

# Nirman: An initiative to solve societal challenges

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**Nagpur:** Dr Shweta Dubey, who is currently studying at GMC Yavatmal, had some difficulty opening up to new people. This was before she enrolled for Nirman, which is an initiative to sensitize the youth to turn change-makers in order to solve various societal challenges by providing guidance and a suitable environment.

"I had also planned to study in the US, but later realized that my reasons for doing so were weak and unconvincing. Nirman taught me that my introversion shouldn't stop me from expressing my opinions and thoughts with other people. It made me go through encouraging work and understand that good research can be done in our country as well," said the 21-year-old.



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**GROOMING PROCESS:** Each batch of around 75 selected youths goes through a series of three residential camps that are organized once in every 6 months

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**AMRUT BANG | PROGRAMME COORDINATOR**

Initiated by Dr Abhay and Dr Rani Bang, founders of SEARCH foundation in Gadchiroli, Nirman was started as a programme under SEARCH in 2006.

In 2008, SEARCH collaborated with Maharashtra

Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL).

SEARCH has revolutionized health care for the poorest in India and overseen a programme that has substantially reduced infant mortality rates in one of the

Total participants so far	<b>873</b>
Medical participants	<b>365</b>
Engineering participants	<b>232</b>
Districts represented across Maharashtra	<b>34</b> out of <b>36</b>
Total participants from Nagpur so far	<b>35</b>
Nirman alumni engaged full-time in social sector	<b>175</b>

most poverty-stricken areas. There have been 35 participants from Nagpur so far in Nirman across various batches, all of whom have a story to tell.

A new branch of Nirman will start in 2018. Those wan-

ting to participate in the upcoming batch of Nirman can submit applications by August 15 through the Nirman website.

"The current education system gives a lot of information, occasionally a few skills, but does not give its participants sense of purpose. And so, 'what should I do with my life?' remains an unanswered question for most people. Very few get a chance to actively search for an answer. In order to change this situation and staying true to the very purpose of education, Nirman encourages search for the development of one's life mission, something which is intellectually stimulating and emotionally satisfying," says programme coordinator Amrut Bang.

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# 'Nirman changed my life choices'

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Ranjan Pandhare, a resident of Bende layout, was 18 when he joined the one-year programme. "I was studying civil engineering at National Academy of Construction, but didn't know what approach I wanted to adopt and what my purpose was. Nirman gave me a perspective on how I can implement my studies in things like micro-irrigation. I saw people working on realistic social projects and realized what it is to be the change," says the 25-year old who works as an engineer with BAIF Foundation.

Pandhare has worked in highly epidemic malaria zone for a project on the same, as well as a de-addiction campaign in Gadchiroli.

As part of the Nirman educational process, each batch of around 75 selected youths goes through a series of three residential camps that are organized once in every 6 months (generally January, June and December). Each camp is of about 8-10 days, conducted at Shodhgram, Gadchiroli, and the series continues for one year.

Dr Prathmesh Hemnani was inspired to leave his doc-



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tor parents' support in Mumbai and opted to utilize his medical practice in Gadchiroli district. "I had an inner feeling that I want a change in the society. That time I did not know how to go about it," he said.

"When I came to Nirman, it posed a crucial question which then changed my further life choices, 'where am I needed as a doctor?' Am I really needed in a big city where there is over saturation of doctors or am I needed in rural/ tribal parts of the country where people are still dying of malaria and pneumonia?" he added.