

Echoes of Eco

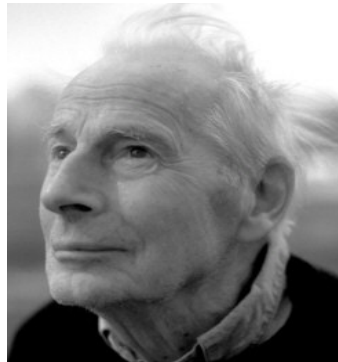


January, 2010

Vivekananda Kendra- **nardep** Newsletter

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Arne Naess (1912-2009)



Arne Naess can be considered as one of the foremost ecological philosophers of our era. He coined the term "Deep Ecology" and propounded the thesis of Eco-sophy.

Starting his career as the youngest person to be appointed full professor at the University of Oslo, he plunged into Ecological activism. Opposing a Dam construction, he chained himself to rocks in front of Mardalsfossen, a waterfall in a Norwegian fjord, and refused to descend until plans to build a dam were dropped.

Deep Ecology has become the holistically most satisfying framework for ecologists scientifically studying eco problems. It also serves as a framework for the activists who at social level get involved with environmental issues.

Deep Ecology and Eco-Sophy complement each other. While Deep Ecology makes the understanding of the intrinsic value of every aspect of nature

Eco-sophy puts Self-realization as its essence. The striking similarity to Advaita Vedanta in Naess's ecological vision is not accidental. He describes Gandhi, Spinoza and Advaita Vedanta as the three basis of his vision. Naess found the following verse from Bhagavat Gita as embodying his vision of Deep ecology: *He who has yoked himself in discipline sees the same everywhere, he sees himself as in all beings and all beings in himself* (6:29)

Rejecting the western ecological idea of "the man-in-environment" image, Naess put forth the "relational-total-field" image. The Self-realization as visualized by Naess is highly entrenched in Upanishadic imagery. He compares Self-Realization to an arrow and the movement is one from the small egocentric self towards a comprehensive Self: "A direction starting from the self moving towards the Self. It is a direction I can say yes to ethically." And that has been his life till he breathed his last on January 12, 2009 – on the birth day of Swami Vivekananda.

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Life – a Holistic Holy



What moves, what flies, what stands quite still, what breathes, what breathes not, blinks the eye-- this, concentrated into a single One, though multiple its forms, sustains the earth.
- Atharva Veda (X, 8, 11)



Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress.- Anonymous

Traditional cure for a modern ailment from Varma Medical Therapy

This month...



The modern age is full of stress and strain. Most of the urban people are suffering from Kumba Vatham (KV) (Cervical Spondylitis) and Sagana Vatham (SV) (Lumbar spondylitis). Though all sectors of people are affected from these problems, it is rampant in urban people with sedentary and stressful lifestyle. Western medications are not able to give an effective answer for this problem.

People are eager for a holistic cure from this illness. Can Siddha system's Varma Medical Therapy (VMP) provide an answer to this problem? In fact VK-NARDEP in its field study discovered that a large number of local traditional healers are treating KV/SV by using VMP. What is more is that such a cost-effective practice is giving very good results.

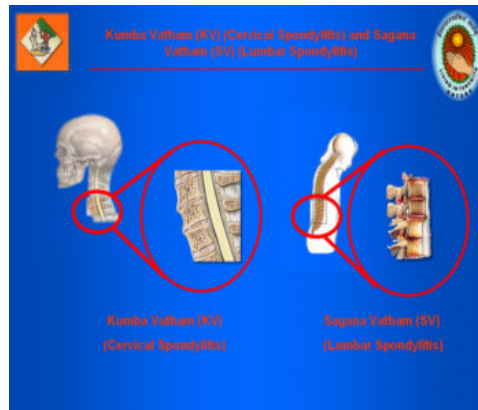


It is not just Varma points alone. It is a comprehensive holistic system. For example there are specific medications such as

- Karuvelampattai thylam,
- Aalampal thylam and
- Kurunthotty ver churnum

They also play important role for curing this KV & SV.

Unique Varma point massage has also played major role in treating this problems. Six Varma points (Vital energy point centre) are being used by healers for KV and eight Varma points are being used by healers for SV. And specific method of massage and fermentation are also being advised by the healers.



VK-NARDEP undertook a study of more than 300 patients. More than 80% got good prognosis at the end of treatment. When patients had other complications like Diabetes or obesity, the sign and symptoms of spondylitis were relieved more slowly compared to the patients undergoing treatment without these complications.

- 159 patients were treated at Vivekananda Kendra Green Health Home at Vivekanandapuram
- Dr. Ganapathi presented a paper on the topic of animal health care in Siddha medical system at International conference on Ethno Veterinary medicine and practices at the South Indian Cultural Center, Thanjavur. The event was organized by TANUVAS & FRLHT.
- Dr. Ganapathi gave a lecture on "Role of Siddha medicines in Stress Management" at Sri Saradha College for Women, Ariyakulam, Thirunelveli on 12th of this month.
- Free Siddha medical camp was organized at Vivekananda Kendra (Kanyakumari) on 16th. 205 patients benefited from free treatment.
- Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture on "Studies of Siddha Patho-Physiology on Renal Stone" at Dept. of Noi-naadal, Govt. Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai on 19th. 150 students attended the lecture.

It seems plain and self-evident, yet it needs to be said: the isolated knowledge obtained by a group of specialists in a narrow field has in itself no value whatsoever, but only in its synthesis with all the rest of knowledge and only in as much as it really contributes in this synthesis toward answering the demand, "Who are we?"

-Erwin Schrödinger





Dr. Pillai interacting with Sevaiyur Farmers



Organic Farming workshop



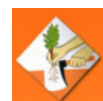
CAT-participants learn bio-formulations technology

This month... Agriculture



- Workshop on Capacity building for Adoption of Technologies (CAT) was held at Technology Resource Centre at Kaluvillai, with 32 participants, on 7th and 8th. It was sponsored by NABARD. Dr. Kamalasannan Pillai, Sister Saraswathi, Sri. Rajamoni, Sri. Muneeswaran and Smt. Premlatha were the resource persons.

This month... Agriculture



- Intensive one day Azolla technology training was given to 3 persons at Kalluvillai on 23rd. The resource person was sister Premlatha.
- A Workshop on Organic Farming was held at Sevaiyur, Natham, Madurai Dist. It was supported by the FORD Foundation, New Delhi. It was held between 21st to 23rd. 140 farmers attended the workshop.
- Workshop on Capacity building for Adoption of Technologies (CAT) was held at Technology Resource Centre at Kaluvillai, between 28th to 30th with 26 participants. It was Sponsored by NABARD. Dr. Kamalasannan Pillai, Sister Saraswathi, Sri. Rajamoni, Sri. Muneeswaran and Smt. Premlatha were the resource persons.

This month... Water



- Water measurement from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist was carried out by VK-NARDEP as part of the programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.

This month... Renewable Energy



- Awareness cum training programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant (RIF) was held on 4th January at Balasubramaniya-puram, Kanyakumari Dist. It was sponsored by NABARD. 49 persons attended the awareness camp.
- Awareness cum training programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant (RIF) was held on 5th January also at Thoppur Community Hall, Kanyakumari Dist. It was sponsored by NABARD. 62 persons attended the awareness camp.

- Yet another awareness cum training programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant (RIF) was held on 9th January at Amanakkanvilai, Kanyakumari Dist. It was sponsored by NABARD. 34 persons attended the awareness camp.
- On 23rd at Technology resource center Kalluvillai, the intensive training camp on Shakti Surabhi Biogas was conducted for 3 persons.
- Ten Shakti Surabhi plants have been commissioned under NABARD scheme.



RTF programmes at the villages for rural women: Creating awareness on the Bio-Methanation plant technology, its usefulness and need.



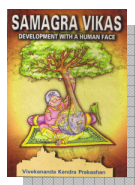
This month... Networking



- Construction of a hundred cubic metre biogas plant based on municipal organic waste construction was started near Mahabalipuram with the support of "Hand in Hand" organization in Chennai.

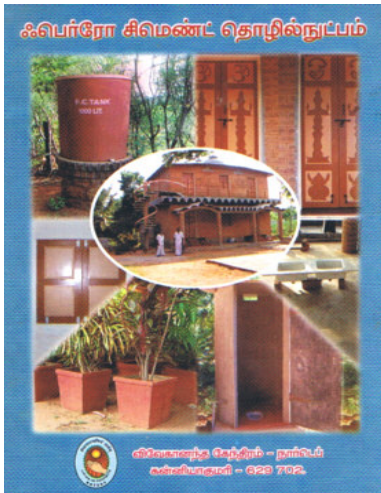


Eco-toon from Samagra Vikas : Showing how business practices with only profit as motive are damaging the ecological resources and the need to tell that loudly.





Publications



Ferro-Cement Technology is a Tamil book that lucidly explains this cost-effective technology for those who are masons as well as construction engineers interested in alternative construction methods.

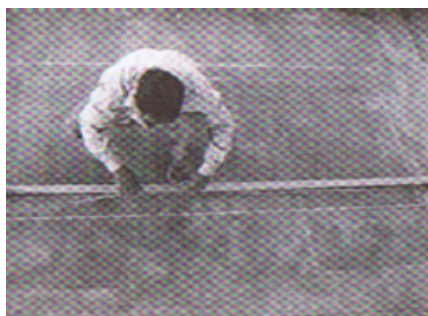
The book starts with a brief history of Ferro cement technology and goes on to explain how it is economical and eco-friendly. It explains the relative merits and advantages of Ferro-cement technology compared to concrete cement technology, which is capital intensive with hidden costs.

Another attraction of the technology is its flexibility and ability for pre-fabrication.

Three aspects of Ferro-cement technology are dealt in detail in the book. They are:

- a) The pre-fabricated Ferro-cement roofs
- b) Ferro –cement doors and
- c) Ferro-cement water tanks.

Each of this aspect is described with line diagrams as well as black and white photographs. An economic analysis of the inputs as well as labor costs involved is also done and the analysis is tabulated to provide a clear-cut understanding. Thus a Ferro-cement roof of 1 metre length costs (including labor) Rs 213.00/- A Ferro-cement door (including fixture) of 1 square metre costs (including labor) only Rs 400.00/- A Ferro-cement water tank of 1000 litre capacity costs (including labor) Rs 1442.00/-.



The advantage of this book being in Tamil makes it reachable to the vast mason population. By setting people –particularly skilled laborers and technology choice makers- to think differently at the ground level, the book aims to bring a technological diversity to the construction field thus fulfilling a long awaited need.

Ferro-Cement Technology (Tamil)

(Author: Er.V.Ramakrishnan)
2005-Edition
Pages: 44
Price: Rs 35/-

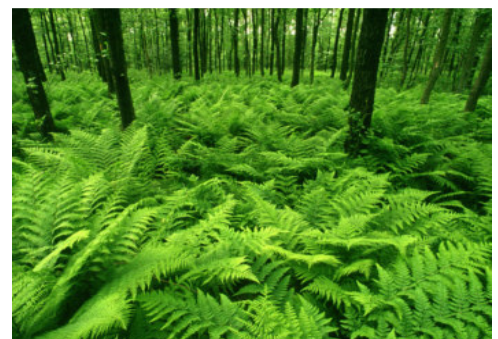


There are as many as 100 million species on Earth, of which only 1.7 million have been identified.



How many plant species of our planet are edible?

About 30,000



What percentage of Earth's land area is covered by forests?

About 34 percent



A Vain Archer

After winning several archery contests, the young and rather boastful champion challenged a Zen master who was renowned for his skill as an archer.

The young man demonstrated remarkable technical proficiency when he hit a distant bull's eye on his first try, and then split that arrow with his second shot. "There," he said to the old man, "see if you can match that!"

Undisturbed, the master did not draw his bow, but rather motioned for the young archer to follow him up the mountain.

Curious about the old fellow's intentions, the champion followed him high into the mountain until they reached a deep chasm spanned by a rather flimsy and shaky log. Calmly stepping out onto the middle of the unsteady and certainly perilous bridge, the old master picked a far away tree as a target, drew his bow, and fired a clean, direct hit.

"Now it is your turn," he said as he gracefully stepped back onto the safe ground. Staring with terror into the seemingly bottomless and beckoning abyss, the young man could not force himself to step out onto the log, no less shoot at a target. "You have much skill with your bow," the master said, sensing his challenger's predicament, "but you have little skill with the mind that lets loose the shot."



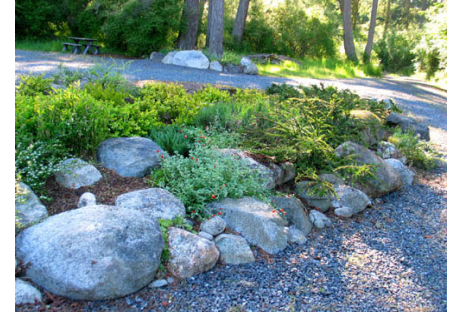
A Stray Dog

After he established Belur Math Swami Vivekananda was able to live there for only a few years, but there were pets because he loved them: two goats, an antelope, a stork, some ducks and geese were his pets - and the dog Bagha. who had arrived as a stray.

One day Bagha committed the unforgivable, and made a mess in front of the shrine. Some of the monks were shocked and dismayed and tried to deport him to the jungle on the other side of the river Ganges. When they released him on land, Bagha jumped right back into the boat and refused to be pushed out.

The next morning before daylight he stationed himself at the door of Vivekananda's bathroom, and when Swamiji nearly stepped on him in the dark, he whimpered and rubbed his head on his master's feet. Swamiji understood, and he told the monks to leave Bagha alone. When Swamiji passed away, Bagha sat by the cremation site for a long time afterward and refused food or water that day.

Strange to say, when the dog died and they lowered his body into the water of the Ganges, though it went out with the tide, it was found on the incoming tide near to the monastery. So the monks decided to bury Bagha's corpse on the monastery grounds.



A Rock in the head

Hogen, a Chinese Zen teacher, lived alone in a small temple in the country.

One day four traveling monks appeared and asked if they might make a fire in his yard to warm themselves.

While they were building the fire, Hogen heard them arguing about subjectivity and objectivity.

He joined them and said: "There is a big stone. Do you consider it to be inside or outside your mind?"

One of the monks replied:

"From the Buddhist viewpoint everything is an objectification of mind, so I would say that the stone is inside my mind."

"Your head must feel very heavy," observed Hogen, "if you are carrying around a stone like that in your mind."

