

The Man Who Moved a Mountain:

A Remarkable True Story of One Man's Endeavour

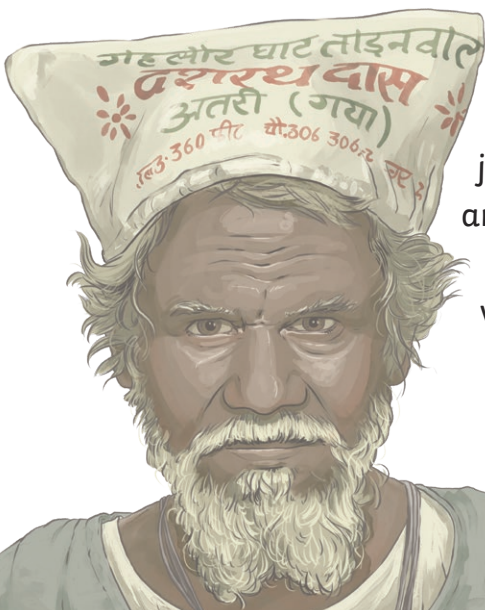
Dashrath Manjhi was a relatively poor man who worked as a labourer in a remote mountain village near Bihar in eastern India. After a tragic event, he dedicated his life to an incredible project which led to him becoming known as 'Mountain Man' or 'The Man Who Moved the Mountain'.

Living on a mountain just south of the Himalayas, Manjhi and his community were isolated from the nearest towns. When his wife accidentally fell one day, she was injured and in need of medical help. The journey to the nearest hospital or doctor was 55km and, sadly, Manjhi's wife died as a result of being unable to receive medical attention in time.

The labourer said that he never wanted anyone else to suffer the same fate as his wife. He spent the next 22 years single-handedly creating a passageway through the mountain with only a hammer and chisel. Before he ploughed the fields each morning, he spent hours of every day hammering the rock of the mountain. He would then return in the afternoon and into the evening to continue his quest. Manjhi had to sell the family's three goats to buy the hammer and chisel that he used.



When news spread about what the man was doing, many people thought that he had gone mad. His community worried that he would die before ever coming close to completing the mission. However, in honour of his wife, he continued for more than two decades, from 1960 to 1982, working day and night. By the time he had finished, he had carved a road through the side of the mountain. The village now has access to schools, hospitals and jobs for the first time, and Dashrath Manjhi became an inspiration to the whole society. Thanks to the efforts of this 'Mountain Man', the distance from the village to hospital was reduced from 55km to 15km.



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The road that he created is flanked by 7.5m high mountain walls on either side. It is 9m wide and 110m long.

In 2011, a documentary film was made about Dashrath Manjhi, called 'The Man Who Moved the Mountain'. Another film was made in 2015 called 'Manjhi – The Mountain Man'.

Location Fact File: Gehlaur is a village in the Gaya district of Bihar state in eastern India. To the north, it borders Nepal. The famous River Ganges flows right through Bihar from west to east. The Himalayan mountains begin a short distance over the border into Nepal.

Dashrath Manjhi died on 17th August 2007. He was given a state funeral by the government of Bihar, which is a type of public ceremony usually only held to honour very important or significant individuals.



Questions

1. How long did Dashrath Manjhi spend carving out the passageway through the mountain?

2. Which of these statements best describes other people's reaction to Manjhi's project when he first started? **Tick two.**

- They encouraged him to get started
- They thought he had gone mad
- They helped him to begin with
- They thought he would die before he completed it

3. The road which he created is flanked by 7.5m high mountain walls on either side. What is the meaning of the word **flanked**?

4. Which parts of the day did Manjhi spend on carving the passageway?

5. Dashrath Manjhi was given a state funeral. What does this suggest about the way the government felt about his actions?

6. The local people were happy when the project was finally complete. According to the text, what **three things** did they have access to that they previously did not?

7. One of the documentary films was called 'The Man Who Moved the Mountain'. Why do you think this was a good name for the film?

8. Look at the **Location Fact File**:
Which direction is Nepal from India? Circle **one**.

north

east

south

west