

Echoes of Eco



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Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

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Indigenous Wisdom



In this issue:

- Indigenous Wisdom
- The Happenings – I
- The Happenings-II
- Know Sustainable Technology
- From our Publications
- Visions of Wisdom

A Hymn for Fearlessness



***May the atmosphere we breathe,
breathe fearlessness into us;
fearlessness on earth and
fearlessness on heavens! May
fearlessness pervade us behind
and before! May fearlessness
surround us above and below!
May we be without fear of friend
and foe! May we be without fear of
the known and the unknown! May
we be without fear by night and
by day! Let all the world be my
friend!***

–Atharva Veda (XIX 15)



We must question why, after more than 500 years, and the many proofs of the depth and breadth of knowledge of the Indigenous peoples and the demonstrated complexity and sophistication of our systems of medicine, astronomy, biology, etc., the dominant educational system honors and validates only one way of knowing, one way of understanding, one process of thought.

In simpler words: at the same time that society wishes to have the advantage of Indigenous knowledge, seeks it out, expropriates it, uses it out of context and for its own, commercial purposes. And does these things without respect for the intellectual property rights of Indigenous peoples and without recognition or compensation or benefit,- why is this same knowledge held as primitive and invalid because it will not be explained by or fit into a system of understandings that are too narrow to encompass it.

This is called cognitive imperialism. From cognitive imperialism we should move to cognitive pluralism.

Indigenous knowledge does not need to be put through a western lens to be legitimate.

And most importantly: Indigenous knowledge cannot be taken separately. Indigenous knowledge belongs to the people, the people belong to the land and the land belongs to that which created it. In the Indigenous perception of time there is the rhythm of being, patterns and cycles.

In Indigenous Wisdom there is time for healing of history.

The sharing of knowledge for the good of all is greatly valued by Indigenous people.

But we should honor the strands of knowledge held by each culture. Whatever its form it is of value. It is a part of our understanding of the Creation.

By bringing these strands together, by honoring, protecting and preserving the cultures and traditions and the people who bring them, by including rather than excluding, we weave into life the possibility of a future that honors one another as relatives and sustains this magnificent planet, this Mother Earth and all of life.

Excerpt from a lecture by Rose von Thater-Braan on the need for Cognitive Pluralism

To love is not to ask anything in return, not even to feel that you are giving something- and it is only such love that can know freedom.- J.Krishnamurthi



This Month ...



This Month ...



This month...



CAT programme on Azolla cultivation training to Cattle breeders was held at TRC, Kalluvilai. It was sponsored by NABARD, Chennai. It was held on 28th and 29th of this month in two batches. 36 and 29 farmers respectively attended the workshops. Dr.Kamalasanan Pillai was the resource person. Dr.Thaya Sekar, Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Kanyakumari also interacted with the participants.



Apiculture Training Programme was conducted for farmers at Thethampatti, Dindigul Dist.

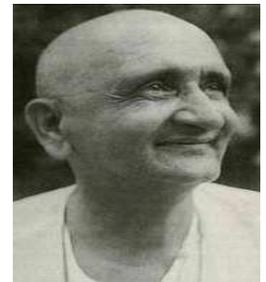
This was conducted on 28th of this month. 18 farmers attended it and bee hives with colonies were installed for them after the training. Shri.Kannan of KVIC, Madurai was the resource person.

Green Health Home at Vivekananda Puram functioned for 6 days and treated 180 patients.



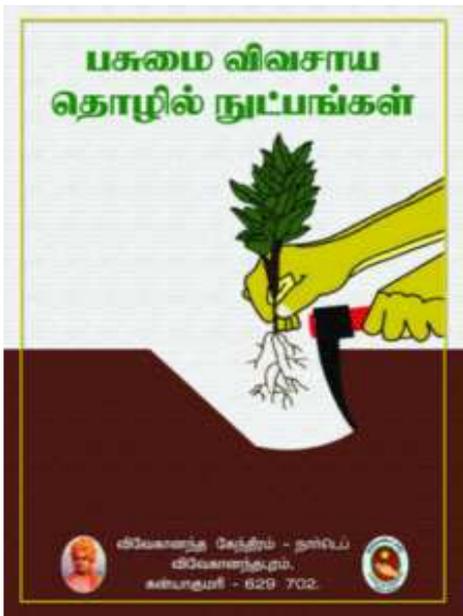
Done with DST core support

Love as one's own self all Existence



We have to take the whole universe as the expression of the one Self. Then only our love flows to all beings and creatures in the world equally. Just as a flower gives out its fragrance to whomsoever approaches or uses it, so love from within us radiates towards everybody and manifests as spontaneous service... When we feed, clothe and attend on anybody, we feel like doing all these things to our own body, for which we do not expect any return or praise or commendation, because all bodies are our own: for, we as the all-pervading Atman or Spirit reside in all bodies..

-Swami Ramdas



This new multi-colored book on Agricultural technologies is a must for every field-worker and farmer and student of sustainable development. This Tamil book can be purchased from VK-nardep. This is a book that will make you an organic farmer and technologist for sustainable development. The book is sponsored by FORD Foundation, New Delhi.



Both dance and dream are brought into being by the consciousness of a moment. They can never be repeated or successfully imitated. But you can dance and dream again. You must, if life is to continue.- Lyall Watson



Shakti-Surabhi Training Programme: Multi-media session in Progress.



Happenings: This month

Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a talk in the Guest lecture programme of South Indian Traditional Vaidyars Federation conducted at St.Xavier's College, Palayamkottai on 7th of this month. 150 persons attended. The topic was "Siddha Varma treatment for Coleus fracture"

Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture in the Guest lecture programme of Velumail Siddha Medical College, Sriperumpudhur, Kancheepuram Dist.The venue was Velumail Siddha Medical College Auditorium on 11th. The audience numbered 300. Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a talk on "Basic fundamental studies on Siddhars Pulse theory"

Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture in the Guest Lecture Programme at the Southern Railway, Chennai Conference Hall, Railway Head quarters, Central, Chennai on 11th. The audience numbered 200. The topic was "Siddha Rejuvenative Care for common problems"

A Workshop on "Traditional Siddha Visha Vaidya Practices" was held at TRC Kalluvillai on 18th of this month. It was held under the auspices of AYUSH, New Delhi. 105 persons participated in the workshop. Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team acted as the resource persons.



Dr.Ganapathi showing a collection of Visha Vaidya Traditional medicines kept in age old containers.

Specific Varma points for Kumba Vatham



Main Varma points

1. Kondai narambu varmum
2. Kaakkattai varmum
3. Valaimudintha varmum
4. Kaluthu Nadukku varmum (Mudichu varmum)
5. Puya varmum
6. Kotchu varmum

Sub Varma points

Penkuzhi varmam
Viralaadi varmam

A Slide from Dr.Ganapathi's multi-media presentation on Siddha Varma treatment for Coleus fracture. The presentation shows how Varma treatment involves not just harnessing the hidden healing potentials of Varma points but also the use of herbal formulation – both internal and external applications in the healing process. Thus he presents the system as a holistic healing system.



Happenings: This month

64th Anniversary programme of Gandhigram Trust was held at Dr.Soundaram Manimandapam, Gandhigram, Dindigul Dist on 7th of this month. Shri.G.Vasudeo was the Chief guest. 300 people participated.

24 Students of Vivekananda College, Agasteeswaram visited our J.C.Bose Nursery and learned about Vermi compost technology as part of study tour on 13th of this month.

On 13th of this month at Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education, Noorul Islam University, Kumaracoil Sri.G.Vasudeo presented a paper on "Vulnerability factors in Disaster Management" on International Day for Disaster Reduction. 200 students along with faculty members attended the programme.

Learning is finding out what you already know. Doing is demonstrating that you know it. Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you. You are all learners, doers, and teachers.
Richard Bach




Conserving the Wisdom



South Indian traditional medical system called 'Siddha' has its legendary origins in seer Agastya. Siddha system has a rich tradition of Visha Vaidyas - a system of treating venomous bites and poison intakes. This cost-effective but effective healing system is little studied and is in the verge of extinction. **VK-nardep** has taken up the challenge of documentation and conservation of this medical system. Our team visited several traditional rural and tribal physicians and collected data. We also conducted the first state level workshop of the Venom-treating healers from all over Tamil Nadu.



Vivekananda Kendra- nardep

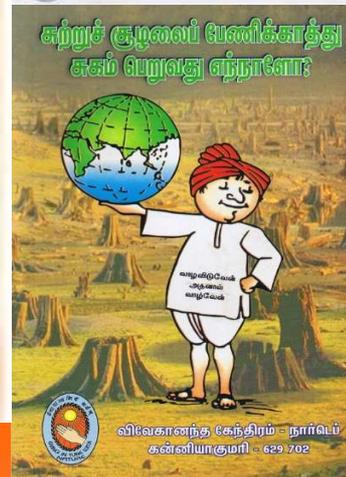
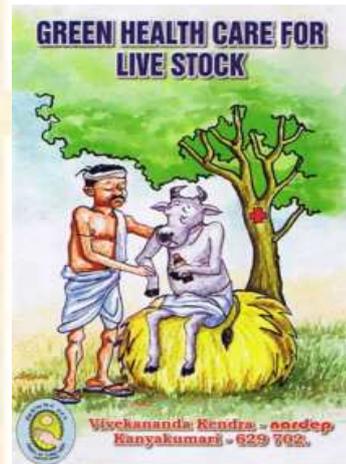


This month... Shakthi Surabhi



Workshop on "Kitchen Waste (Shakthi Surabhi) Biogas Plant" was conducted at the Technology Resource Center of VK-nardep. This was organized under DST, Core Support

It was conducted on 29th of this month and 26 persons attended it. TV-crew from 'Puthiya Thalai Murai' a popular TV channel came and filmed the Shakthi Surabhi – both its technical and user aspects. This was telecasted this month.



LET'S SAVE THE



Diversity enriches a culture. We do not want to destroy diversity, but we shall subject our diversity to a central thread of spiritual unity. That was the vision of the ancient sages. That vision has continued to inspire India through the ages, including this modern period.

-Swami Ranganathananda



From Our Publications

Green Agricultural Technologies (Tamil)



This is a book on agricultural technologies that are sustainable and eco-friendly. These are cost-effective do-it-yourself technologies at the backyard of the farmer. The book gives the importance and the need of these technologies and also their relevance to small and marginal farmers. The book speaks about the need for creating a web of relations inside the farmer's homestead.

Starting from the need to preserve soil prosperity through the understanding of the nature of soil, the book explains technologies that will increase the vitality of the soil. Starting with the well known technologies like Vermi-compost, the book moves through lesser known but effective technologies like vermin-water, compost tea and living water.



All these technologies increase the effective micro-organisms in the soil and have the capacity to reclaim the soil which has been depleted of its micro and macro fauna as well as micro-nutrients as a result of excessive usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides,

The book prepared by VK-nardep team headed by Dr. Kamalasanan Pillai, then deals with natural growth promoters like Pancha Gavya (well known) and Fish amino (little known).

The book then moves on to integrated pest management. It shows how natural enemies of insects can be used against pests in the fields to create an ecological balance. Then the book deals with how to prepare a variety of plant formulations as pest repellants. The book also deals in detail with backyard Azolla technology – developed by VK-nardep.

Then the book shows how we can create a variety of links through integrated farming using livestock, poultry and apiculture. The book is in Tamil. It is richly illustrated with colour pictures and photos. This is also a do-it-yourself book and a guide. This is a must for all farmers and students of sustainable development in Tamil Nadu.

Online Catalogue on our publications

Online catalogue of our publications with price list as well as description and cover pictures has been published in our website.

Bio-Gas Slurry based Agricultural Inputs



'Eko vashi sarva-bhutantaratma; the one Self in all beings' and 'rupam rupam pratirupo babhuva; assumes separate forms in respect of different shapes'. To those who realize this truth belongs eternal peace. One infinite Reality appears in diverse forms. Realize this truth. That is the way to gain life. That is the way to become truly immortal. –Jagadish Chandra Bose



Conserve Diversity

I think the so-called privileged Westerners need to rethink the last 500 years of history and look at other cultures with fresh eyes. Academic rational knowledge has fundamentally misjudged indigenous cultures that have other ways of knowing, and looked down on them, but by opening intercultural spaces for scientists and shamans to have dialogues, we'll have better tools for understanding the world. Western scientists are beginning to uncover two facts of life that indigenous shamans have known for millennia: All of nature teems with intelligence and all life is interconnected.

An indigenous culture with sufficient territory, and bilingual and intercultural education, is in a better position to maintain and cultivate its mythology and shamanism. Conversely, the confiscation of their lands and imposition of foreign education, which turns their young people into amnesiacs, threatens the survival not only of these people, but of an entire way of knowing. It is as if one were burning down the oldest universities in the world and their libraries, one after another — thereby sacrificing the knowledge of the world's future generations.

Jeremy Narby
Anthropologist



Understand Diversity

Diversity means many links, many different approaches to the same problem. So a diverse community is a resilient community. A diverse community is one that can adapt to changing situations, and therefore diversity is another very important principle of ecology. Diversity is a strategic advantage for a community if, and only if, there is a vibrant network of relationships, if there is a free flow of information through all the links of the network. Then diversity is a tremendous strategic advantage. However, if there is fragmentation, if there are subgroups in the network or individuals who are not really part of the network, then diversity can generate prejudice, it can generate friction, and as we know well from our inner cities, it can generate violence.... All the research about diverse learning styles and diverse intelligences will be extremely useful if and only if there is a vibrant community where you have interdependence, a vibrant network of relationships, and cyclical flows of energy and information. So these are some of the basic principles of ecology: interdependence, recycling, partnership, flexibility, diversity, and as a consequence of all these, sustainability.

Fritjof Capra
Physicist



Venerate Diversity

When offering this universal, ancient, Sanskrit prayer, it affirms a testimony to the truth of our life on earth. It states:

Asatho ma sat gamaye (Lead us from untruth to truth)

Tamaso ma jyotir gamaye (Lead us from nescience to light)

Mrityor ma amritam gamaye (Lead us from death to immortality)

O God, let humanity dwell in truth, in divine light, and in the blessedness of immortality. Allow mankind to ultimately receive the lasting peace and happiness its soul longs to obtain. I pray that all people will live in harmony with all beings in a world without war and strife, respecting others' cultures and traditions, and valuing the importance of preserving and protecting our earth with its natural resources and environment. What a glorious day it will be when divine co-existence will be the idyllic, spiritual way of life throughout the world.

These wonderful truths, these spiritual precepts and values take us onto the path of righteousness that leads to the holiness of everlasting life in God.

Alice Coltrane
Jazz Musician

