

Akshay Rout

Akshay Rout, 60, **completed 38 years of public service in February 2019**, when he relinquished charge as **Director General in Swachh Bharat Mission, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India**. He has served 34 years out of this in the Civil Services (Indian Information Service) in a range of command positions in managing programmes/ projects/ finances/ procurements/negotiations. Earlier, he served in a nationalised Bank for over 3 years. Akshay Rout is a **leader in Communication, social mobilisation, public campaigns and public participation, Institution building, training, academic and capacity development and CSR implementation**.

Akshay Rout is currently **Senior Strategic Advisor with UNOPS Geneva** after serving briefly as the national level **Team Leader in Capacity Building for Water and Sanitation with UNICEF in New Delhi** where he backed up the efforts of the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation of the newly created Ministry of Jal Shakti of Government of India.

Rout led the critical behaviour change and mass mobilisation tasks at Swachh Bharat Mission, besides inter- sector coordination, corporate partnerships, media engagement and fast tracking of sanitation in priority areas like in Ganga banks and in some of the challenging States. He executed pan India mass mobilisation initiatives towards making Swachh Bharat a Jan Andolan. He also led innovative projects by teaming up with central and state agencies, PSUs and private corporate entities, non-governmental organisations and national and international development partners. Akshay Rout headed the organisation of the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention in New Delhi in 2018 that saw mobilisation of over 60 nations and prominent stakeholders including the UN Secretary General for giving an impetus to the global movement for safe and inclusive sanitation in reinforcement of the SDGs,

In the three Financial Years, 2017-18, 18-19 and 19-20, Akshay Rout successfully led a unique funds mobilisation drive – the Swachhata Action Plan (SAP)- from all non-sanitation Ministries in favour of sanitation work to the tune of about Rs, 18000 crore rupees each year. He also negotiated with various central PSUs and private companies including SBI, NTPC, NHPC, and PGCIL, an amount of about Rs 1000 crore as CSR support for raising sanitation levels at locations of high footfall under the project, the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP). More recently, he **coordinated the mobilisation and implementation of a package of financial benefits for Sanitation Workers in Kumbh 2019 that included insurance policies as well.**

From 2009 to 2014, as **Director General in Election Commission of India**, Akshay Rout led initiatives that yielded significant increase in enrolment and record turnout of voters in all elections. Towards this, Rout effectively put together a network of partnerships involving government agencies, the Civil Society, educational institutions, youth outfits, and Corporate and media organisations besides putting in place a scientific approach for connecting with people. He is associated with interventions like SVEEP and NVD that are now worldwide acclaimed and adopted. While leading the International Cooperation efforts

at ECI, Rout harnessed the UN system and other multilateral institutions, to extend technical and professional assistance to younger democracies. He was instrumental in creation of new alliances for exchange of knowledge and mutual support in South Asia, Africa, and Asia in election management and co-drafted the charter to create the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)

Akshay Rout laid the foundation of India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), a global knowledge and resource Centre to meet the critical need for capacity development in election management both at home and abroad. He was the **first Director General of IIIDEM.**

As a specialist in communication, Akshay Rout has made distinguished contribution to public service broadcasting in India and in carving out partnership for media in all developmental and democratic processes. He has provided **leadership to the National News Channel, DD News as Director General and Addl. Director General.** He represented the Public Service broadcasters in South East Asia and Bangladesh from 2000 to 2003.

Akshay Rout has been an international Election Observer, travelled widely and speaks and writes on sanitation, communication, public participation and elections and democracy. He was twice recommended by Election Commission of India and one more time by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation for Prime Minister's Award for Civil Servants. He is a triple Masters: in English literature from Utkal University; in Economics and Management from University of Manchester; and in Public Policy and Sustainable Development from TERI University.

Akshay Rout is associated with two historic achievements in recent times: the dramatic increase in voters' registration and turnout in Indian elections & the fulfilment of world's largest behaviour change mission - the Swachh Bharat Mission.