

Echoes of Eco



March, 2015

Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

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Local Traditions of Rameshwaram:

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Hymn for the Dawn



Vanished are those who in the days before us gazed at the rising of the morning Sun. It is we the living who now behold the Dawn, and after us her shining others will see.

With her she brings all life-sustaining blessings. Brightly she shines and sheds abroad her radiance. She is the last of countless vanished mornings. She is the first of more bright morns to come.

-Rig Veda 1.113.11-15



Revitalising Local Green Medical Traditions



Identification of local herbal resources.



Training local women SHGs in medicinal preparation



Creating Green Health Awareness

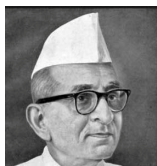


Forward link them to local markets.

Identification of local herbal formulations and their standardisation can create a valuable geo-medicinal product. Local SHGs can be trained in producing such a product. This creates a livelihood opportunity.

Meanwhile VK- nardep has also been working in the promotion of general health through green herbal health camps at Rameshwaram improving the general health while making people aware of the local herbal resources.





There is a balance on earth between air, water, soil and plant. Trees have a great place in the economy of nature. ... They are the guardians of the perennial springs of water. They are the natural defenders of dust-storms. They check erosion by wind and water and they preserve the fertility of the soil.- K.M.Munshi



Local Cultural Traditions in Rameshwaram that conserve soil



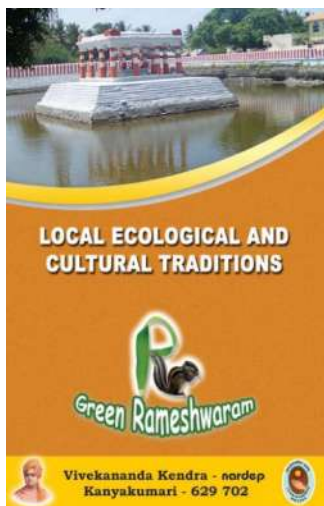
Because the legend holds that the soil of the island itself is holy, digging soil for commercial purposes ploughing the land have been prohibited...These are important environmental restrictions laid on human activities by local cultural traditions.



Work Efficiency and Amba Pattu



The tradition of singing songs that evoke historic memories and mythologies when involved in doing important physical activities collectively is an important psychological tool developed by local traditions. When students are engaged in group activities the effect of such songs in the improvement of team spirit needs to be studied.

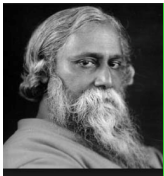


The above are excerpts from the book on 'Local Ecological and Cultural Traditions' published by VK-nardep with support from the WaSH programme of UNICEF. The booklet explains how the local traditions help in the conservation of the following:

- plant wealth and biodiversity,
- soil resources and water conservation, and
- psychological well being and social coherence.

These books are part of the Green Rameshwaram campaign and they aim to create awareness about these traditions to both the pilgrims as well as the residents as they have to be conserved. These are also made into panels for exhibitions at various places. For more information on Green Rameshwaram please contact:

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For us the highest purpose of this world is not merely living in it, knowing it and making use of it, but realizing our own selves in it through expansion of sympathy; not alienating ourselves from it and dominating it, but comprehending and uniting it with ourselves in perfect union.
-Rabindranath Tagore



Happenings this month:
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



Happenings this month:
Networking



Happenings this month:
Water Management

Workshop on "Azolla - enriched Cattle feed" with DST - Core Support, New Delhi was conducted for four participants at TRC, Kalluvilai on 28th of this month. The resource person was S.Premalatha.



Happenings this month:
COST-EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION



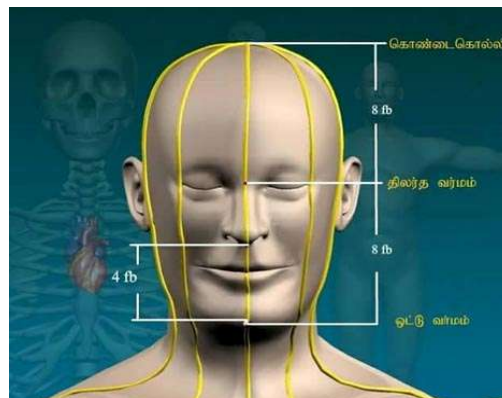
Workshop on "Ferrocement technology" was conducted for the Govt. Polytechnic, Konam on 17th March. 57 students attended and the Resource Person was Er.V.Ramakrishnan

"Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influence of the earth." ~ Henry David Thoreau



Shri.G.Vasudeo attended Brain stroking session on Prime Minister's Youth Leadership Development Programme (PMYLD). The programme was organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, New Delhi on 27th of this month. About 40 persons from all over India attended the programme.

Siddha Ethnic medicine Siddha VARMA bone setting



Release of Varma documentation CD at the ethnic medicine Varma-Bone setting workshop at TRC Kalluvillai :



Tested water from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist. as a part of the programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.



Happenings this month: on Siddha-Ethnic Medicine

Workshop on "Traditional Siddha Varma Bone Setting Practices" Was conducted on 3rd and 4th of this month at TRC, Kalluvilai with DST - Core Support, New Delhi for 62 traditional physicians. Dr.Ganapathi and his team were the resource persons.

Workshop on "Traditional Varma medical practices" was conducted again on 24th of this month with DST - Core Support, New Delhi at Vivekanandapuram campus for 98 traditional physicians. Dr.Ganapathi and his team were the resource persons.

Demonstration at the Varma Bone setting workshop:



To know more about 'Green Rameshwaram Pilgrimage' Project contact:
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Green Health Home of VK-nardep functioned for 9 days and treated 207 patients.



Both violence and nonviolence inhere in us. Our mind also works in two ways: one dictates anger; the other counsels patience, puts the brakes on anger. Both the instigating and the restraining tendencies are there. Good and evil are both present in us. The real question is which of the two we shall develop. Which one shall we awaken and which one shall we put to sleep?

- Acharya Mahapragya



Renewable Energy this month:



Green Rameshwaram

unicef
unite for children



IFAD Awareness programme for women of Nagapattinam on Bio-Methanation

Training programme on "Bio-methanation plant from kitchen waste" was held on:

- 28th of this month with DST support and 2 persons attended the programme.
- On 13th March Awareness programme on "Kitchen waste based Bio-methanation plant" was organized for 50 participants from Nagapattinam. Er.V.Ramakrishnan and his team were the resource persons.



With IFAD support 36 bio-methanation plants of 1 cum fixed plants have been installed.

As part of renewable energy initiative in Green Rameshwaram two portable type kitchen-waste based bio-methanation plants of 6-cum capacity have been installed in the Rameshwaram island.

ECO-Awareness Programme:

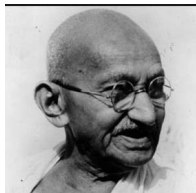
Under the auspices of UNICEF

No	Name of the programme	Venue	Date	Number of people attended
1	Eco-Awareness Programme	Vivekananda Kendra, Rameshwaram	7 th to 9 th	59
2	Eco-Awareness Programme	Vivekananda Kendra, Rameshwaram	19 th to 22 nd	19



Media Report on Bio-Methanation plant

Report in popular Tamil vernacular magazine 'Rani' on Bio-methanation plant. Popular Tamil newspaper Dinamalar also carries every Tuesday an article on 'Green Rameshwaram'



Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of ahimsa must remain an empty dream. But the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. - Mahatma Gandhi



From our
Publications



COMPOSTING URBAN GARBAGE

Though rich in organic matter, with a modest supply of nutrients much of the urban garbage is wasted as fills. Even industrial countries use only 11% of its organic garbage.

Composting is a natural way of preparing waste for reuse. Composting is a few months long process. In it bacteria worms and other organisms eat and digest carbon-rich matter and produce humus, a rich stable medium, in which roots thrive. Humus with its abundant pores shatters the nutrients and provides extensive surface area to which nutrients can bond three to five times more nutrients, water and air than other soil matters.



REUSING HUMAN WASTE

As most of the world's cultivated food passes through beings, human waste is rich in nutrients and organic matter. Chinese agriculture for thousands of years thrived on recycled human waste. Reuse of sewage sludge in farm lands is picking up in a world which otherwise considers human excreta as waste-debris. Slowly human excreta is being diverted from landfills, incinerators and waterways as usual avenues of disposal towards recycling, farmland use, etc. If these uses are encouraged, dependence on chemical nutrients can come down. For the effective recycling, the human waste should be treated separately, away from heavy and toxic industrial waste. Better technologies should be developed.



It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living.

- David Attenborough



Living Planet

Of all celestial bodies within reach or view, as far as we can see, out to the edge, the most wonderful and marvelous and mysterious is turning out to be our own planet earth. There is nothing to match it anywhere, not yet anyway.

It is a living system, an immense organism, still developing, regulating itself, making its own oxygen, maintaining its own temperature, keeping all its infinite living parts connected and interdependent, including us. It is the strangest of all places, and there is everything in the world to learn about it. It can keep us awake and jubilant with questions for millennia ahead, if we can learn not to meddle and not to destroy. Our great hope is in being such a young species, thinking in language only a short while, still learning, still growing up. ... Provided we do not kill ourselves off, and provided we can connect ourselves by the affection and respect for which I believe our genes are also coded, there is no end to what we might do on or off this planet. At this early stage in our evolution, now through our infancy and into our childhood and then, with luck, our growing up, what our species needs most of all, right now, is simply a future.

- *Lewis Thomas*
- Biologist



Laws of Living

The first is that ecology has to go together with economy. When your economy develops, your ecology should also thrive and flourish. If you have reached a stage where you are saying that economy has to develop but we have to sacrifice the ecology, then you are going down the wrong road. You should stop straightaway. The second principle is what we nowadays call an extremely low ecological footprint: what is the size of your foot print on the ecosystem considering your activities, what you consume....All the demands of the activities associated with the ecological traditions ... are basically all with very, very small ecological footprints. ...The third principle: carrying capacity is not to be ever exceeded. We know that the moment carrying capacity of any ecosystem is exceeded, the system as a whole threatens to collapse. ...So you can't exceed your carrying capacity. ... The fourth principle: whatever activities we are involved in, must be sustainable. This means we don't do it for our generation, we ensure we do not compromise the rights of our children to have their chance in the world, and their children as well.

- *Claude Alvares*
Eco-activist



Metamorphosis

If you look closely at a plant in your backyard or in the soil beneath your feet, you may find one of nature's most mysterious black boxes—the chrysalis. On one side of this black box, a caterpillar goes in. On the other, something entirely different emerges—in this case, a butterfly or a moth. But what happens inside is not entirely known. The metamorphosis of a caterpillar seems simple enough, but the change is so dramatic that early naturalists thought a butterfly was a new life rising out of the caterpillar's burial cloth, along the lines of a spiritual ascent or the casting off of an old shell. Like many transformations—both physical and spiritual—the change undergone by a caterpillar away from prying eyes is so great that it's easy to wonder how much of the original remains after it breaks free of its shell. ... While dissecting a caterpillar, a 17th century Dutch biologist discovered that early versions of the future butterfly—such as the wings, antennae, and legs—already exist in the caterpillar's body before the formation of the chrysalis. ...So caterpillars already carry parts of their future selves inside, and the potential for transformation exists even before it is visible from the outside. Isn't that amazing?!

Shawn Radcliff
Science Writer

