader and frequently goes back to reading novels such as 'Godaan', 'Maila Aanchal', etc. He confessed that every read always teaches him something new. He often reads the Mahabharata too and wishes to undertake research on the Epic itself. He believes that a serious study of the Epic will reveal many inter-connected histories of otherwise distant states and lands. "Did you know that one of Arjun's wife, Chitrangada was from Manipur? This only shows how we are all connected." He also enjoys cultural programs and, in the past, has participated in several plays that were performed in his village. In future, besides working on women's empowerment and issues, he wishes to promote the cultural activities of his region across the country so that the cultural identity of the people is protected, known and nourished.

The multi-disciplinary approach of the MA in Rural Management program excites Shivam, which he believes will not only hone his management skills but also teach him critical thinking skills. He will join the course with the aim of later working in the rural sector in his region.

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SHUBHI DUBEY

Ayodhya

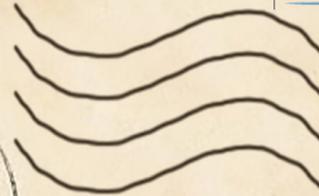
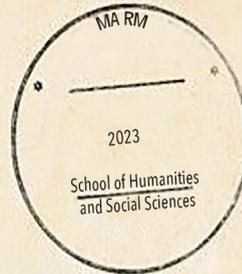
Uttar Pradesh

Shubhi Dubey is a determined and ambitious individual with a strong passion for education, social empowerment, and community development. Shubhi hails from Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. She has two sisters and one brother, and lives with her younger sister in Ayodhya to pursue higher education.

She received a scholarship in the 9th standard that led to her father's decision of sending her to Ayodhya for higher studies, reflecting her academic excellence and the value her family places on education. During her undergraduate studies, she had to undergo online education, which was not an ideal experience as it hindered her learning process. However, she found a silver lining in this situation, as it brought families together, highlighting her positive outlook and ability to find opportunities even in challenging circumstances. Shubhi draws inspiration from her mother, who served as a role model for her. Her mother worked in the same NGO as her father, where she was responsible for mobilizing women of the communities. She is inspired by her mother's commitment to her work in the NGO as well as to domestic responsibilities. Shubhi expresses gratitude for her mentor Mr. Shashi Bhushan Singh of SATHI (Supporting Association for Thematic and Holistic Initiatives) <http://sathiup.com>.

Shubhi's love for books and reading classical thinkers like Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and Karl Marx demonstrates her intellectual curiosity and interest in understanding society and its dynamics. On completion of her MA in Rural Management, she wants to work with women, focusing on both economic and social empowerment. Shubhi also wishes to make a difference in the domain of child rights, livelihoods, and education. She enjoys listening to music and often hums along, finding joy and relaxation in artistic pursuits. Shubhi is a driven and compassionate individual who values education and social empowerment. With her intellectual curiosity, admiration for classical thinkers, and commitment to work with people, Shubhi has the potential to become a catalyst for meaningful transformation in society.

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SUGAN MANDLOI

Dewas

Madhya Pradesh

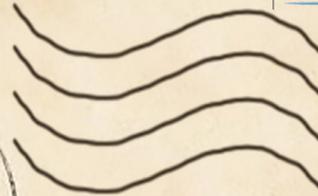
Sugan belongs to the Bhilala Adivasi (ST) community and comes from the Dewas district in Madhya Pradesh. She lives with her mother and has done her schooling in a government school. She lost her father at the young age of eight and her mother had to take care of five children. She always aspired to study further but due to financial constraints she took up a job in the small school in the village after her graduation to support her family. They have around 2 acres of land and they grow maize. Obviously, 2 acres is not sufficient to sustain any family so the family members have to work as labourers.

She has completed her BA in Education. As a teacher in the school she has gained experience in school administration. She likes to set examples and inspire others. She acknowledges that even though enrolment in school is promoted, but quality education is still a challenge. Parents should be encouraged to send their children to government schools. And for that it is important that its overall quality is upgraded. She thinks that government should introduce quarterly school ranking system at block and district level.

Sugan cites her mother as a motivator, who always wanted her daughter to study. This is her chance to fulfil her dream of studying further and fulfil her aspirations. These two years she wants to live for her dreams and give her best. This is her chance to create a better future for herself and improve the constraints and struggles of her family especially her mother. She wants to create impact at the grass-root level through local community based organisations. She wants to work on women empowerment through raising awareness through women collectives so that every woman has a voice and agency.

She likes teaching kids and does sewing for additional income.

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SUNNY KUJUR

Ranchi

Jharkhand

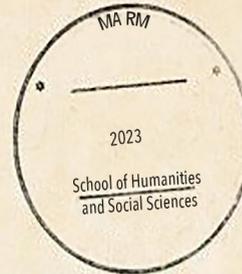
Sunny Kujur comes from Ranchi, Jharkhand. He belongs to the Oraon Adivasi (ST) community. The Oraons represent the largest and most influential indigenous group in Jharkhand with nearly 20 percent of the total population. The Oraon community has a vibrant and colorful cultural life. Traditionally, they have been agriculturists and have a strong connection to the land. Like other Adivasi communities, the Oraon people have faced various challenges, including land rights issues, displacement, and socio-economic disparities. The Oraon people also have a presence in neighboring states such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and West Bengal.

Sunny completed his Bachelor of arts in Geography from the Ranchi University in 2007 and since then he has worked in an array of projects and organizations. He worked as a mobilizer at Skill India where he connected with graduates of 10th grade and 12th grade youth to encourage them to attend this program that provided free education to their groups. Sunny also worked in Jharkhand surveying the impact of lakes on agricultural practices and productivity using Geotagging. His project found out that having a lake in proximity benefits the agricultural produce, farmers are able to diversify their crops and increase their net farm area.

Besides this, Sunny contributed in organizing the karma festival at the Central University of Jharkhand, a program that worships Nature. It featured the Karma dance, singing, and individuals sharing local knowledge and culture.

Sunny also takes tuition in all subjects for the children of 5th grade and below. He loves playing football and cricket and is thankful to his family for always supporting him.

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TAMANNA VERMA

Khargone

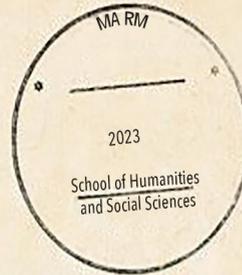
Madhya Pradesh

Tamanna Verma hails from Sanawad, Khargone, Madhya Pradesh. She is a passionate and determined individual who has dedicated herself to empowering girls and women in her area. She has two sisters and a brother, and her parents run a snack shop. With a Master's degree in Social Work, three years of work as a volunteer with Educate Girls and one year of experience as a 'Mitaan' at Samaj Pragati Sahayog (www.samajpragatisahayog.org), one of India's leading grass-roots NGOs, Tamanna has been at the forefront of social change.

Coming from the Kewat community, which traditionally consists of boatmen, Tamanna has defied societal norms and expectations. Despite the practice of early marriage in her community, she has stood firm at the age of 24, rejecting marriage proposals that did not align with her aspirations of higher education and a career. She has been able to persuade her parents to encourage her younger sister to pursue higher education as well. Tamanna's charisma and grit have made her a beacon of hope for girls and women in her area. She has actively encouraged families to value and support their daughters, breaking the apathy that often surrounds the girl child. Through her persuasive arguments, she even prevented a possible case of sex-selective abortion, demonstrating the power of her conviction. She is fearless and always stands up against injustice.

Tamanna enjoys watching motivational videos in her leisure time and motivates her younger siblings to excel in studies and make something of their lives. She excels in sports, having won awards in athletics at local tournaments. She runs errands riding her bike, which highlights her sense of responsibility as well as confidence. Tamanna's unwavering desire to learn and create positive change, her lived experiences, and resilience, make her an exceptional person to undertake the challenging work of social transformation.

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ग्रामीण जन को स्वरोजगार हेतु जागरूक



VIKAS RAI

Vidisha

Madhya Pradesh

Vikas comes from Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh. His father is a small contractor in the local brick kiln. He has always found himself drawn to social work. Much of his motivation comes from his early association with NCC and NSS. Even during his school, he had participated in and excelled at extra-curricular activities and trained himself in a disciplined life. He persistently uses the term 'seva bhav'.

He is a keen learner and is always drawn towards learning something new. He wants to do something impactful for the country. He believes the real change can be effected only through leveraging up development of rural India - which is the soul of the nation.

Masters in Rural Management at SNIOE will enable him to achieve his goals. With his experience in the social sector and with his degree in engineering, he will enrich the classroom with his technical and lived-experience.

Through his current involvement with MP CM's youth internship programme, he has worked with the state and district administration, and with village panchayats—promoting government programmes such as Ladli Behna, Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Ladli Laxmi Utsav, Har Ghar Nal across 40 villages through door to door campaign, and through community meetings. The experience was insightful for him in understanding rural problems and contexts better.

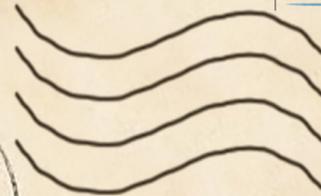
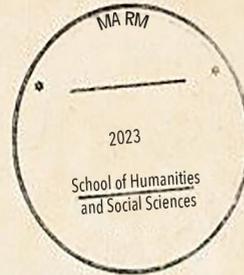
He credits himself for being able to mobilize tribals of his area about several government policies that they were not aware of—including the accident cover of 2.5 lakhs. He helped villagers to get and avail the facilities of the Ayushman card. He also enabled some villagers to avail small loans worth Rs 10,000 for setting up street carts for selling flowers and vegetables.

Vikas likes to debate and he has participated in the Youth Parliament held in Bhopal.

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VIPUL BHARDWAJ

Maharajganj

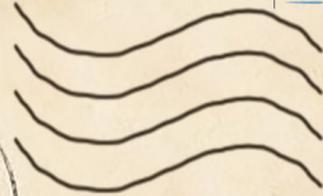
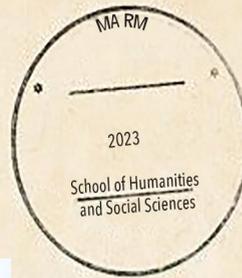
Uttar Pradesh

Vipul Bharadwaj hails from Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh, and is inspired by his father, who runs an NGO working on issues of HIV/AIDS and drug addiction. His elder sister's pursuit of an MSc in Mathematics and interest in teaching showcases a family that values education and giving back to society. Vipul nurtures a wide range of interests, including Yoga, Ayurveda, and Sanskrit language. He shares his knowledge and spreads awareness about these topics through his YouTube channel, indicating a passion for educating and empowering others. Vipul's involvement in Scouting and NCC has provided him with multiple opportunities to engage in social service and work closely with people. His active participation in post-disaster rescue and rehabilitation efforts, Covid-19 vaccination drives, and commitment to nurturing nature through tree planting on family birthdays further exemplifies his dedication to making a positive impact.

After completing the MA in Rural Management, Vipul dreams of carrying forward APJ Abdul Kalam's vision for India, with a focus on transforming villages. He wishes to pursue this by working on infrastructure, promoting girls' education, and addressing domestic violence. This shows his ambition to contribute to meaningful and holistic development. Vipul is a district-level yoga instructor, showcasing his expertise in this field. He is a creative and versatile person, and has participated in various cultural activities, such as theatre, singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments, including the Congo and flute. Vipul's travels to 21 states in India, as well as Bangladesh and Nepal, highlight his exposure to diverse cultures and regions. His interest in learning languages, including Telugu, Urdu, German, and French, reflects his passion to learn new things and connect with people from different backgrounds.

Vipul's project of assembling an LPG bike during 10th standard, which he showcased in institutions like IIT-BHU, demonstrates his innovative thinking and interest in engineering solutions. Vipul values honesty, commitment to work, and the spirit of teamwork, making him a reliable and responsible individual to collaborate with. Vipul's rich experiences, diverse talents, and strong values make him a remarkable individual with the potential to bring about positive change in various realms of society.

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VIVEK KUMAR GIRI

Ballia

Uttar Pradesh

Vivek finished his Masters in Genetics and Plant breeding from Jananayak Chandrasekhar University, Ballia in 2022, after which he has been engaged in the activities of Society for Promotion of Educational and Environmental Development (SPEED). He has been associated with SPEED's Ballia Office since February 2023 wherein he visits different villages and makes the farmers aware of issues such as crop cycles, natural farming etc. Till now, he has worked in villages such as Nidhariya, Chhorahar, Hathouj and Paharpur. He wants to bring his academic training in agriculture to bring back and support traditional farming practices such as crop rotation for better productivity and income of farmers.

Coming from a family of farmers, he wants to work in the field of agriculture, particularly surrounding issues of lack of proper markets, transportation, etc. He also believes that poor farming techniques and severe dependence on chemicals as pesticides have made land in his area unproductive that has increased land conflicts. In the future, he wants to work with an organization that specializes in introducing new agrarian techniques while supporting traditional methods.

He has in the past been associated with the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and acted as the Parade Commander of his unit in 2016. NCC instilled in him leadership qualities and a sense of focus and discipline. He is also passionate about running and has in the past won the Bundelkhand Half-Marathon in 2016.

SHIV NADAR UNIVERSITY

CLASSIC HANGOUT

- 1 Central Vista
- 2 Campus Lake
- 3 Indoor Sports Complex
- 4 Sacred Grove
- 5 F Block- Art Walk
- 6 Botanic Garden
- 7 C&D- Naveen Tea House
- 8 A&B- Anna's Cafe
- 9 Shopping Arcade
- 10 Golf Course
- 11 19th Hole- Restaurant
- 12 Clubhouse
- 13 Cricket Ground
- 14 Student Activity Center
- 15 Central Library
- 16 Atal Incubation Center (AIC)
- 17 Research Block

HOW TO TOUR

The tour will cover the most important attractions at the campus, which are suggested on the map with the yellow pins and can be tracked by following the red broken lines. Find yourself in the lap of nature and wonderful flora in the Botanic Garden. Try the scrumptious dosas and rolls at A&B and C&D. Need a bit of peace and quiet? Try the amazing view from our lakeside. Enjoy the various attractions and we hope to find you back here soon!





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