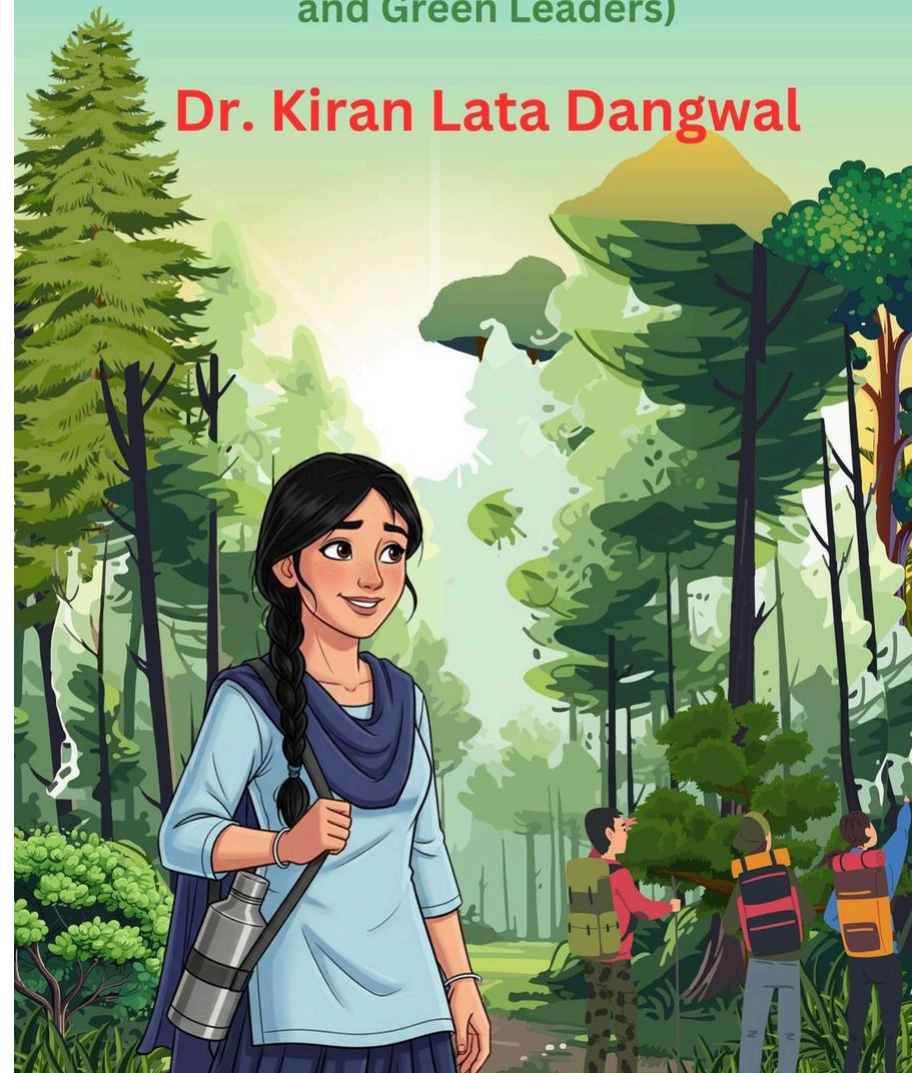


Eco Tales & Action Trails: Meera's Digital Journey to a Plastic-Free Campus

(A Storybook Guide for Students, Teachers,
and Green Leaders)

Dr. Kiran Lata Dangwal



Eco Tales & Action Trails: Meera's Digital Journey to a Plastic-Free Campus

*(A Storybook Guide for Students,
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Chapter 1: The Hills That Spoke

Seventeen-year-old **Meera** had always loved her hill town.

From her bedroom window, she could see the sun rise over pine-covered slopes, hear the songs of the mountain birds, and smell the fresh scent of wildflowers after every rain.

But over the years, something else had crept into her paradise-**PLASTIC**

The once-clear stream near her school now carried empty chip packets.

The winding path to the classrooms was dotted with discarded bottles.

Even the cool mountain breeze sometimes carried the rustling sound of polythene bags stuck in bushes.

One chilly morning, as Meera walked to school with her steel bottle slung over her shoulder, she saw a crumpled plastic wrapper lying at the school gate.

She bent down, picked it up, and stared at it for a moment.

Meera



Listen Story in Gaharwali
Language
गढ़वाली भाषा में कहानी सुनें

Chapter 1.....

Her friends laughed,

“Why bother, Meera? There’s plastic everywhere. One wrapper won’t change anything.”

But as Meera stood there, holding that wrapper in her hand, she felt the hills staring back at her—silent, tired, and suffocated. And then, a thought came rushing into her mind:

“If no one starts, the hills will drown in plastic. Why not me?”

Her heart beat faster. It was a small thought, but in that moment, it felt like the beginning of something much bigger. That single decision, made at the school gate, gave birth to what would soon be known as the **Plastic-Free Campus Campaign**.

💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Observe your surroundings.** Change often begins with noticing what’s wrong around you.
- **Write down your “Why.”** It doesn’t have to be big or perfect. Just one honest reason can ignite a movement.
- **Start small.** One wrapper. One step. One person. That’s how revolutions begin.

Let's think

If you were in Meera’s place, standing at the school gate with a single plastic wrapper in your hand while your friends told you it wouldn’t make a difference, what would you do next—and how would you convince others to join you?

यदि आप मीरा की जगह होते और स्कूल के गेट पर हाथ में एक प्लास्टिक रैपर लेकर खड़े होते, जबकि आपके दोस्त आपसे कहते कि इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा, तो आप आगे क्या करते - और आप दूसरों को अपने साथ शामिल होने के लिए कैसे राजी करते?



**One girl, one step
Ready to turn the tide against plastic.**

Chapter 2: Digital Seeds in the Mountains

The day after Meera picked up that plastic wrapper, she couldn't stop thinking about it.

Even during class, while the teacher spoke about environmental conservation, her eyes wandered to the windows.

She saw the hills-majestic, green, and patient-almost as if they were waiting for someone to fight for them.

When school ended, Meera ran home.

She sat at her small wooden desk, surrounded by her textbooks, a slightly cracked laptop, and a slow but determined internet connection.



The world outside was quiet except for the sound of the wind and the occasional bleating of goats.

But inside her heart, an idea had started roaring.

"If I can't clean the whole world, I can start with my campus," she whispered.

Meera knew she couldn't do it alone.

She needed a plan-and in the hills, plans spread fastest through **digital tools**.



**अध्याय 2: डिजिटल बीज
चला सुणदा कहानी गढ़वाली माँ !**

Chapter 2

Then, she designed colorful posters on **Canva**. Bright green and blue, with slogans like:

"Plastic-Free Peaks!"

"One Campus, One Change."

With a deep breath, she shared the survey link and posters on her school's **WhatsApp groups**.

At first, silence. No one replied.

But then, her phone buzzed. One message. Then five. Then twenty. Students started filling out the form. Within two days, **150 students** had responded. Some even wrote comments:

"This is a good idea!"

"Can we do a clean-up drive?"

"I'm in!"

Meera's heart swelled. She wasn't alone.

That night, as she stared at her laptop screen glowing in the darkness of her small room, she realized something powerful:

Change doesn't wait for permission-it starts the moment you press 'send.'

💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Start with research.** Use tools like **Google Forms** to understand the problem.
- **Make it visual.** Free tools like **Canva** can help create posters and graphics that grab attention.
- **Go where people are.** Whether it's WhatsApp, Telegram, or Instagram, use platforms where your community is most active.
- **Don't wait for perfect.** Launch small, learn fast, and grow big.



अध्याय 2: डिजिटल बीज
कहानी गढ़वाली माँ !

Chapter 3: Hashtags and Hills

By now, Meera's small campaign had a heartbeat. Students were filling out surveys, sharing ideas, and even asking how they could help. But she knew that if this was going to become a real movement, it needed a voice -something that could echo beyond the campus walls and climb the hills.

That night, under a sky full of stars, Meera sat on her balcony with her steel bottle beside her and her phone in hand.

She opened Instagram and typed out the name for her new page:

@PlasticFreePeaks

Her fingers trembled with excitement as she hit "Create." This wasn't just an account. It was going to be a digital campfire where everyone could gather, share, and inspire.

She posted her first image: a photo of the hills with the words:

"Our mountains deserve better. Join the Plastic-Free Campus movement. 🌱 #PlasticFreeCampus"

At first, nothing happened. One like. Two likes. But by the end of the day, her phone wouldn't stop buzzing. Classmates were tagging each other. Some students reshared her post. Even a few teachers left encouraging comments.



💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Create a campaign identity.** Pick a simple, memorable name and hashtag.
- **Make it shareable.** Use short videos (Reels or Shorts) that inspire quick action.
- **Build a pledge wall.** Digital recognition motivates people and shows the power of collective action.
- **Celebrate every milestone.** Even a single teacher's comment or a handful of likes can be the spark you need.

अध्याय 3: हैशटैग अर पाख्यौ :
डिजिटल उड़ान की शुरुआत

Chapter 3....

Encouraged, Meera decided to make it more engaging. She recorded short **Instagram Reels**:

- One showed her switching from a plastic bottle to a steel one.
- Another featured her friend refusing a plastic straw at the tea stall.
- A third reel? Just a timelapse of her picking up wrappers along the school path, with text that read: ***"One step at a time."***

Within a week, the hashtag **#PlasticFreeCampus** had more than 500 mentions.

Students were posting their own videos and tagging the page.

But the real surprise came when her principal commented on one post:

"Proud of you, Meera! Let's make this official!"

Meera couldn't believe it. What started with one wrapper had now caught the attention of the entire school. The hills felt like they were watching, nodding in quiet approval.

Hashtags and Hills

And then, Meera added the feature that made the campaign explode: ***The Digital Pledge Wall***.

She built it using a simple website builder.

Every time a student pledged to go plastic-free, their name appeared on a scrolling banner online. By the end of the first week, over 200 names danced across the screen.

For the first time, Meera didn't feel like a lone voice in the mountains—she felt like the leader of a movement.



अध्याय 3: हैशटैग अर पाख्यौं : डिजिटल उड़ान की शुरुआत

Chapter 4: Turning Green into a Game

The Plastic-Free Campus Campaign was growing. Meera's Instagram page had become the talk of the school. The pledge wall was filling up fast, and students were posting their plastic-free swaps every day.

But Meera knew something important: *excitement fades if it's not made fun.*

One evening, while sitting at her desk, staring at the glowing pledge wall, she thought,

💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Gamify participation.** Turn actions into challenges and rewards.
- **Use a leaderboard.** Public recognition motivates people.
- **Design simple rewards.** Badges, certificates, or shout-outs cost nothing but create huge excitement.
- **Celebrate visibly.** End every challenge with an event that reinforces the new habit.

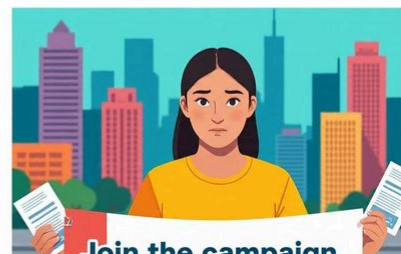


Meera creating '7-Day Plastic-Free Challenge' poster on Canva

"What if we make it a challenge? Something so fun that even the laziest student would join?"

And that's how the **7-Day Plastic-Free Digital Challenge** started.

अध्याय 4: खेल बनी कैपेन



The Challenge

Meera designed a colorful challenge poster on Canva and shared it across Instagram, WhatsApp, and the school's notice board.

Each day had a simple task:

1 Day 1: Bring your own reusable water bottle.

2 Day 2: Refuse plastic straws—post a picture with #NoStrawChallenge.

3 Day 3: Reuse your lunchbox instead of buying packaged snacks.

4 Day 4: Pick up 5 pieces of plastic waste and dispose of them properly.

5 Day 5: Share one creative idea to replace plastic.

6 Day 6: Convince a friend to join the campaign.

7 Day 7: Celebrate with a plastic-free picnic!

Students who completed each day posted proof online and tagged [@PlasticFreePeaks](#).

Meera created a [leaderboard](#) using [Google Sheets](#), updating it every evening.

Each participant earned [Green Points](#), and at the end of the week, winners would receive [Eco Badges](#)—beautiful digital awards she designed herself.

The Reaction

The first day, only 30 students joined. By the third day, the whole school was buzzing with competition.

- Raj, the class prankster, turned the “No Straw Challenge” into a hilarious reel that went viral locally.
- Priya, who never posted anything online, proudly shared a photo of her new cloth lunch bag.
- Even teachers joined in. Mr. Ramesh, the math teacher, carried his steel tiffin and wrote, “Count me in!”

By Day 7, over **300 students** had completed the challenge. The school’s digital pledge wall was overflowing with names.

And at the plastic-free picnic on the final day, the hillside campus was full of laughter, reusable plates, and not a single piece of plastic trash in sight.



The Turning Point

The gamification didn’t just make it fun, it made it a movement.

Students weren’t just following rules; they were competing, creating, and owning the campaign.

That night, Meera looked at the leaderboard and smiled.

***“This isn’t just my campaign anymore,” she whispered.
“It belongs to everyone.”***

And the hills, as always, stood silently behind her, as if nodding in agreement.

अध्याय 4: खेल बनी कैपेन

Chapter 5: Convincing Uncle Gopal

By now, Meera's Plastic-Free Campus Campaign was transforming her school. Students carried steel bottles, reusable lunchboxes were a trend, and the pledge wall was growing every single day.

But there was still one problem—a stubborn one.

Just outside the school gate stood **Uncle Gopal's tea stall**, the heart of every student's after-class ritual. His steaming cups of chai and hot pakoras were legendary. But so were the **plastic cups** he used.

Every day, dozens of empty plastic cups ended up on the ground, rolling down the slope, some even landing in the nearby stream.

Meera knew if the campaign was to be real, it couldn't stop at the school gate, it had to reach Uncle Gopal.

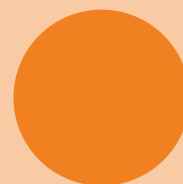


One afternoon, she walked up to his stall. Gopal, with his salt-and-pepper beard and a warm smile, greeted her.

"Meera beta, chai?"

"Yes, Uncle," Meera said, then added gently, "But can I bring my own steel cup?"

Gopal chuckled. "Why, what's wrong with my cups?"



अध्याय 5: गोपाल का टी-स्टाल
बदलाव की एक प्याली

Chapter 5

Meera didn't scold or argue. Instead, she pulled out her phone.

"Uncle, look at this," she said, opening a **Google Slides** presentation she'd made. It was simple, but powerful:

- ***A slide showing how many plastic cups his stall used in a week.***
- ***A slide showing the cost of switching to paper or letting students bring their own cups.***
- ***A final slide with photos of plastic waste scattered near his stall.***

Gopal scratched his head. **"Arrey, I didn't know it was this bad..."**

Meera smiled. "Uncle, if we all bring our own cups or you will use mud cups, you won't have to spend extra money.

And your stall could even become the first *Plastic-Free Chai Point* in the hills!"

💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Engage local vendors.** Show them how change can save money, attract customers, or build goodwill.
- **Use simple data.** A small, clear presentation can change minds faster than arguments.
- **Lead by example.** Start the change yourself before asking others.
- **Give recognition.** A public thank-you or signboard makes them proud to support the campaign.

A Classroom Scenario

Gopal's eyes twinkled. **"Plastic-free chai?** Hah! That sounds fancy. Alright, beta. Let's try it."

The next day, Meera and her friends arrived at his stall with their own steel cups. Gopal served them proudly in steel and mud cups. Word spread quickly, and soon, almost every student carried a reusable cup or mud cup.

A week later, Uncle Gopal hung a handwritten sign on his stall: **"Plastic-Free Chai Point – Thanks to Meera & Team!"**

From that day on, not a single plastic cup was used at his stall.

Meera grinned every time she saw it. This wasn't just a campaign anymore—it was changing the community.

And the hills?

They felt lighter, as if they were finally beginning to breathe.



अध्याय 5: गोपाल का टी-स्टाल
बदलाव की एक प्याली

Chapter 6: The Dashboard of Change

Meera's campaign had changed the way students behaved.

Reusable bottles, lunchboxes, and steel cups at Uncle Gopal's stall had become the new normal. But one day, while sitting with her friend Aarav, the school's "tech genius," she said:

"Aarav, everyone is doing so much. But how do we prove it? What if we could actually see our impact?"

Aarav grinned. "Easy. We make it digital."

That evening, the two of them sat at Meera's desk. With her notes and his laptop, they created something that would take the campaign to the next level: **The Plastic-Free Dashboard.**



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अध्याय 6: आँकड़ों का जादू

Chapter 6.....

Building the Dashboard

Aarav used **Tableau** to turn numbers into colorful charts:

- A line graph showing how plastic cup usage had dropped to zero at Uncle Gopal's stall.
- A bar chart comparing the number of reusable bottles students carried in Week 1 versus Week 4.
- A pie chart of pledges from students, teachers, and even local shopkeepers.

Meera added another idea: **QR codes**. They printed and pasted QR codes around the school. When scanned, each code opened a mini-page with campaign updates, tips for going plastic-free, and even short videos of students explaining their hacks.

Within days, the school's hallway walls turned into digital gateways for change.

💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Track progress visually.** Use tools like Tableau or Google Data Studio to make results visible.
- **Add QR codes.** Link them to tips, challenges, and updates for easy engagement.
- **Show results publicly.** Share your data during assemblies or meetings—it inspires more participation.
- **Turn data into motivation.** Numbers make the movement feel real and unstoppable.



अध्याय 6: आँकड़ों का जादू



The Results

Two weeks later, during the morning assembly, Meera stood in front of the entire school.

The projector displayed their dashboard:

- Plastic waste reduced by **30% in 2 months**.
- Over **250 reusable bottles** in daily use.
- Uncle Gopal's stall: **100% plastic-free**.
- 400+ digital pledges from students and staff.

The hall erupted in applause. For the first time, the numbers told the story better than words ever could.

The principal smiled and announced,

"This is not just a campaign anymore—this is a model for every school in the district."

Meera's heart swelled with pride. From one plastic wrapper to a data-backed movement. The hills were no longer silent; they had found a voice and it was hers.



💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Track progress visually.** Use tools like Tableau or Google Data Studio to make results visible.
- **Add QR codes.** Link them to tips, challenges, and updates for easy engagement.
- **Show results publicly.** Share your data during assemblies or meetings—it inspires more participation.
- **Turn data into motivation.** Numbers make the movement feel real and unstoppable.

Chapter 7: The Hills Join In

The dashboard changed everything. What started as a small effort by one determined girl now had proof. Meera's school wasn't just participating, it was **leading**.

And as soon as the numbers went up on Instagram, the campaign caught the attention of the hills beyond.

One evening, as Meera was checking her messages, a notification popped up:

DM from HillView School:

"Hi Meera! We saw your Plastic-Free Dashboard. Can you help us start this in our school too?"

Her heart skipped a beat. This wasn't just her school anymore. It was spreading.

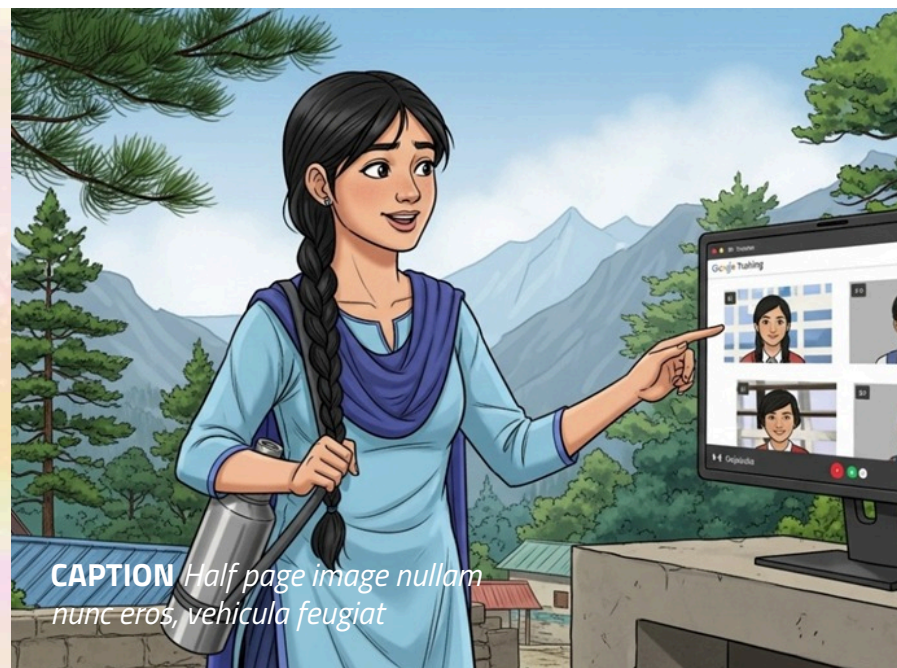
The next day, another message came-this time from a school in a nearby village.

"Your pledge wall is amazing! Could we join in?"

And then, the local newspaper wrote an article:

"Teen Leads Plastic-Free Movement in the Hills."

Meera couldn't believe it. The campaign was no longer just a school project. It had become a **regional movement**.



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💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Create a toolkit.** Make it easy for others to copy your model.
- **Train leaders.** Online sessions or simple video guides can spread the campaign faster.
- **Celebrate expansion.** Share success stories from other schools on social media.
- **Think bigger.** Once you succeed in one place, help it grow everywhere.

अध्याय 7: पहाड़क कू असर

Chapter 7....

Sharing the Blueprint

Meera and Aarav got to work. They built a **Plastic-Free Digital Toolkit** and uploaded it to Google Drive:

- *Editable posters and social media templates.*
- *Google Form surveys to track plastic usage.*
- *A step-by-step guide to creating dashboards and QR codes.*
- *Challenge rules and Eco-Badge designs.*

They even held their first **virtual training session** on Google Meet, teaching student leaders from other schools how to launch their own campaigns.

By the end of the month, **three more schools** had joined. And each one added its own twist—one school introduced a **"Plastic-Free Lunch Day,"** another started making cloth bags in their craft class.

Meera's phone buzzed constantly with updates:

- Photos of clean streams.
- Videos of school assemblies celebrating plastic-free milestones.
- Hashtags like **#PlasticFreeHills** starting to trend.

The Moment That Changed Everything

One Saturday morning, Meera stood on the hilltop above her village. Below her, she could see not just her school, but two other nearby schools with banners hanging proudly:

"We Are Plastic-Free."

She smiled, tears welling in her eyes.

"This is what it means to start something small," she whispered.

"The hills are listening. And now, they're answering back."



अध्याय 7: पहाड़क कू असर

Chapter 8: The Whispering Hills

It had been six months since Meera picked up that single plastic wrapper at the school gate.

What once seemed like a small act had now transformed her entire world.

The campus was cleaner than ever no stray bottles, no rustling plastic bags in the wind.

Students carried steel bottles and cloth bags with pride, teachers actively participated in the campaign, and Uncle Gopal's tea stall had become a local legend: the first **Plastic-Free Chai Point** in the hills.

But the biggest change? It wasn't just in her school anymore.

Across the hills, **five more schools** had joined the movement.

Every weekend, Meera received pictures of students in neighboring villages holding up signs that read:

"We are plastic-free!"



💡 Side Note: Action Step

- **Reflect on impact.** Take time to see how far your campaign has come.
- **Share your story.** Inspire others to start their own plastic-free journeys.
- **Leave a legacy.** Document your process so future students can continue the mission.
- **Remember your "why."** The most powerful movements begin with a single, simple reason.

अध्याय 8: पाख्याँक कू धन्यवाद

MEERAAAA

One morning, Meera's principal invited her to the assembly stage. As she stood there, looking out at hundreds of students and teachers, the principal announced:

"Because of Meera's leadership, our campaign has been recognized by the district education board. This is no longer a school project-it's a model for every school in our region."

The hall erupted in applause. Meera's cheeks flushed red, but her heart felt warm.

That evening, she walked home slowly, her steel bottle in hand. When she reached her favorite spot on the hilltop overlooking the valley, she paused.

The setting sun painted the sky orange, and the mountains stood tall, glowing in the fading light.

The wind brushed past her cheek, gentle and soft, and in that quiet moment, she felt it like the hills themselves were speaking.

"Thank you, Meera. You listened to us. Now, we will stay green for generations to come."

Tears welled up in her eyes, but this time, they were happy tears.

Meera didn't need awards or recognition. She had given something back to the mountains that had raised her.

And as she stood there, looking at the hills stretching endlessly before her, she knew one thing for sure:

"This is just the beginning."



Final Outcome:

- Plastic-free campuses across the hills.
- A community movement fueled by digital tools and local action.
- One girl who turned a single thought into a revolution.

And the hills?

They were no longer silent.

They were alive, breathing free, whispering thanks.



Teen Leads Plastic-Free Movement in the Hills

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Digital tools + determination = real-world impact.

**अपने स्कूल की मीरा बनो –
बदलाव की शुरुआत करो ।**

यह स्टोरीबुक सिर्फ एक कहानी नहीं है-यह बदलाव का उपकरण है। कहानी, स्थानीय भाषा और डिजिटल टूल्स के साथ मिलकर, हम विद्यार्थियों को अपने समुदाय में पर्यावरणीय नेतृत्व के लिए सशक्त बना सकते हैं।