



# #TURNING THE TIDE

one youth  
at a time

The Champions Success Stories

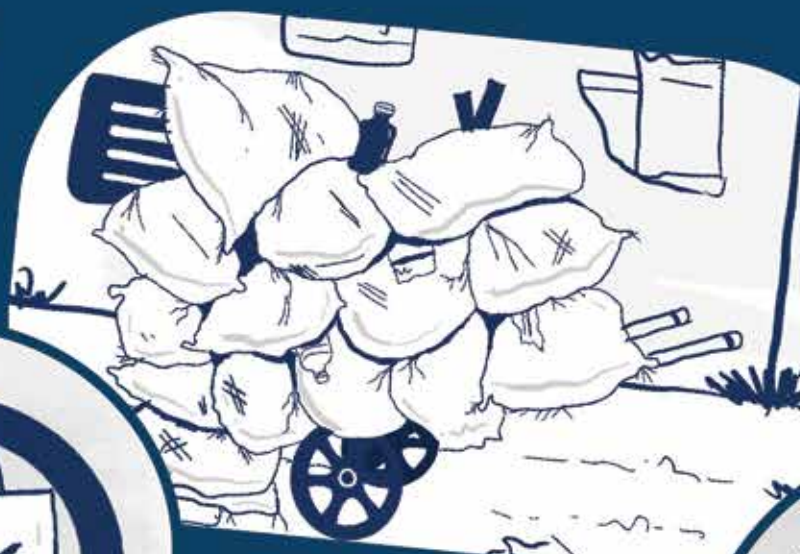




4 R S TOP



Single-use plastic







SAVE OUR EARTH

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

SAY NO TO SUPS



# #TURNING THE TIDE

## one youth at a time

The Champions Success Stories



## **ABOUT THE PUBLICATION**

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge is a global youth movement by the United Nations Environment Programme, designed to educate youth to understand the impact of plastic pollution and motivate them to reduce their plastic consumption, along with encouraging others. In India, the campaign is being implemented by World Wide Fund for Nature India (WWF India) and Centre for Environment Education (CEE).

'If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.' Mahatma Gandhi

331,804 youth from across India joined the Tide Turners Challenge with one aim to beat plastic pollution. In the last three phases these change makers undertook individual and community based actions to turn the tide on plastic. Though we would like to share the success story of each one of them, we have stories of 22 Tide Turners Champions and six educators who have brought exceptional change to create awareness about single-use plastic through awareness, education, and innovation.

They have truly led with action. Turning the Tide- One Youth at a Time.

Website : [www.tide-turners.org](http://www.tide-turners.org)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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Mansi is a youth icon who is ready to make the change that she wants to see in the world. A young geologist from Mahuva city in Gujarat, she shares her impactful Tide Turners journey with us. Mansi has been a member of the Environment Conservation Youth Club with over 100 members. While working with the organisation, she identified a problem in her neighbourhood.

## We Have a Plastic Problem

At a temple by the beach in her neighbourhood that is popular with devotees and visitors, waste from the temple is either thrown in the water or on the beach. This waste has been a huge challenge. She says,

**“Everyone talks about plastic waste but no one is ready or equipped to bring about the changes that need to be made. By our own individual efforts, we can bring change that leads to big movements.”**

## Act to Resolve the Plastic Problem!

As Mansi took the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge this year, she became more aware of the issues with plastic waste and started looking for relevant resources to learn more about the harmful impacts of plastics on marine and human life. She also came to know about different groups of people with expertise in waste management, segregation, recycling and beach cleanups. Interaction with these

# MEET MANSI THAKAR

📍 Mahuva, Gujarat

groups helped her scale up her knowledge.

Taking the beach cleaning challenge in hand, she began beach cleanup activities every Sunday with her fellow members. The major challenge on the ground was to convince visiting devotees and visitors not to litter. They started talking to groups visiting the beach about the impacts of plastics and sensitised them about the impact of their actions.

## Creating Awareness Brought a Behavioural Shift

The team's efforts paid off as their awareness drives brought a behavioural shift and littering on the beach reduced considerably. There were other reasons that contributed to littering, in that the shops near the temple had no dustbins for waste disposal, but now they have been installed and the shopkeepers themselves monitor the littering behavior. Also, the local vendors on the beach have stopped selling drinking water pouches. Instead, they provide bottled water. And the vendors themselves collect the used bottles for recycling, and earn some cash.

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**Age:** 24 years

**Institute:** Environment Conservation Youth Club

**Target Audience:** Youth

**Intervention:** Awareness, Recycling, Impact on Biodiversity







## Learning from Tide Turners

Mansi shares that the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge empowered her to take action. **“I learnt many new things during my Tide Turners journey and gained a deep understanding of sustainable development. I learnt about various recycling methods and waste management. Also, I came to know about innovative sustainable packaging. ‘Reuse, Recycle, Reduce, Reject and Repair’ are the solutions to combat plastic pollution. It was also exciting to know that fuel generated from the 2 layer plastic is a useful innovation.”**

*Mansi has played an exceptional role in engaging large numbers of youth in her initiative. She has become an inspiration for the other girls of Mahuva, Gujarat. Her efforts have been appreciated by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change. Her story was published in various local and state level newspapers. She has also represented the Tide Turners Champions at the Tide Turners National Youth Summit.*

As the cleanup drive increased pace, volunteers joined them. At present there are 100+ volunteers. The group has involved local communities in the coastal areas of Mahuva in beach cleaning drives and maintenance. Mansi and her group have set up a system of waste collection, segregation and recycling with the help of the Forest Department to ensure that their efforts sustain.

## Sea Turtles, Migratory Birds Return to the Beach

With plastics and other waste materials deposited on the coastal area of Mahuva and nearby coast, it affected the nesting activity of the Green Turtles. Mansi’s initiative to clean the beaches has been bringing back the Green Turtles to hatch their eggs in increasing numbers! Prior to this, hatching was not possible due to increased plastic pollution on the shores.

The volunteers have removed all plastics from the coastal areas including ghost fishing gear. The resurgence of clean beaches has attracted large numbers of migratory birds this year.



## Journey Towards Sustainability has Just Begun

Mansi looks forward to learning more through initiatives like Tide Turners. She believes such challenges and online initiatives are helpful to gain skills and work more efficiently in the area of sustainable development.

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**Age:** 20 years

**Institution:** Udayanath Autonomous  
College Adaspur, Cuttack institution

**Target Audience:** Recyclers

**Intervention:** Awareness & Community  
Engagement

Sonia Pradhan's experience highlights the truth that individual actions can lead to global movements. She is a student and a solution maker. Having observed the residents' behavioural problem towards single-use plastic in her neighbourhood, she took the initiative to bring a behaviour change in society at large.

## We Have a Behavioural Problem

The residents in and around her neighbourhood were not very receptive to the notion that single-use plastic was at the core of many of our problems. When Sonia took the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, she started interacting with her local community and her interaction with senior citizens introduced her to the 3 Rs of Plastic- Reuse, Recycle & Reduce. She decided to disseminate this knowledge to residents in her neighbourhood.

**"During the challenge I interacted with many people. Some showed a positive mindset but many revealed a negative attitude, as they did not care about what was going on with the environment."**

On the ground, it was quite difficult to continue with activities on a large scale. Convincing the local people was a major challenge. Neither was the municipality monitoring any of it, nor was the waste collection from the area regular in frequency.

# MEET SONIA PRADHAN

📍 Baroda, Gujarat

## Awareness Generation and Community Engagement

Sonia identified the problem and as she went from one level to another in the Tide Turners Challenge she undertook various activities to reduce the consumption of single use plastics, increase awareness levels, and make innovative products using plastic waste.

**She mapped the recyclers (kabadiwalas) in her area and conducted discussions with them to understand the supply chain of waste. She also conducted awareness campaigns with the owners of 25 local shops to create awareness regarding the impacts of plastic products and ways to minimize them. Besides this, Sonia met the Principals of 3 local schools to brief them about the negative impact of single-use plastic and ways to minimize its usage.**



initiative. Also, the waste collection activity with the kabadiwalas has begun on a regular basis. She has also succeeded in raising awareness among the local people and convinced them to switch to more sustainable options.

## Learning from Tide Turners

Sonia sees the challenge as a source of inspiration. "The online challenge is really helpful to create awareness. During this pandemic, ground activities are quite difficult. Such online campaigns are quite helpful to reach out to more people and hence more audience can be targeted."

She believes if the challenge is made open to all age groups and is further designed to reach remote locations it can amplify its reach enormously.



## Way Forward with Tide Turners

Sonia is keen to join the leadership and skill-based programs. She wants her district and state to participate in this challenge for the next phase. She ensured that she could communicate with the authorities and get them enrolled in the next phase.



*Sonia sees the challenge as a source of inspiration. "The online challenge is really helpful to create awareness. During this pandemic, ground activities are quite difficult. Such online campaigns are quite helpful to reach out to more people and hence more audience can be targeted."*

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She extended her reach through social media and created awareness amongst her family and friends. She also inspired them to use alternatives to plastic products.

Sonia also creatively transformed plastic bottles into usable items for use on her study table. She has started using eco-friendly products, and believes that sustainable options are more useful for health as well.

## Cleanup Drive at Gopalpur & Puri Beach

Sonia undertook pond and beach (Gopalpur and Puri Beach) cleaning activity in association with the district (Gopalpur) and the state (Puri) Scouts administration. "Convincing locals is always a big challenge," she says.

## Effecting Behavioural Change

The beach cleanup authorities were finally convinced and now support her work on this





Sneha is a bubbly 23-year-old MSU alumna who loves reading and trekking to unexplored places. She was among the first few students to sign up for the Tide Turners Challenge when it was introduced to her college in 2018.

# MEET SNEHA SHAHI

📍 Baroda, Gujarat



## We have a Gutter Problem

As Sneha took the challenge she tried to identify problems in and around the campus she was studying in. Sneha and her 300 fellow students, about 90 of whom came from the Department of Environmental Sciences where she studies, conducted a survey about single-use plastics and whether they should be banned and replaced.

The team decided to focus on the Bhukhi Nala stream flowing through the university grounds which was clogged with plastics and solid waste.

**Sneha says, "Nala means gutter, but on mapping it, we found that it was a natural rivulet which was choked with plastic. Multiple factors have caused this stream to look like a gutter but in certain patches, it has incredible urban biodiversity."**

## Bhuki Stream Restoration Project was Born

In the initial clean-up drive, about 300 kgs of waste was removed, segregated and recycled. Bulk plastics and thermocol were cleaned and moulded into small planters and wall hangings. Glass bottles were sent for recycling. The project was extended, and overall, the group removed an enormous 700 kgs of waste from an 800-metre long stretch.

A rivulet that wound its way through the campus of Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in Gujarat that was mistaken for a sewer was cleaned of its enormous plastic waste. The efforts generated unexpected outcomes.

## Guess who returned to the habitat?

As the waste decreased and the habitat improved, Sneha and her volunteers were delighted to see the return of the Gangetic Flapshell Turtles and even crocodiles who swam up the tributary from the main river

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**Age:** 23 years  
**Institute:** MS University  
**Target Audience:** College students  
**Intervention:** Community Participation & Impact on Biodiversity



*“Plastics shouldn’t be ending up in our streams, rivers, oceans or forests. They are a man-made entity, and it’s completely our responsibility to phase out single-use plastics and prevent them from entering our ecosystems.”*

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during the monsoons. Plant life and insects have also returned.

“Nowadays, each time I walk across the Bhukhi stream, I wait on the bridge in the hope of spotting a crocodile. Earlier, the chances of spotting one were low, but now the odds are 8 out of 10! I am delighted! The university has even had to install safety fences due to the regular appearances of our new friends,” Sneha added.

### Awards Followed

Sneha and her team’s efforts were rewarded when they won the **Youth for Earth Award, (Team name - Our Common Future)** for the Bhukhi Stream Project.

Sneha won the **Tide Turners Champion Badge** and her story was covered by local and national dailies. Her interview and success story was also **published on the UNEP website.**



## Tide Turners was Worth Every Effort

It was not easy to obtain the ‘Tide Turners Badge’ and at times she was daunted by the challenge, but she felt the issue of plastic waste was so little understood that she had to persevere.



## Future Advocates of the Environment

Sneha and her team mates have become future advocates of the environment. The group has started building on this success and hope to take the project forward and have a fully restored ecosystem in the heart of the city.

Sneha has taken on digital media to create awareness and advocate to stop use of single-use plastic. She is an environmental ambassador.







Abhishek Mani was a Class XII student from Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh when he joined the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. An active scout of the Bharat Scouts and Guide at Azamgarh, he was very excited to join the Tide Turners.

Abhishek has been very active in scout and guide activities and this gave him the opportunity to channelise his energy. As he began the challenge he spoke to his family and neighbours and realised that nobody really knew much or understood that single-use plastic was harmful for us.

## We Have an Acknowledgment Problem

Lack of awareness and education about single-use plastic make people think that it is not a problem. According to Abhishek people don't want to follow rules and regulations related to single-use plastic.

**"They don't want to refuse plastic because it is very cheap and readily available in the market."**

The only way forward was to sensitize them enough to acknowledge that it is a problem.

# MEET ABHISHEK MANI

📍 Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

## Awareness is the Greatest Agent of Change

With baby steps, Abhishek began his journey. He started with his locality and ran an awareness drive to stop the use of single-use plastic. As he met more people, four friends joined him to take the message forward. Together they undertook cleanup drives and created awareness about the 4Rs and the impact of single-use plastics in the city. He, along with the local municipal authorities, cleaned up a choked drain just outside his school entrance which was a major accident-prone area for the younger kids. He connected with recyclers and local bodies to understand the problem and rectify it. **"Initially, local authorities supported us but then they thought we were just using it for our benefit so they stopped their support."** Though it was a challenge for him, after looking at Abhishek's work they came around.



**Age:** 18 years

**Institute:** Bharat Scouts and Guides India

**Tagret Audience:** Neighbourhood

**Intervention:** Awareness & Recycling



# 4R's for



## single-use plastic

*"Behaviour change is very important to stop this menace. But it is also the most difficult one to achieve!"*

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### Challenge from Offline to Online Mode

As the pandemic struck, we wondered how we would complete it. But the Tide Turners Challenge went online. The guidelines to take it online helped Abhishek create awareness through Zoom. He conducted successful awareness sessions.

### Efforts Start to Show Results

Abhishek's efforts brought him a lot of support. Today he has a team of 30+ members who not only take up clean-up drives but also do plantations post clean-up, along with conducting awareness drives in different locations of Azamgarh. They have also connected with recyclers of many areas and now the recyclers directly collect waste for recycling.

Most of the people are now following the guidelines and use cloth bags instead of plastic bags.

Two NGOs also support him to educate the underprivileged children.

### Learning from Tide Turners

The challenge gave him a platform to work with his community, and enhanced his knowledge about nature conservation. He feels that he can now contribute to society in a better way.





Vinay Raj Singh hails from Kota, a city in Rajasthan known for its gallantry, kings, and their struggle for freedom. Born with the zeal to lead, Vinay joined the Scouts when he was in school and has served as an NCC cadet. He is the President of the Students' Union at Government College, Kota.

Vinay has been very active in youth related activities and participating in Tide Turners opened new avenues for him to lead and make a difference.

## We have a Littering Problem

While Vinay participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, he identified the problem of littering in and around the rivers in Kota. The people who visited the river banks for recreational or religious reasons threw plastic bags, chips packet wrappers, water bottles, packets and so on, into the rivers or on the banks.

**"We found single-use plastic everywhere!" Vinay remarked, ranging from plastic bags to face wash bottles, tea bags, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and so on.**

The various levels of the Tide Turners Challenge made him aware of the different kinds of plastics that we use in our daily lives, besides its harmful impact on human beings, and on aquatic animals.

# MEET VINAY RAJ SINGH

📍 Kota, Rajasthan

## Social Media did Wonders

Vinay being an avid supporter of social media, took the matter online. He and his friends started posting videos of littering around rivers urging the public to stop littering and use alternatives to single-use plastic.

When the momentum increased, Vinay and his scout friends undertook activities on the ground, like cleaning river banks and removing plastic waste. They removed all kinds of single-use plastics and advocated choosing eco-friendly products.

These activities had a great impact on the aquatic as well as human life. The water logging problem was solved and the foul odour was gone. More so, they observed fish and other aquatic life return to the river.

**Age:** 24 years

**Institute:** Government College, Kota

**Target Audience:** Visitors at the River banks in Kota

**Intervention:** Awareness & Impact on Biodiversity



*"After seeing our activities many people joined us but the icing on the cake was gaining media coverage and many people appreciated our initiative on social media," Vinay beams.*

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## Taking TTC Learning to Serve the Community

Though Vinay had completed the TTC in 2020, he is taking the cause forward. He says,

"I have already been involved in environmental issues, as I am a rover at Bharat Scouts and Guides but the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge provided an opportunity to involve many other students and family members. It changed my lifestyle and now I am working to promote the numbers who 'Say No! to Single-use Plastic' and educate people about the right way to recycle it."







Divya is a self-starter who is keen to contribute to solving societal problems. She was amongst the first Tide Turners who joined the challenge in 2018, and had a great chance to create on ground impact by identifying a problem around her and working towards its resolution.

# MEET DIVYA POHWANI

📍 Baroda, Gujarat

## We Have a Dumping Problem

Open dumping of plastic waste is a common phenomenon in a few areas of Baroda in spite of door-to-door collection drives in the city. Being part of the Tide Turners Challenge, Divya had been oriented about the harmful impacts of single-use plastics, and observed that waste dumping led to waterlogging and road closures in many areas. Residents and users of commercial spaces did not pay attention to this problem and only complained about the issue.

## Public Orientation Turned Things Around

There was a clear need to educate the people around commercial and residential areas. Divya recalls, **"Initially the people were reluctant to listen to us. But my friend and I undertook multiple awareness drives which really pulled the campaign off."**

Major waste dumping areas were identified. Discussion, deliberation, poster presentations providing alternatives to single-use plastics were undertaken in those areas. A letter mentioning concerns and solutions was also sent to the corporator to draw immediate attention to the growing menace.

This brought regularity in the door-to-door collection. Slowly and steadily, a change in the habits of residents was seen with a decrease in dumping, with the use of cloth bags instead of plastic bags, use of reusable straws instead of single use straws and other measures.

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**Age:** 24 years

**Institute:** MS University

**Target Audience:** Residents

**Intervention:** Awareness & Recycling



*"We have to remember to contribute our one drop to the ocean. Doing our bit is the key."*

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This small but significant change in one area was a working incident and set the precedent to educate residents in other areas. The impact of awareness campaigns was amplified with the inclusion of more residents and commercial spaces.

### **Tide Turners was a Journey of Self-discovery**

"Tide Turners enabled me to identify my real potential. From channelizing my leadership qualities and putting up with my ambivert personality for the good of the society to taking challenges head on and dealing with them, this journey has been one wonderful learning experience," Divya emphasizes.







# The 4 R's







Asif Ahmad Siddiqui is a young and energetic professional who has committed himself towards environment conservation. He participated in Tide Turners Plastic Challenge in 2021 and came across not one but multiple problems that led to plastic pollution.

## We Have a Societal Problem

As Asif dug deeper into single-use plastics, he found that multiple causes made it difficult for people to hold the bull by its horns.

As he began to talk to people, he observed a long history of inherited attitudes towards the use of resources. People used things for years without questioning their viability and impact.

Single-use plastic, though a recent product, soon became ubiquitous as mass products were made available in single-use pouches, disposables, polybags, and so on. Its use was further reinforced as practically no or perhaps the minimum alternatives were available.

Other layers of problems included lack of awareness about SUPs, its rightful use, impact on the environment, policy implementation, responsibility and accountability.

# MEET ASIF AHMAD SIDDIQUI

📍 Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

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All these facets have made this a larger problem that needs to be addressed immediately. Asif thus identified areas where he could contribute and bring a change.

## Community Participation and Action Bring Change

Asif undertook the evaluation of the plastic related problems in his locality. Together with his friends, he undertook awareness activities in schools, colleges and neighbourhoods with the message to stop use of Single-Use Plastics. They even distributed eco-friendly alternatives for people to use.

Cleanliness and plantation campaigns were undertaken near the Gomti River and signature campaigns were also organized for mass public participation and effective awareness. His team effectively utilized social media platforms to raise awareness amongst the public via different types of events and contents like videos, vox pops, competitions, and so on.

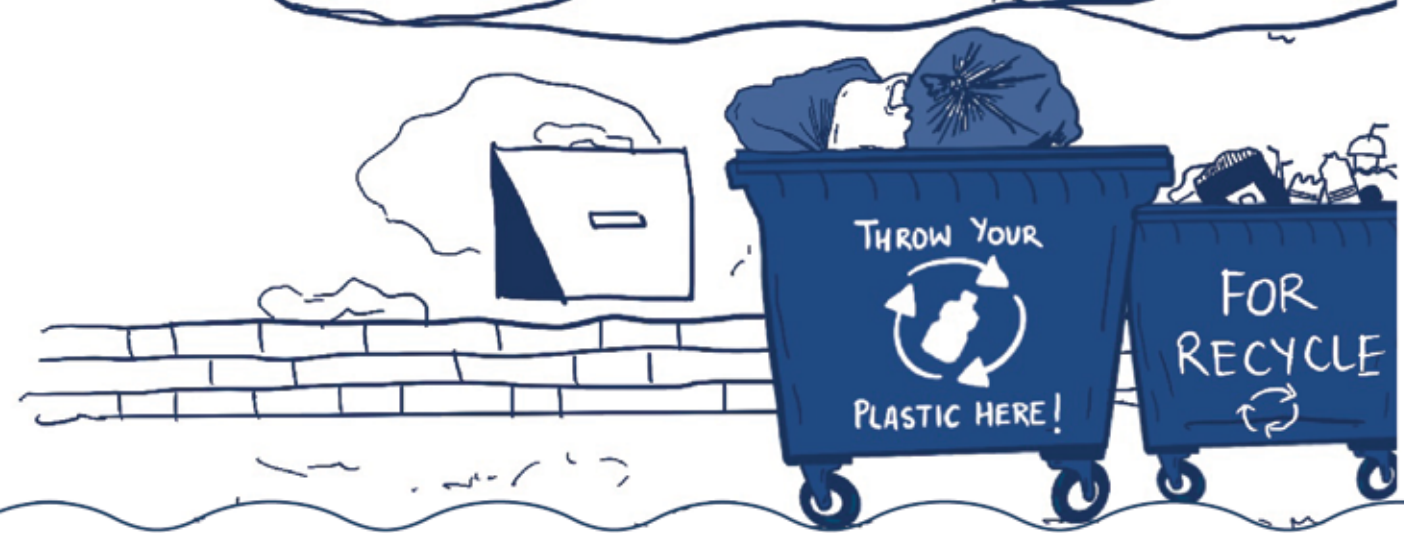
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**Age:** 27 years

**Target Audience:** Neighbourhood

**Intervention:** Awareness & Community Participation





*“The only thing in between us and a better life is our behaviour.”*

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## **Determination to Convince Pays Off**

Asif not only managed to convince his friends, family and colleagues he also persuaded schools and colleges to avoid using single-use plastic. He and his team connected with waste recyclers and created a proper strategy for plastic disposal and regular waste collection in his locality. They also managed to grab the support of the print media to gain attraction so that their initiatives reached out to a larger population.

## **Learning from Tide Turners**

**“It developed a new way of thinking.”** Asif asserts. He affirms that the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge provided him a chance to be a change maker. It not only enhanced his communication skills but also his critical thinking and made him empathetic to the

environment.

It has also given him career opportunities as he was able to network with a lot of people.







Jaydip Jani is a young architect cum environmentalist. He hails from a beautiful town called Mahuva in Gujarat. He aspires to be a successful “sustainable” earth architect. His objective was to make the beaches and neighbouring areas plastic free and make people aware about the impacts of plastic pollution.

### Habits Die Hard!

“I used single-use plastic thoughtlessly before I joined the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. During the challenge I realised that I was using too much plastic.”

Being curious, Jaydip decided to research, explore and dig deep into the single-use plastics. Since he observed that his monthly consumption of single-use plastic was very high, he took conscious steps to change the habit.

### Learning and Changing Habits

A change maker in the true sense, Jaydip not only found alternatives to single-use plastic but also raised awareness to address the impacts of plastic on biodiversity along the coasts.

He is the founder of the Environment Conservation Youth Club. His team of young leaders aims to observe, implement and make changes in the environment to a

# MEET JAYDIP JANI

📍 Mahuva, Gujarat

plastic-free world. When he started this campaign, it was a group of only 5 friends and now more than 100 people work actively to make this earth plastic free.

During the campaign, the ECYC took the initiative to run beach clean-up drives. These initiatives have changed people’s perception towards plastic products.

Jaydip and his team have also raised funds for awareness purposes to arrange for dustbins on the beaches, banners and social media to sensitise the local communities and visitors to the beach. The ECYC worked every Sunday and with the help of more than 100 members they collected 4 tons of plastic in a span of 31 weeks.

### Leading with Innovation

Under the initiative, the ECYC team created more than 200 Eco-bricks using plastic waste. Team members also observed Gangetic Dolphins and a few species of crabs near their clean-up site as a positive change. Jaydip and his team are also planning to distribute paper bags/cloth bags instead of

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**Age:** 20 Years

**Institute:** Navrachana University

**Target Audience:** Youth

**Intervention:** Awareness & Impact on Biodiversity



According to him, such online campaigns are very helpful to create a mass movement. If this was not online they might have missed this opportunity. Also, the visibility increases through such online campaigns. Social media is a very powerful tool to raise awareness among youth.



## What's Next?

Jaydip and ECYC are planning to increase awareness of recycling and eco bricks through the local administration. They are also ideating on more ground activities that can be added for more impact and school participation.

plastic bags

## Tide Turners an Eye Opener

It was Jaydip's first ever competition that he had participated in. He has learnt a lot about single use plastics and its harmful impact on life and environment. His communication skills have sharpened to a great extent. Also, he has realised that we need to provide people with replacement options if we have to convince them to stop using something.

His research and communication skills have improved a lot. He could also increase his knowledge about the recycling products and procedure. New learning in this challenge always inspires him to move ahead.

He liked the plastic audit in particular as it directly reflects the quantity of plastic that has been consumed over time. Since there was no support regarding points to deposit the collected waste, the challenge should include contacts of local recyclers for participants to connect with. They have gained contact with the volunteer groups that could join their awareness drives.

*"I used single-use plastic thoughtlessly before I joined the Tide Turners Challenge. During the challenge I realised that I was using too much plastic."*

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Krutaarth is a young environment enthusiast who is interested in a variety of topics, from current affairs, defence to renewable energy. He loves outdoor games and gardening.

# MEET KRUTAARTH ASHVINKUMAR PATEL

📍 Ahmedabad , Gujarat

## We Have a Bag Problem

Krutaarth and his friends were fun loving students who were doing well in studies and sports. Being keen on a lot of extracurricular activities introduced them to the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. As he started the challenge, Krutaarth's perspective of looking at the environment changed completely. He found the plastic menace all around him, especially the single-use plastic bags. **"They are choking our environment. I wanted to stop it."**, shares Krutaarth.


## Taking Awareness from Micro to Macro

Krutaarth and his friends decided to start an awareness campaign in class. They created a presentation about the harmful impacts of single-use plastic and plastic bags that we all use in our everyday life. They shared the alternatives like cloth and jute bags that the students could choose. The presentation was well received which

encouraged them to take the campaign to every class in the school. They held group discussions and debates to create the momentum. Krutaarth and his team also used fun ways like drama as a medium to spread awareness. His teachers encouraged them greatly and the school was supportive throughout the Tide Turners journey. It has now become a school challenge.

A special canvas bag making competition was organised in the school where students had to make canvas bags and paint on the theme of 'environment protection'. The best bags from every class were displayed in the school's main lobby. Once the results were announced, the bags were displayed in the school lobby and on the school's social media pages. Along with canvas bag making competition, selected volunteers also made paper bags that could be given to shops where they were not able to avoid single-use plastic bags.

With the help of volunteers, these canvas bags were then distributed in the nearby areas of his school like the vegetable market, and shops which used single-use plastic bags. It oriented



**Age:** 17 years  
**Institute:** Rachana School  
**Target Audience:** School students  
**Intervention:** Awareness



SAY



NO TO  
PLASTIC



YES TO  
CLOTH BAG


*"It does not matter how big your position is, the only thing that matters is how big your actions are."*

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and sensitised people about choosing cloth bags over plastic bags. The shopkeepers, vegetable vendors and individuals were persuaded to pledge to carry cloth or eco-friendly bags every time they bought or sold anything.

Krutaarth and his team also organised a special art installation competition for students in his school where students built large art installations with the help of waste and discarded single-use plastic items. Children used all their creativity and some out of the box installations were displayed at the exhibition. These art installations were also shared on social media and received great appreciation and encouragement.

Krutaarth says, **"With the help of activities conducted in our school we were successful in creating a positive attitude towards environment protection amongst the school children. All the students of our school started talking about environment protection and also dream of doing something for the environment. The**



impact was stronger in the younger students of classes 4 to 8. These students started cleaning the school premises whenever they found garbage and also prevented others from throwing garbage in the school premises. They had regular discussions with us regarding what they could do and how they could also be a part of our project."

He and his team tried to amplify the impact with a poster and banner making competition in school before Diwali on the theme, **"Say No! to Crackers."** Once the posters and banners were made, prizes were distributed among the students. These posters and banners were used in the anti-cracker rally that was organised in the nearby locality. Students carried these posters and marched on the roads and shouted slogans to raise awareness.

## Learning from Tide Turners

The challenge transformed Krutaarth from an introvert to an extrovert. It enhanced his presentation, public speaking and leadership skills. The challenge also helped him overcome his stage fear, and it gave him the power to ignore people who tried to stop his work. It empowered him to build a 'never give up' attitude. It also taught him how to manage studies and also work for the community.





Born in Odisha, an East Indian state, Aadhya changed seven schools throughout her life. This experience has helped shape who she is today and has exposed her to diverse ideas and thought processes.

Aadhya is also a pianist and has been trained to play classical music and currently holds a Grade 5 certificate in piano from the Royal Schools of Music. She is also a district-level badminton player and has competed in numerous All-India Badminton tournaments. Apart from this, she has recently started investing in the stock market and is completely fascinated by all that it has to offer.

Since Aadhya is extremely passionate about sustainability and environmental protection, she participated in the Tide Turners Challenge in 2021.

## We Have a Plastic Problem

The problems of plastic pollution and open defecation plague citizens across the nation and in many parts of the world. Around the world, 1 million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute. An equally sombre statistic by the WHO states that another pressing issue in India is that 40% of Indians or 524 million people defecate in the open.

Taking note of problems as ubiquitous and catastrophic as plastic waste and open defecation, Aadhya, with her team of 70+ members was compelled to take action. She focused on three areas of impact - Plastic Wastage, Sanitation, and Open-Defecation.

# MEET AADHYA CHOPRA

📍 New Delhi

## Transforming Single-Use Plastic into a Sustainable Resource

Eco Bricks are a hallmark in the field of modern and sustainable construction. They are made entirely from non-recyclable plastic using the "plastic in plastic" approach. Additionally, unlike the conventional red bricks, they help minimise potential pollution from plastic degradation and the use of single-use plastic.

From these plastics, her team and she plan to create bathrooms that will be made using 2000 such eco-bricks which will serve as the building blocks for the structure. These, conjoined with cement and mortar, will result in a sturdy and resilient public bathroom for all-weather use.

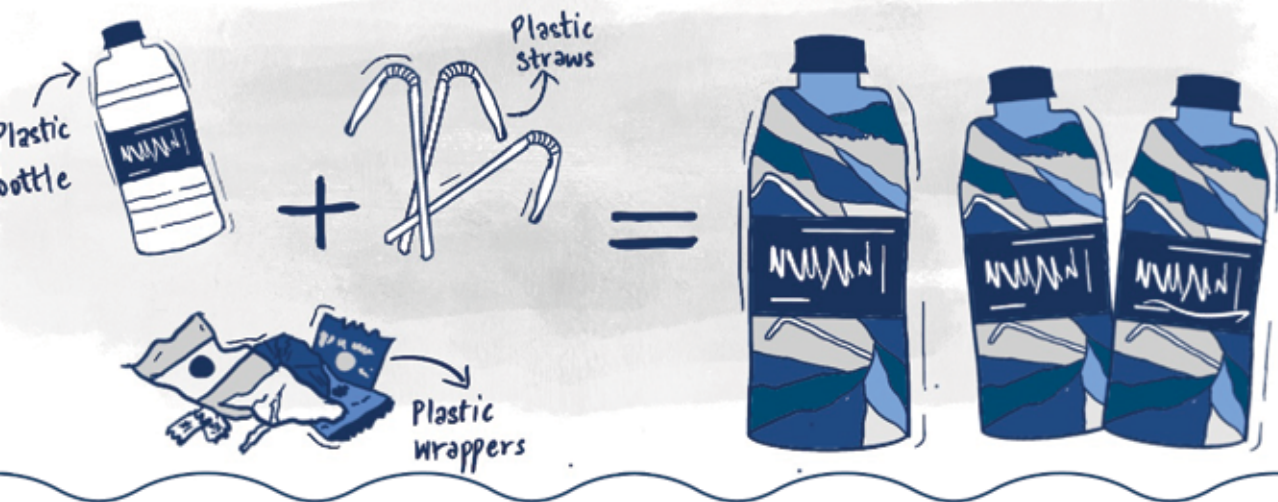


**Age:** 19 years

**Institute/Organisation:** Jesus and Mary College

**Target Audience:** General Public

**Intervention:** Innovation



## Learning from Tide Turners

Aadhya vouches, “It has instilled in me the faith that if the youth of today decide to make a positive change in the world, there’s nothing that can stop us. This experience has shown me the light at the end of the tunnel in terms of climate action and I’m extremely grateful to play a small part in our quest for a better tomorrow.”

Through this challenge, Aadhya has been greatly influenced to continue our fight against plastic pollution. The Tide Turners Challenge has been instrumental in teaching her the power of collective action.



*“It is in our hands to ensure we do all we can individually, and as a community, to minimise degradation and leave a vibrant and thriving planet for the generations after us to live in.”*

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## Killing Two Birds with One Stone!

As the waste decreased and the habitat Aadhya’s innovation ensures a net-zero carbon emission and zero wastage. **Having successfully reduced CO2 emissions up to 96.8 kg by collecting 63 kg of single-use plastic, they project a reduction of 1000 kg of plastic waste and 1538 kg of CO2 emissions per structure.** They will divert plastic from the environment to develop safe and sustainable infrastructure.

The washrooms will benefit those who lack access to adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities and ensure an intersectional and accessible approach, catering especially to women and the differently-abled.

Through a host of donation drives and social media campaigns throughout the past year, **Aadhya and her team have spread awareness to an audience of over 19 lakh individuals.**







Sayantani is a Rajyapurashkar Ranger of the Bharat Scouts and Guides, Badarpur District Association. Her hobbies are cooking, dancing, singing, drama and making the best out of waste.

As the world's population continues to grow, so does the amount of garbage that people produce. This fact has been bothering Sayantani and she found Tide Turners as an ideal platform to do something about the issue.

## We Have a Disposal Problem

Sayantani observed that people in her neighbourhood did not dispose of the garbage properly. Neither did they segregate wet and dry waste, nor any biological waste.

The local authorities too did not provide litter bins to the societies, leading to garbage disposal in the open. Sayantani and her team evaluated the amount of single-use plastic that was used by each household in her neighbourhood. It was alarming, and needed immediate attention.

# MEET SAYANTANI NANDI

📍 Badarpur, Assam

## Communication Leads to Change

Along with a small team of Rovers and Rangers of the Badarpur District Association, BSG, Sayantani wrote a letter to the Municipality in her area highlighting the problem and requested them to provide dustbins in each and every house in her area. Her persistent efforts brought change. The local authorities provided dustbins and began regular waste collection.

She made people aware about plastic pollution and also spread knowledge about the proper disposal of plastic and other kinds of garbage. She also undertook a cleanliness drive with the help of her neighbours.

Sayantani sewed some cloth bags and distributed them to the shopkeepers in her area to reduce the use of plastic bags. In order to reuse the plastic bottles, she planted various saplings in them and created a small kitchen garden.



**Age:** 21 years

**Institute:** Industrial Training Institute

**Target Audience:** Neighbourhood

**Intervention:** Awareness



*“For many years I have been observing people in my area dumping all the garbage together in one place, which is very harmful to nature and human beings.”*

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## Going Virtual During the Pandemic

Due to Covid-19 and the lockdown, Sayantani had to follow safety rules which limited her awareness drives in the Red Zones. Without being disheartened, she arranged a virtual talk on plastic pollution and invited people to join her to create a better environment and successfully got positive responses.

She worked in different areas by arranging awareness rallies and cleanliness drives. Sayantani created an awareness video on plastic pollution and uploaded it on various social networking sites to reach out to a wider section of the public.

## Learning from Tide Turners

Tide Turners Plastic Challenge helped Sayantani to contribute to the wellbeing of the society and environment. By participating in the Challenge, she learnt that nothing is impossible! If we are determined to do something, it becomes easy for us. As she rightly sums it up, **“Determination and dedication can make everything possible.”**







As a final year undergraduate student of computer science, Rushali is focused towards equipping herself with skills that would make technology more eco-friendly and accessible. When she's not coding, you'll find her doing community work or reading books. She also headed the Eco Club of her college where she worked on a pan-India project under WWF-India that focused on sustainable menstrual and food consumption practices. Her role involved managing a team of 50 young women, overseeing human resources, public relations and social media teams, innovating new campaigns, adding new layers to the project and keeping the momentum going.

### **We have a Sanitary Napkin Problem**

It all started when Rushali came across the fact that a major part of the sanitary pads in use is made of plastics. In her initial research, she found that the conventional disposable sanitary napkins are 90% plastic. An estimated 121 million females use disposable sanitary napkins (with an estimation of 8 pads a month), leading to 1.021 billion pads being disposed monthly, or over 12.3 billion disposable sanitary pads every year. These pads take 500-800 years to decompose. If burnt, they release toxic fumes and if left in the surroundings, they become breeding grounds for bacteria like e-coli and staphylococci.

# **MEET RUSHALI KHILRANI**

📍 New Delhi

### **Girl Power with the Social Media Wand does Wonders**

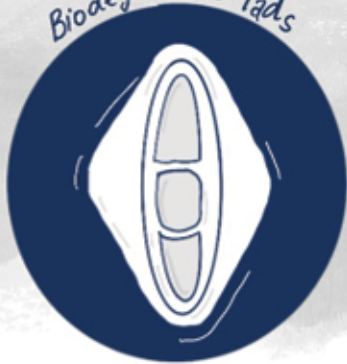
This soon became a topic of discussion in Rushali's classroom and she started searching for eco-friendly menstrual products available in the market. She started creating awareness about it using word of mouth and soon a team of 30 girls started conducting workshops, organizing campaigns, and selling sustainable alternatives at reasonable prices. Rushali and her team met during lunch breaks and devised strategies to balance their studies and their common love for the environment. **Their campaign was soon able to influence over 28,000 people via social media platforms and on-ground workshops.**

★  
**Tide Turners Champion 2021**  
★

**Age:** 21 years  
**Institute/Organisation:** Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women  
**Target Audience:** Women  
**Intervention:** Awareness

# Zero Menstruation Waste

Biodegradable Pads



Menstrual Cup



Reusable Cloth Pads



*“Conventional disposable sanitary napkins are 90% plastic. We needed to create awareness about that amongst young girls and women, so that they can make an informed choice.”*

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## Promoting Sustainable Alternatives

Switching to eco-friendly menstrual products is the way to go. Rushali identified eco-friendly alternatives like menstrual cups, cloth pads, biodegradable pads, period underwear, and started conducting workshops along with her team to raise awareness about these products. She started online awareness campaigns and conducted awareness workshops for schools, colleges, corporate offices, and resident welfare associations. She not only raised awareness about it but also organized eco-fairs to ensure that these alternatives were easily accessible at a reasonable cost.

**Rushali helped 250+ women switch to sustainable menstrual products via on-ground workshops. This helped in replacing 35,700 plastic sanitary napkins and has prevented 2300 kgs of plastic from ending in landfills since January 2019.**

## Creating the Ripple Effect

After conducting multiple workshops in Delhi, Rushali connected with like-minded students from 5 other states of India and they started organizing similar events in other parts of our country. Despite the restrictions caused by Covid-19, they were able to conduct virtual seminars and launched their own Instagram shop where all the sustainable alternatives were available for everyone who wanted to switch to sustainable menstrual products. **Their work was also showcased on Doordarshan News in the special Environment Day section.**



## Learning from Tide Turners

Rushali has always been passionate about doing her bit to save the environment. The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge allowed her to influence thousands of people and connect with like-minded individuals. Earlier, all her eco-friendly actions were limited to her small circle of family and friends before she participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. This challenge helped her push her limits and learn that a small group of committed individuals have the power to change the entire world.













Rishu Kumar is a teenager who loves to paint and draw. He also plays badminton and tries his hand at photography, once in a while. He is also an active member of the Bharat Scouts and Guides and has been regularly participating in their activities. He is a dynamic young man exploring the world and learning about its strengths and flaws.

## We Have a Decomposition Problem

As Rishu participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge he started reading about various aspects of plastic. He learned that the chemicals used in the production of plastic are toxic and detrimental to the human body. The problem with plastic is that most of it isn't biodegradable. It doesn't decompose, like paper or food, it can stay around in the environment for decades, putting wildlife and human life at risk.

He has personally witnessed animals swallowing plastic waste products, which are life threatening.

# MEET RISHU KUMAR SINGH

📍 Dimapur, Nagaland

## Making Society Plastic Ready

Rishu took this issue in hand and started an awareness campaign with his friends whereby they informed family, friends, neighbours and the public about the harmful effects of plastic and the consequences that we have to face if we don't take the small step of avoiding single-use plastic.

They propagated the use of cloth bags for shopping, carrying things from one place to another. He also requested the municipal council to place waste bins in the locality so that residents and the public could dispose of the waste properly and directly eliminate the problem of animals consuming waste.

Age: 15 years

Institute/Organisation: Don Bosco  
Higher Secondary School

Target Audience: Locals

Intervention: Awareness

PLASTIC take forever  
to DECOMPOSE



*"Give a man a fish and  
he'll eat for a day but  
teach him how to fish  
and he eats for the rest  
of his life."*

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### Human Chain of Change

He saw a drastic change among the society members who took note of the points discussed in the campaign. They started taking all the necessary steps that were required to avoid and eliminate plastics. The society members started making their own awareness groups and took various sessions to sensitize people in the neighbouring areas. Rishu was able to create a human chain of change.

### Learning from Tide Turners

Rishu believes in the saying, "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day but teach him how to fish and he eats for the rest of his life." Tide Turners provided him the opportunity to become the agent of change and create many more like him.





Syed is the owner of a very innovative and successful spin café in Hyderabad. He was born in Saudi Arabia and raised in Hyderabad and holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. In all his years as a student, he has learnt to resolve issues and invent new ways to make human life easier. He practises the maxim, "Change our habits for the betterment of our future generation."

## We Have a Plastic Cup Problem

Being a sports enthusiast, he loves to play several sports like basketball and table tennis, among many others, which led him to open the spin cafe. He identified several plastic coffee and tea cups consumed by customers being dumped on the streets. This increased the amount of plastic waste and improper disposal, leading to a bigger problem. The plastic waste was usually dumped arbitrarily or even consumed by animals, and this could not be ignored any further.

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Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★

**Age:** 25 years  
**Target Audience:** Customers  
**Intervention:** Innovation

# MEET SYED AKIFULLAH HUSSAINI

📍 Hyderabad, Telangana

## Innovation is the Game Changer

He invented an edible waffle cup, which can be used for any hot or cold beverage. The consumer can eat the cup after drinking the beverage. It's made with cereal based flour and is vegetarian. This innovative idea was lauded by a lot of people and they wanted other outlets to adopt this idea so the city would have less waste. He was appreciated for this idea and motivated to come up with more inventions.

Critics questioned the idea of waffle cups, and its ability to hold liquids, but they were shocked that the waffle cup could do so for 30 minutes. The younger generation quickly took to the idea, while the older generation took some time but eventually came around.

**The incredible innovation solves a greater issue and is estimated to reduce 700 kg of plastic per day from the city of Hyderabad. Around 2000 people have approached him after the**



*“A platform for encouragement, from which you can inspire and pass your idea to everyone, is the most important thing.”*

**14**

invention of edible cups and four coffee shops have adopted the idea and are getting direct supplies from him.

### **Learning from Tide Turners**

The challenge helped him to showcase his innovation and reach thousands of people in India and across the world.







Ankita is an environment enthusiast. She loves gardening and exploring nature, trekking and hiking with her friends. She is also learning karate in her free time.



# MEET ANKITA PANDEY

📍 Bongaigaon, Assam

## We have a Plastic Disposal Problem

Ankita identified the issue of plastic bags being used in heavy quantities and then disposed of in a manner that they litter the environment and cause harm to the animals living nearby. Most shops use only plastic bags and thus she embarked on a journey to eliminate this evil from nature.

## Enlightening the Community

With the help of the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge activities, Ankita worked with shopkeepers and customers to help them reduce their plastic usage.

She identified early on that you can pick up plastics from the roads and grounds but to clean oceans and nearby water bodies was a difficult task. She began by showing her friends and family how plastic affects their daily lives and the environment.

As her family and friends joined in, they carried out multiple awareness campaigns and rallies to say no to single-use plastic. They also undertook door to door awareness drives, and cleanliness drives on the streets and around nearby water bodies. All of Ankita's efforts led to a movement of zeal that inspired everyone to reduce, eliminate and reuse plastic.



**Age:** 21 years

**Institute/Organisation:** Bongaigaon College and PGDCA

**Target Audience:** Shopkeepers

**Intervention:** Awareness



*"If we do not wake up now, future generations will suffer."*

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## Learning from Tide Turners

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge helped Ankita connect with other champions and realise that the impact of the challenge is not just on an individual level but on a community level. This motivated her to keep working towards the cause and bring in many more people to the journey







Karnav, a 7th grade student, is a young and dynamic leader who has created a mark with his writing and communication at a very young age. He is a poet, story teller, story writing trainer and reviewer (articles, poems, story, novel reviews). He is a science fiction author who has created a book series of his own under the title Kartik & Mixie and has released five books of different genres under it. Karnav's latest book is a sci-fi book on artificial intelligence. His e-comic on coronavirus and the environment helped collect funds for corona warriors and covid affected children's education and health through NGOs. He is the youngest and the only Indian nominated for the World Happiness Awards, Covid- 19 Individual Category, instituted from Florida, USA.

His work is elaborate and with Tide Turners he gave a purpose to his writing.

## We Have a Choice Problem

As Karnav began his Tide Turners journey he learnt about the amount of plastic we use in our daily life that can be easily avoided. Students use plastic covers, plastic pens and pencils; window envelopes are used in many laboratories/ offices to give reports to patients/ clients; paper coffee cups/ wet wipes are still commonly used. Since the pandemic a lot of plastic material is being used such as masks, gloves, PPE kits, hand sanitizer bottles. Karnav realised that we all had a choice to stop the menace of single use plastic. He thought of

# MEET KARNAV RASTOGI

📍 Mumbai, Maharashtra

beginning with himself. Since he believes that "Change starts at home," he went on a journey to make his surroundings plastic free.

## Making Sustainable Choices and Voices

Karnav stopped using plastic covers and used newspaper covers instead, chose seed pencils over plastic pencils and metal pens over plastic pens. He also realised that 100% paper envelopes can be used for dispatching reports. Paper coffee cups can be replaced by recyclable coffee mugs and wet wipes with bamboo wipes or cloth towels. During the pandemic, he was using disposable masks but later shifted to cloth masks and cloth gloves. Once he realised that by doing all these things, his plastic footprint came down, he urged his friends to adopt all the means to create a change.

**He and his friends started a campaign called 'Project Mask' to prevent all the disposable masks from entering our ecosystem.** He and his classmates enacted

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**Age :** 12 years

**Institute:** R. N. Podar School

**Target Audience:** Children

**Intervention:** Sustainable Alternatives



# SWITCHING to SUSTAINABLE Choices



*"It's a very good platform for children and youth because it teaches you a lot about the environment."*

16

various skits. He wrote a poem on the ill effects of plastic pollution which will be soon published in a children's magazine. Karnav also wrote an e-comic on beating plastic pollution which talks about what can be done at the household level to reduce plastic pollution. It is a free downloadable book and many children have read it.

On being hugely motivated by the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, he recently completed writing a report on climate change at the Poles and sustainable development, as a part of his school project.

## Learning from Tide Turners

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge helped Karnav tremendously. He became very watchful about any plastic usage and minimised its use. It inspired him to create a lot of educational material such as comics, poems, a/v presentations, slogans, and

skits. It has encouraged him to think deeply and be more creative. He thinks, "It's a very good platform for children and youth because it teaches you a lot about the environment."

It made him realize that each and every one of us, irrespective of age and profession, can contribute towards making the environment safe and healthy.







Ansul was born and brought up in a small village in West Sikkim, India. He gained a BTech degree from NIT Prayagraj in electronics and communication engineering. After working in an MNC for 2 years and completing an MBA degree course, he started his own online travel firm in Sikkim. Right from childhood, Ansul has been very observant about plastics and its adverse effects.

He has read many ancient scriptures out of interest and is completely amazed at how the life and culture of those times were totally in sync with nature and the ecosystem. He has always been very careful as far as littering is concerned and has also tried his best to be as minimalistic and organic as possible.

## We have a Plastic Packet Problem

Ansul identified the menace created by plastic packets in our surroundings. Every year, millions of packets are manufactured and used by milk factories, chips, snacks and other similar factories for packaging.

On a daily basis, tons of plastics is being thrown in the open after consumption of these products. This is unnecessary and if planned properly, can be reduced significantly.

# MEET ANSUL AGARWAL

📍 Singtam Bazar, Sikkim

## Initiating Change

Though plastic packets are cheap and seem like the best alternative, they harm our environment tremendously. Ansul undertook a survey and observed the amount of plastic waste generated per week and contacted some of the officials in companies regarding these issues.

He also conducted a social media awareness campaign through change.org and other platforms. He created videos and creatives for general awareness. After having talked to the officials, they took note of the concerns and assured the implementation of new alternatives based on their marketing surveys and researches.

Ansul got a few hundred signatures on change.org locally as well as globally and received positive responses on his social media posts. The factories have also started their own awareness drives. Though there is still a lot of work to do in this regard, his small actions were enough to start a big change.



**Age:** 30 years

**Profession:** Entrepreneur

**Target Audience:** Youth

**Intervention:** Awareness

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Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★



*"In a small way, I could somehow be a part of this global team of enthusiasts and likeminded people. I was very keen to learn about many new things and share it with others. Glad to be a part of something big and positively impactful."*

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### **Learning from Tide Turners**

The challenge helped him channel his inner guardian of nature. The online mode helped him to express his views about this critical global issue and plastics. He felt, "In a small way, I could somehow be a part of this global team of enthusiasts and likeminded people. I was very keen to learn about many new things and share it with others. Glad to be a part of something big and positively impactful."







Pulak is a student from the countryside who loves nature and wildlife. Pulak is always eager to do something for nature conservation and constantly finding ways. He is also interested in wildlife photography and gardening.

## We Have a Bread Problem

Four million tons of bread are produced in India annually and most of it is packed in single-use plastic. This worried Pulak and he wanted to make a difference by sensitising bread manufacturers about a sustainable alternative that existed prior to bread companies switching to SUP packaging.



**Age :** 22 years  
**Institute/Organisation:** Midnapore College  
**Target Audience:** Local Bakeries  
**Intervention:** Alternative Products for Packaging

# MEET PULAK KANTI KAR

📍 Midnapore, West Bengal



## Creating a Sustainable Shift

After research and surveys, Pulak realised that bread is consumed within 24-48 hours. So, there is no need to use plastic packaging, which is applied for long term use of food products. Pulak found that butter paper is 22% cheaper and 45% more economical in printing costs than plastic packaging. Butter paper is also biodegradable and environmentally friendly. He sensitised bread manufacturers about a sustainable alternative that existed prior to SUP packaging.

He started approaching bakeries of Midnapore town using single-use plastic packaging. He explained to them that shifting to paper packaging from plastic will be a profitable proposition for bakery owners. He also sensitised them about choosing a sustainable alternative which would be a win-win situation for them and the environment.

# Better Sustainable packaging



*“Sustainable alternatives can be a win-win situation for business and the environment.”*

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He arranged meetings with bakery owners and briefed them about the paper packaging and harmful effects of single-use plastic packaging. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, he couldn't continue his visits to bakeries, so he conducted awareness seminars for college and school students and requested them to explain the idea to their local bakeries. He also posted his ideas on social media to make more people aware of this.

Some bakeries at Midnapore who used single-use plastic packaging for bread are now using paper packaging. Other bakeries are also convinced to use paper packaging.

## Learning from Tide Turners

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge helped Pulak realise the entrepreneurial potential in him and pushed him to create a change in his city.













Being a life science student and a researcher, Eldon's topic of interest is to discover new things or maybe new additions to science. A keen researcher, questioning things around him helped develop this behaviour. He is also a musician, hence feels he can communicate with the environment around him through music as well.

## We Have a Littering Problem

Eldon undertook research on plastics and realised that they are a much bigger problem than we assume it to be, and every day, we make it worse with our actions.

He also observed that educating children is the best way to create a behavioural change towards plastic.

## Making Children the Change Makers

His findings and observations persuaded Eldon to create awareness about the three R's: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

He started teaching young children to start collecting plastics or litter nearby and help them understand that as educated individuals, we must be responsible for keeping the environment clean and the living organisms in it healthy. This created a positive impact in the area as children started to keep their own surroundings

# MEET ELDON P SOHSLEY

📍 Shillong, Meghalaya

clean by not allowing any plastics.

He and the children started collecting plastics in the area nearby and when people questioned why he was doing it, Eldon took the opportunity to explain the harm plastic does to the environment.

He realised that when children speak about an issue, it caught the attention of others and people tend to listen more intently. So, he started teaching children about the ill effects of plastics and how one can create a change through our efforts. He kept it simple and scientific so as to be easy for any common man to take in.

This helped in creating awareness and knowledge amongst the local people. However, more was needed to be done as it takes vast experience in this field to help imprint this on their consciousness. However, spreading awareness through pictures and social media helped them to grab a glimpse of the story.

★  
Tide  
Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★

**Age:** 21 years

**Institute:** Shillong College

**Target Audience:** Children

**Intervention:** Awareness



*"Staying focused and persistence is the only key. Before quitting, remember why we started and have faith in yourself which will lead you through the journey."*

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## Learning from Tide Turners

The challenge has highly benefited Eldon and everyone around him. However, the value of this challenge cannot be defined without success. Eldon says, **"It has enlightened my knowledge on how plastic can do so much harm to not only the environment but also to all lifeforms on Earth. It has also developed my practical and theoretical knowledge. It has helped me view things from a different perspective and to foresee the future and the outcomes that plastic can destroy not only the environment but also push living organisms to the brink of extinction."**







Leonard is a trained graduate teacher in Art Education in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Diphu, Assam. He is part of the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge since he was a teacher at a Fine Arts College and as a Scout Master. His hobbies include painting, sculpting, acting, singing, writing articles, and sports.

# MEET LEONARD BEY

📍 Diphu, Assam

## We Have a Footprint Problem

Preserving a greener world is one of the most challenging tasks. Our increasing footprint is creating a negative impact on the environment. Being an Art Teacher and the Pre-Alt Scout Master, Leonard feels responsible to pass on the message of maintaining the balance of life and to move ahead in tandem with the world.

As he participated in the challenge, he began by calculating his own footprint. Though the numbers were not impressive, he realised that he could easily reduce his plastic footprint by reducing the use of plastics.

## Making Individual Actions Count

Leonard created a list of actions that would help him reduce his footprint. He started using alternative materials like paper bags, wooden spoons, pottery and other ceramics, in place of plastic products. He also sold unused plastics, old iron, to a local scrap dealer/ kabadiwala who in return sells them to a recycler. When he realised that action was needed on a community level, he started creating awareness in his group, school, friends and family.

He has successfully created awareness among more than 700 students and scouts and guides.

★  
Tide  
Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★



**Age:** 39 years  
**Institute:** Kendriya Vidyalaya Diphu  
(Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan)  
**Target Audience:** Individual  
**Intervention:** Individual Action



*Preserving a greener world is one of the most challenging tasks. Our increasing footprint is creating a negative impact on the environment.*

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## Learning from Tide Turners

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge has helped Leonard take individual actions. It has also enabled him to extend his reach from individuals to groups and to a wider world.







Subhanka is an avid reader and is interested in public speaking and community service. He has been an NSS Volunteer for the last 3 years and has been working on providing free education to underprivileged children. For the last 2 years he and his team have been working with the children from 2 villages. As a result, the school dropout ratio of that area has fallen from 73% to 29%.

## We Have a Village Problem

As part of educating the children, Subhankar sensitises them about the environment. When he participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, he observed the problem of plastic had not spared his village.

The villagers used products packed in single-use plastic bags. But they did not know the right way to dispose properly. They were also unaware of the concepts of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. The waste found its way into the rivers, polluting them and thus becoming a risk for villagers, cattle and aquatic life.

# MEET SUBHANKAR DEY

📍 Tezpur, Assam

## Community Action Creates Greater Impact

Subhankar's solution to the plastic menace was to start a campaign among the schools and college going youths of his village on how to reuse the usable plastic bottles.

His team cleaned the village rivers afloat with plastic bottles and packets. He further educated the villagers not to throw away the plastic waste materials. He also started rewarding people who cleaned their surroundings and made others aware of the plastic problem and helped keep the village clean. The campaign and his various initiatives significantly reduced the use of plastics in his village.



**Age:** 21 years

**Institute:** Rangapara College

**Target Audience:** Villagers

**Intervention:** Awareness and  
Community Participation



## Learning from Tide Turners

Tide Turners helped him create an impact in his own village and create a momentum among his peers to take it farther to other villages.



*"Plastic problems are now everyone's problem."*

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From a very early age, Ashmita has been exposed to opportunities that helped her learn about the environment. Her father has been her inspiration throughout Ashmita's growing years. He has taught her to be sensitive towards nature, to give back, and take care of it.

Even though she always aspired to become a doctor, she's been very active in extracurricular activities right from sports to arts and crafts to creative writing, public speaking as well as treks and excursions. She hates to miss out on anything!

## We Have an Addiction Problem

After attending various Tide Turners workshops, it struck her that even if she considered herself a somewhat environmentally literate individual, it was not enough. In fact, she needed to do better. She realised that you cannot help but blame yourself for contributing to this problem when you get to know the facts and figures and the time it takes for the plastic to perish or be recycled.

It was very much evident that this easy life of disposables and plastic shopping bags was like an addiction. Single use plastics encourage our lazy lifestyles, lifestyles that will ruin our ecosystems! The time is not far away when we will not be able to teach the younger generation about the sea life, the wildlife and the things they will miss out on. We will have to hold ourselves accountable.

# MEET DR. ASHMITA PHUKAN

📍 Assam

## Changing Habits will Change the Future

Ashmita realised that to solve the problem we all had to track where we were going wrong and it did not surprise her that our daily habits and our lifestyles were the reasons for this problem.

It was crucial to draw everyone's attention to this singular choice of single-use goods, and show how it causes a lifetime of unintentional damage to the environment. Ashmita motivated and encouraged her peers and college students to adopt healthier habits, starting off small, and gradually expanding their changes. Habits like carrying their own water bottles, straws, and cloth bags to run their errands, were some examples. She even encouraged the cafes on campus to switch to metal or wooden cutlery to serve their food.

Seeing such drastic changes in her college campus she was excited inspired her to take the initiative to her hometown in Assam. Ashmita organized poster



**Age:** 23 years  
**Target Audience:** College students  
**Intervention:** Awareness



*"We need to take care of nature if we want to see better days ahead."*

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campaigns and workshops for the school-going children who were more connected to nature than the children in metropolitan cities. She appreciated the participation of parents and teachers too. The schools adopted a waste management system where children were instructed to separate their recyclable and non-recyclable waste. The beautifully illustrated and colorful posters were displayed in the local shops which helped the locals become more aware of the issue and help towards making a change.

### **Learning from Tide Turners**

Asmita believes, "When you take responsibility for a certain issue as a leader, people look up to you, especially children. You become their role model and you make sure you set the best examples to lead your crowd in the best way possible." According to her, being a part of this journey has not only made her self-aware but also helped her become bold to raise her voice where it is

required, for a cause that needs to be looked at. She is thankful for the opportunity to make a difference in this world, to inculcate values in the society where we will witness visible changes, and to always love nature and take care of it to see better days ahead.









# ECO-CLUBS AND MORE







Dr. Himanshu Pandey is renowned for his sustainable practices and contributions towards saving the environment. He is a certified teacher from Paryavaran Mitra. He is an active member of the Innovative Scouts Group with Bharat Scouts and Guide and one of the founding members of Innovative Eco Club with Govt. Inter College, Khairna.

## We Have a Rural Problem

The utmost concern that bothers Dr. Pandey is that the scope of segregation and collection of Single-Use Plastics in rural areas is very limited and being technologically impaired, these areas are left out of the awareness campaigns. The pandemic magnified the problem beyond control.

## Going Digital Empowered Remote Areas

But the initiation of an online Tide Turners Plastic Challenge has changed the scenario for everyone and scouts and guides have been able to reach even the remote areas and sought their contribution.

Dr. Pandey thinks that the SUP minimizing concept through the Tide Turners challenge was a superb idea. The onset

# MEET DR HIMANSHU PANDEY

📍 Uttarakhand

of various tasks for the Tide Turners challenge has made their eco club more dynamic and dedicated to the cause.

Under his guidance, more than 180 registrations were made, and the scouts were able to interact with 50 students, each of whom amplified the message of 'Say No to Single Use Plastic'.

He prides himself in being a part of the school which was the only school in the entire state of Uttarakhand to be doing such work. The participants were overjoyed with the recognition they received and this pushed them forward on the sustainable path.

## Eco-friendly Celebrations

Dr. Pandey also recalls this year's Holi Mahotsava in which 196 students and 17 teachers celebrated an eco-friendly Holi and winners of various competitions were felicitated with flower pots.

They also replaced plastic cutlery used during



## Innovative Scout Group & Eco Club GIC Khairna

**Target Audience:** Rural Community  
**Intervention:** Awareness



*“After completion of the task, we came to know that ours was the only team in the whole of Uttarakhand who was working on Tide Turners challenge and it felt like a national level achievement for us and we were overwhelmed.”*

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the festival with wooden ones. The concept of making GIFs was warmly welcomed by the members of the eco club and the readiness he saw in his students was incredible.

### **“Plastic Tide Turners” Connects All**

Plastic Tide Turners is the digital group which connects all the district and state officials including district secretaries, district organizing commissioners, district training commissioners, block secretaries and the leaders of eco clubs and scout groups. This ensures that everyone is updated about the tasks undertaken, participants involved, performance of the participants and their impact on the society.



### **The Future is Ours**

Dr. Pandey’s eco club and scout group have also collaborated with WIPRO and are planning on constructing a butterfly park in the district. He has solemnly sworn to take part in Tide Turners challenge every year and enlarge his buffer zone to include all the 20000 students of his district and many more from the neighbouring ones.





A man of few words and great actions, Mr. Suresh Kumar D. Nagla has led his school to become one of the Tide Turners award winning schools for the year 2021. Mr. Suresh is an eco-club coordinator and keeps his students engaged in different environment activities and programs. His belief is that better and continuous engagement will create the awareness for a sustainable future.

## We Have an Engagement Problem

Mr. Suresh fell short of activities to engage his students in learning about the environment and making them aware about the grave problem of single-use plastic. He also wanted to make the community at large responsible for its actions. The pandemic posed further challenges to keep the students engaged.

## A Judicious Mix of Online and Offline Activities does the Trick

When the students participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, the teachers elaborated on the excessive use of plastic and its disadvantages, especially SUPs. Video films and pictures showing the harmful effects of plastics were shared to create awareness about the impact of their

# MEET SURESH KUMAR D. NAGLA

📍 Gujarat

actions. The students were oriented about alternatives to SUPs which helped them to undertake simple activities to stop the usage of single-use plastics.

They made paper bags and distributed them to local shopkeepers with the intent to create awareness about the harmful impacts of SUPs. The local people were encouraged to use cloth bags for daily grocery shopping instead of plastic bags. The school distributed cloth bags to the locals to motivate them.

The school also organized a competition to create awareness about cleanliness. A special street cleanliness drive called **"Potani Sheri Sauthi Swatch" -Our Street/Alley is the Cleanest!** was organized by students. All the parents, teachers and locals encouraged the efforts of the students and fully supported their amazing work.



**Principal,  
Ansodar Primary School,  
Amreli, Gujarat**

**Target Audience:** Students & Parents  
**Intervention:** Awareness



*"I used single-use plastic thoughtlessly before I joined the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge. During the challenge I realised that I was using too much plastic."*

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## Tide Turners Broadens Horizon

The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge helped the students learn about the bigger problem of plastics that India and the world faces today. They also came to know about simple acts and step by step processes that can be taken up by individuals to contribute to a safer and greener environment. The challenge and winning the Tide Turners Champions award has taken their motivation to another level.

## Small Acts Continue for a Greener Future

Mr. Suresh inspires students to celebrate the "Green Diwali, Healthy Diwali" program every year. The children also celebrate Raksha Bandhan by tying rakhis to trees.

The school also has a functioning seed bank and invites parents to a meet every Sunday to discuss environmental pollution. It also conducts an award ceremony to felicitate

children and the residents that keep the cleanest street in the town.

Their efforts towards a greener future continue.







The Bharat Scouts and Guides, Bihar, is an extremely strong and active group of young girls and boys who work on mass movement to address various societal problems. They are truly committed to the power of many.

Under the guidance of Mr. Rituraj, Bharat Scouts and Guides, Vaishali, Bihar, they have set an example for future BSGs to follow. Its exemplary work during Tide Turners Plastic Challenge has created a policy level impact in the state of Bihar.

## We Have an Implementation Problem

When these youngsters participated in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, they realised the power of a mass movement to persuade local bodies and governments to take stringent actions against single use plastic. It was imperative to deal with the problem head on if it were to be solved.

## Initiated Sankalp Abhiyan

Under BSG Bihar, the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge was taken up in the entire state of Bihar. 1535 young scouts and guides took the challenge and amplified it to different cities. To enable this, "Sankalp Abhiyan" was launched and 50,000 youths of Bihar state took a pledge, "I will remove plastic from my daily life!"

They conducted a series of online

# MEET RITURAJ

📍 Vaishali, Bihar

webinars, offline seminars, awareness programs through various mediums and activities to spread awareness regarding single use plastic, extensively across Bihar.

The Bihar Scouts and Guides also conducted online activities like painting, essay writing and quiz competitions to create awareness amongst children about the impacts of single-use plastic products.

## Bringing Policy Change on Single-Use Plastics

The BSG team reported this issue to the state government to seek support from them and requested them to ban single-use plastic products. They continually advocated the ban of single-use plastic through various communication channels, activities and awareness programmes. Their perseverance paid off and the Bihar Government completely banned single-use plastic products and implemented this law, punishing defaulters a fine of 1 Lakh rupees and 5 years of

**District Organization Commissioner cum State Coordinator, Bharat Scouts and Guides, Vaishali**

**Target Audience:** Scouts & Guides

**Intervention:** Awareness & Policy





*Their perseverance paid off and the Bihar Government completely banned single-use plastic products and implemented this law, punishing defaulters a fine of 1 Lakh rupees and 5 years of imprisonment if caught.*

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imprisonment if caught.

Achieving a ban on single use plastic was no small feat. The BSG's efforts were lauded by the local press and state governments. **Mr. Sam Barratt, Chief of the Youth, Education and Advocacy Unit in UNEP's Ecosystems Division and Co-Chair of the UN Higher Education Sustainability** personally congratulated them by tweeting about their work.

### **Digital Mass Movement with Tide Turners**

BSG Bihar was able to create a momentum with Tide Turners. The Tide Turners Plastic Challenge played a crucial role during the pandemic to bring thousands of young people together. The Challenge fired their zeal to win and geared them up to intensify efforts to ban single-use plastic. It was a great example of the digital mass movement which received accolades across India.





With the help of teacher coordinator - Ms. Mitali Mehta and Guide parent - Mr. Ivan A. Sequiera, students of Hansraj Morarji Public School, Andheri, Mumbai, participated in Tide Turners Plastic Challenge as a group and brought positive changes in the school, their families and neighbourhood.



**Coordinator,**  
**Hansraj Morarji Public School**  
**Group (HMPS), Andheri, Mumbai**

**Target Audience:** Students  
**Intervention:** Awareness

# MEET MITALI MEHTA

📍 Mumbai, Maharashtra

## We have a 'Don't Know' Problem

Ms. Mitali reveals that prior to the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, hardly anyone was aware about what they should do about plastic pollution. They were a part of the problem since they were using SUPs but were not able to identify solutions to overcome the problem. With the Tide Turners Challenge, she could motivate students, parents, family members, relatives, and neighbours to recycle plastic.

## Converting Information to Understanding

Ms. Mitali has been in charge of the Green Brigade Club of HMPS school for the last 10 years. She considers plastic is wealth if it is recycled in a proper manner. She acknowledges that the Tide Turners Challenge contributed greatly in creating awareness among the students about the usage of Single-Use Plastic.

Her students and she worked diligently during the entire process from collection to recycling. The students were made to collect plastic products every day and make diary entries. Every Friday, they would deposit their collection at the main entrance of the school, and recorded their participation with selfies. Residents from neighbouring areas began to deposit plastic waste too, motivated by the enthusiasm they witnessed in students and teachers!

## Promoting Recycling and Combating Pollution

The Eco club of Hansraj Morarji Public School, Andheri, Mumbai, brought about positive change in their school by forging a partnership with a recycling company.

A group of students of the Harit Club, has been collecting plastic bottles for the past year but participation in the Tide Turners Challenge encouraged more students to participate in this challenge. Since the beginning, their main



## Learning from the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge

Mitali acknowledges that the challenge acted as a guiding path for them. Even the lockdown couldn't shake the zeal of these students to actively participate in the Tide Turner Plastic Challenge.

Their persistence got them recognition from Bisleri. The students were provided with the opportunity to visit the recycling centres of the company to comprehend the process of recycling.

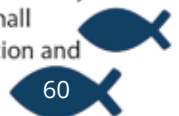
An innovative idea was sought by the school authorities to make sure everyone played her/his part in this challenge. The school used the plastic material to create school ID cards for the students.

## Huge Plans Beyond the Tide Turners Challenge

HMPS targets a collection of 5000 kg of plastic by the end of this year and Mitali and her team are also trying to reach 4 other schools in Andheri to make them part of this noble idea.

The school is also planning to publish a book highlighting all the activities undertaken during the period of this challenge and the impacts they had on the society.

Mitali describes her work in a nutshell as "reinventing the wheel" and she is looking forward to increased participation by students as these are only small stepstaken in the right direction and they have a long way to go.



*"Every day is a challenge as it is a dynamic ongoing process. This is not about plastic; this is about a paradigm shift in living."*

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objective had been to deposit plastic waste from their daily routines, and with each passing day it became successful. The recycling company picked up the weekly deposited waste.

HMPS School also has an MOU with Bisleri, India, for recycling plastic. Since then, the school has collected 1800 Kgs of plastic bottles for the recycling process. They have also surveyed 660 people to study the users' perception on this and make them aware and motivated regarding plastic waste and its impact.

To honour the continuous efforts and engagement of students, Bisleri awarded the school a bench made from 40 kgs of recycled plastic waste!







Rinku Das is an assistant teacher of physics in West Bengal. Her students have been participating in the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge since 2019, and one of them has also become a champion. But she took the challenge in 2021, to investigate the local issues related to Single-Use Plastic.

### There is a Household Problem

Rinku's main inspiration to work on SUPs came from the amount of plastic waste that is generated in households and the waste that is added to the landfills on a regular basis. In the beginning, the neighbours were reluctant to segregate and dispose of the waste. They refused to collect waste at source, as the collection van would not collect from their area.

During her Tide Turners' journey, Rinku met several individuals, environmental organisations and local administration bodies to understand their views on SUPs. Most of them told her that SUPs should be banned locally first, then nationally. But the local administration had a number of excuses not to ban SUPs, as they feared losing their vote bank.

# MEET RINKU DAS

📍 West Bengal

### Communication Helped

Since the major roadblock was convincing the locals to start implementing things on the ground, Rinku began sharing verbal and written communication in the native language with her neighbours, sensitising them about SUPs, giving alternatives to single-use plastic, and showing appropriate methods of disposal.

She researched the alternatives to single-use plastic and created awareness amongst people across her network to adapt to a sustainable lifestyle. The solution that she came up with is not an innovation but it was worth creating momentum. Since her neighbours refused to collect the waste at source as the collection van did not stop by, she allowed them to deposit their waste in her own house. She would dispose of the waste in a proper manner to recyclers. She made sure that the waste she handed over went through the proper channel for decomposition.

At the community level, she started organizing awareness drives and contacted local NGOs for waste collection. Also, she spread the word

★  
Tide  
Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★

**Teacher, Baruipur Girls' High School, Baruipur, West Bengal**

**Target Audience:** Students & Community  
**Intervention:** Awareness & Community Engagement



## Learning from the Tide Turners

The skill that she acquired is the ability to communicate with residents and the administration. She also communicated with NGOs. She realized that awareness about the plastic pollution did not translate to implementation in daily life. According to her, we need a strong awareness drive to motivate people to do so.



## The Way Forward

Currently, Rinku is pursuing research on micro-plastics under the aegis of Calcutta University.

She also found a few aspects where the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge could be taken to the masses by creating content in the vernacular languages. The videos linked to the website could be recorded in local languages for better understanding. Also, if on ground activities are allowed, street plays and skits could help with stronger engagement with the community. She is more than happy to be a part of such initiatives.



*“The problem with SUP is deep rooted. There is no place on Earth where plastic is absent.”*

regarding waste segregation. It was her efforts with the support of local NGOs that persuaded the collection van to stop door to door. She also wrote to the municipal corporation and other active groups to support her work.

## Partnership and Community Action for Recycling

With the aim to investigate the local issues related to Single-Use Plastics, Ms. Das, along with her students, conducted focus group discussions with environmental organisations, the local administration and communities.

Under her supervision, the group collected and segregated about 6 kg of plastic waste. They also organised various awareness competitions for students. They have successfully partnered with a recycler with help from a local NGO for regular collection of segregated waste.





★  
Tide  
Turners  
Champion  
2021  
★

**Educator,**  
**Govt. Naveen Higher Secondary**  
**School, Chuna Bhatti**

**Target Audience:** College students  
**Intervention:** Awareness

# MEET VANDANA PANDEY

📍 Madhya Pradesh

## We have a Health Problem

Eating or drinking from disposable plates and containers, packing food in plastics, makes us consume microplastics almost every day. The innocent animals are at a greater risk as they cannot and do not know how to remove food from plastics. Heartbroken by the death of her only cow due to intake of plastic bags along with food, Vandana decided to start campaigns to protect other animals from suffering the same fate.

## A Sincere Appeal and Efforts Bear Fruit

Vandana urges people to use utensils from their home or paper plates to feed both domestic and stray animals. She has been constantly organizing various awareness drives and activities to make the students understand the harmful effects of Single-Use Plastics and the impact they have on

our environment.

Her efforts have been extended to family members of the students and also to other teachers of the school along with her own contacts. She firmly believes in the idea of RRR (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and the students also share the same ideals with her.

Vandana came up with the idea of reusing the plastic bottles to plant trees, and with cooperation from her students, she magnified this plastic reusing technique to be adopted by the masses. She claims that her students have been performing very well even in the online mode and the report presented by her school resonates the incredible work done.

## Transforming with the Tide Turners Challenge

She believes that the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge has helped her students to express their thoughts through participation in activities such as poster making, slogan writing, making decorative items with plastics. It has



*"I used to feed my cow in a plastic bag. After she accidentally consumed the bag too, she died. I was very fond of her and it was a setback for me. After that I decided to create awareness about the harmful effects of plastics and advised everyone to feed animals on paper plates."*

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brought about significant transformation in the plastic used by the students and they have adhered to the idea of reusing and recycling of SUPs.

### **Commitment towards the Environment Continues**

Before joining the challenge, Vandana and her students did a lot of work on eco-bricks, which they will continue to do. They are also highly enthused to take the awareness campaign beyond their school and sensitise the society around them.





4 R S TOP



Single-use plastic







SAVE OUR EARTH

WE IN THE TOGETH

SAY NO TO SUPS

RECYCLE

X

NO TO PLASTIC

Illustration of a person cleaning a beach with a bag.

Illustration of a hand holding a reusable cup.

Illustration of a vertical garden using recycled plastic bottles.

Reusable Cloth Pads

Illustration of two reusable cloth pads.





The Young  
Leaders Plastic  
Challenge



clean  
seas  
turn the tide  
on plastic



CEE

Centre for Environment Education