

Echoes of Eco



July, 2013

Vivekananda Kendra- **nardep** Newsletter

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Everything that exists is Divine



The Vedanta does not in reality denounce the world. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings of the Vedanta. But, at the same time, dry suicidal advice is not intended; it really means deification of the world--giving up the world as we think of it, as we know it, as it appears to us--and to know what it really is. Deify it; it is God alone. We read at the commencement of one of the oldest of the Upanishads, "**Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord.**"

We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a false sort of optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God in everything. Thus we have to give up the world, and when the world is given up, what remains? God. What is meant? You can have your wife; it does not mean that you are to abandon her, but that you are to see God in the wife.

Give up your children; what does that mean?

To turn them out of doors, as some human brutes do in every country? Certainly not. That is diabolism; it is not religion. **But see God in your children. So, in everything.** In life and in death, in happiness and in misery, the Lord is equally present. The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what Vedanta teaches. Give up the world which you have conjectured, because your conjecture was based upon a very partial experience, upon very poor reasoning, and upon your own weakness....

So work, says the Vedanta, putting God in everything, and knowing Him to be in everything. Work incessantly, holding life as something deified, as God Himself, and knowing that this is all we have to do, this is all we should ask for. God is in everything, where else shall we go to find Him?

[An excerpt from Swami Vivekananda's lecture 'God in Everything']

In this issue:

- Everything that exists is Divine
- Rameshwaram Project
- Azolla goes to Ranchi
- The Happenings-II
- The Happenings-II
- From our Publications
- Visions of Wisdom:
- True Economics, Education & Self

Hymn for the Splendor in Nature

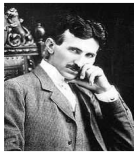


With the splendor that resides in a lion, a tiger, a serpent, the fire, Brahman, the sun, may that blessed Goddess who gave birth to the Divine come to us, and endow us with splendor!

With the splendor that resides in an elephant, a leopard, in gold, in the waters, in cattle and in men, may that blessed Goddess who gave birth to the Divine come to us, and endow us with splendor!

-Atharva Veda





In no way can we get such an overwhelming idea of the grandeur of Nature than when we consider, that in accordance with the law of the conservation of energy, throughout the Infinite, the forces are in a perfect balance, and hence the energy of a single thought may determine the motion of a universe. – Nikola Tesla



SUGREEVA TEERTHAM



before renovation



Renovation work
in progress



JAMBAVAN TEERTHAM



before renovation



Renovation work
in progress



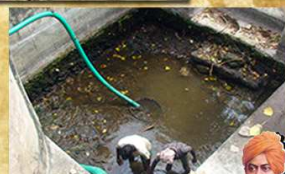
AGASTHYAR TEERTHAM



before renovation



Renovation work
in progress



MANGALA TEERTHAM



before renovation



Renovation work
in progress

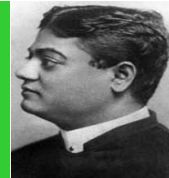


The renovation of the holy *teerthams* in the sacred geography of Rameshwaram is bringing into public awareness these long forgotten endangered fresh water sources. Their ecological and sacred significances are re-emerging.

To know more about Rameshwaram Teertham Project: Contact Secrerary, VK-nardep at vk nardep@gmail.com



The microcosm and the macrocosm are built on the same plan. Just as the individual soul is encased in the living body, so is the universal Soul in the Living Prakriti [Nature] — the objective universe. Shakthi is embracing Shiva: this is not a fancy. This covering of the one [Soul] by the other [Nature] is analogous to the relation between an idea and the word expressing it: they are one and the same; -Swami Vivekananda



AZOLLA

a gift of Green technology



Sri Sitambar Rai of village Raitoli of Khunti district of Jharkhand has been a livestock farmer for the last 5 years. And he has been associated with BAIF – a sustainable development NGO with special emphasis on cattle and dairy for the last 3 year. BAIF provides green technologies as well as breeding service. In fact of the 9 cattle he has six are the result of BAIF breeding service. And it was through them that Rai came to know about Azolla technology in one of the training programmes organized at Khunti.



VK-nardep backyard Azolla cultivation technology and use as bio-feed for cattle, has been taken up by agri-NGO BAIF for dissemination among livestock farmers under **directorates of animal husbandry, Govt. of Jharkhand**. So Sri.Rai when he came to know Azolla benefits as bio-feed he got interested. So he contacted BAIF I/C of Govindpur DCDC, Mr. Amit Kumar. Mr. Kumar has been working on Azolla technology dissemination for cattle and livestock farmers in this area for the last four years and has been providing all extension services of Dairy Cattle Development Programme. Mr. Kumar provided Azolla culture. He also gave a demonstration of backyard cultivation at Sri. Rai's own homestead. By March 2012 Sri Rai has established three Azolla beds in his backyard.

Now he gets an average of 1 kg of Azolla from each bed, thus totally 3 kg every day. This rich daily harvest feeds his 3 lactating animals, each getting 1 kg of the green fern with quality nutrients embedded in the organic biomass. As soon as Mr. Rai started feeding Azolla, he noticed some positive changes. The total milk yield of his cows has increased by 10-15 %. He exclaimed in wonder how one cattle which now in its 7th lactation period, was giving 6 litres of milk, and after feeding Azolla, is now giving 10 litres of milk per day! This wonder has happened because of synergy as Azolla has supplied the limiting factor for cattle.



Farmer with his cow: a loving bond

Mr. G. Vasudeo, Secretary of NARDEP, Kanyakumari from where originally this Azolla innovation started had come down to Ranchi to deliver a presentation on the eve of National Seminar on Animal Nutrition and Fodder Security (1st and 2nd of June 2013). Incidentally he also spoke of how Azolla can be a catalyst and a major innovative node in making an integrated organic dairy farming. On 3rd June 2013 he visited place of Sri Rai along with BAIF officers and BAIF DCDC I/C Mr. Amit Kumar. He was very much pleased to see the Azolla beds established at this far off place.



Sri.G.Vasudeo by the Azolla bed at Jharkhand. Both have come to Jharkhand from VK-nardep, Kanyakumari.

The farmer cheerfully shared the benefits he is deriving from Azolla. Azolla has not only increased the milk production, developed the quality of milk and health of the animals, but also has been phasing out the chemical concentrate feeds. Thus the farmer said with a smile he is saving money and earning money thanks to Azolla. He also shared another piece of interesting information. His BAIF born progeny has come in heat at 10 months of age itself. Azolla was being fed to this progeny also.



10 month old pregnant cow then in heat



If you lose touch with nature you lose touch with humanity. If there's no relationship with nature then you become a killer; then you kill baby seals, whales, dolphins, and man either for gain, for "sport," for food, or for knowledge. Then nature is frightened of you, withdrawing its beauty.

– J. Krishnamurti



AZOLLA *a gift of Green technology*



Now this progeny is 2 month pregnant. His family members have recently celebrated the first birth anniversary of this heifer. The whole family has celebrated the first birthday the same way they do for their kids. Local sweet dish "malpua" was prepared on the eve of birthday and the sweet was fed to this heifer also. For an Indian farmer the livestock is part of a larger family. A large team has played a role in making these extended family bonds green and healthy.



A proud team united by a green cause: Azolla as bio-feed to cattle.

The technology spread now has a self-cascading effect. Sri Rai has gifted 2 heifers and Azolla culture to his relative who is residing in the nearby village of Mandar thana. Both of his relatives have now established Azolla bed with this culture and now they are also feeding Azolla to the heifers.

Sri. Rai has now started providing Azolla culture to many of his relatives, explaining them and demonstrating them the backyard Azolla cultivation. As an innovative addition he has also started using Azolla culture in the paddy field also. Sri. Rai discovered that during the rains the Azolla has indeed gone into his field. Now the fellow farmers also observed that paddy quality and yield has increased due to this.

Sri. Rai says he can now harvest Azolla from paddy field during rainy season for feeding to animals. This is an interesting completion of a cycle because Azolla was originally promoted by agro-scientists as good bio-fertilizer because of its nitrogen fixing ability. However Azolla could not compete with and coexist with Urea. Often Urea application kills Azolla. So Azolla as bio-manure/fertilizer was generally considered a failure in terms of technology dissemination.



Azolla spreads as green fire across the field: our experience at Kanyakumari district.

But the alternative approach of Azolla as bio-feed through backyard cultivation has also accomplished the use of Azolla as bio-fertilizer at various stages of crop cultivation. In fact as Dr. Kamalasannan Pillai the brain behind this innovation used to say "Azolla once in homestead shall find its way to the field as well." For Sri.Rai it is a journey of love – his love for his cows made his search for a good feed which took him through BAIF to Azolla which in turn has come there from Kanyakumari the southernmost end of India through directorate of animal husbandry, Govt of Jharkhand. From the homestead with Azolla entering his field now Sri. Rai is slowly becoming not just a benefactor of green technologies but a co-creator: making the fellow farming community realize the wonder of Azolla.

Rameshwaram: Reviving the Sacred Water Teerthams

Everyone knows that Indian tourism is essentially pilgrimages. In the context of South According to the statistics provided by the Department of Tourism for 2012, Rameshwaram attracted the maximum number of tourists visiting South India with a phenomenal 2.4 crore people. This number is bound to increase in the future.

According to the Union Social Justice Minister Kumari Selja the efforts are on to include the famous temple in the UNESCO's list of heritage sites. **This is a good opportunity to highlight the fact that Rameshwaram island as a whole can make it to the UNESCO's list of heritage sites thanks to the sacred geography and ecology of the island.**

Already global networks of voluntary groups are transforming pilgrimages into eco-pilgrimages. Indian pilgrim cities of Nanded, Rishikesh, Varanasi, Ujjain and Jagannath Puri have joined the Green Pilgrimage Network (GPN) of Norway, making a commitment towards becoming eco-friendly. Nanded would focus on a five point agenda which include: (i) sewage & waste management, (ii) saving the rivers and water conservation, (iii) green energy (solar and bio-gas), (iv) green transport/pollution control, and (v) organic agriculture/tree plantation.

VK-nardep's Rameshwaram project actually has anticipated these developments. If enough awareness is spread through our efforts in this age of digital social networks Rameshwaram can make it as a whole to the UNESCO heritage site. So we request each one of you to spread awareness about the Teertham project.



How far is the passion for pure truth unimpaired by commercial interests? How far is our substitution of specialisms for synthesis conditioned by finance merely? When our utilitarian ingenuity draws nearer exhaustion, when the present spasm of inventive ability has worked itself out, then, and not till then, will come the time for estimating the actual profundity and disinterestedness of our scientific ardour. – Sister Nivedita



Happenings this month: **SUSTAINABLE** **AGRICULTURE**

Training programme on “Azolla Cultivation Technology” was held at TRC, Kalluvilai and was organized by Common Livelihood Group, Tirunelveli dist. on 20th of this month. 22 persons attended and underwent training. The resource person was Smt.S.Premalatha



Participants study the backyard Azolla cultivation technology

One day workshop on “Azolla backyard cultivation technology and Azolla as bio-feed” was conducted by VK-nardep at TRC, Kalluvilai on 27th of this month. 47 persons attended the workshop. The Resource Person was Dr. P. Kamalasanan Pillai and his team.



Happenings this month: **WATER MANAGEMENT**

Tested water from 14 wells in the district under the programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.

A workshop on grey-water treatment was held under Social Development Polytechnic Scheme of Govt. Polytechnic Nagercoil at the Dharmapura Atheenam premises on 19th for the village public as well as trainees of Fashion Design course. 55 persons attended. Sri Ramakrishnan conducted the session.



Happenings this month: **COST-EFFECTIVE** **CONSTRUCTION**

62 students from Sri Ramana Institute of Polytechnic College, Moolaikaraipatti, Tirunelveli Dist. attended a workshop on “Green Construction Technologies as a Project for Academic Studies” at TRC, Kalluvilai on 5th of this month. The resource persons were Shri.V.Ramakrishnan, Sis.V.Saraswathi Shri.Periyaswami.



Workshop on Cost-effective construction to students



VK-nardep activities done with DST core support



Green Health Home of VK-nardep functioned for 8 days and treated 143 patients.



Happenings this month: **MEDIA & NET-** **WORKING**

23 farmers from Vannigonanth, Tirunelveli Dist. organized by Pudukuzhu Thittam, came to VK-nardep on 7th, visited Gramodaya and learned various Organic farming technologies.

This month issue of ‘Mangair Malar’ Tamil Nadu’s foremost women magazine published a feature on VK-nardep Shakthi Surabhi Bio-methanation plant.



Exposure visit farmers studying various green agricultural technologies at Gramodaya Park.



To lead to any degree of permanence, the standard of value itself must be based on something apart from the person valuing, which is after all perishable. Such a basis, detached and independent of personal feelings, controlled by ideals which have their roots in the permanent order of things, are objective and so are true and reliable guides – J.C.Kumarappa



Happenings this month: **HOLISTIC & INDIGENOUS** **MEDICINE**

A meeting on “Ethno medicines standardization” was held at Gandhigram Trust, Dindigul district on 10th of this month.

50 persons attended this and the resource person was Dr.V.Ganapathy



Dr.Ganapathi discussing the issues in standardizing ethnic medicines

Workshop on “Ethno medicines and High Potency Compost” was organized by Vazhka Vazhamudan Group at G.R.Mahal, R.R.Nagar, Madurai on 12th and 85 persons attended it. The resource person was Dr.Ganapathi.



Two aspects of ethno-medicine workshops: medicine preparation & Varma demonstration.



Happenings this month: **HOLISTIC & INDIGENOUS** **MEDICINE**

A workshop on the ‘Documentation on ethnic medicine for community’ was organized by the Zigma Trust, Nagercoil at Krishnankovil Nagercoil on the 31st of this month. Dr.V.Ganapathy was the resource person.



A workshop demonstration of the ethnic medicine.

One day class on ‘Varma and ethnic medical practices’ was taken by Dr. Ganapathi at the ‘Extension programme on ethnic medicines’ organized by Varma and Kalari healers of Visweshvaraiah International Kalari Trust and Dr. Ajit at VIP Mahal, Kottayam on 28th and 29th. 40 persons attended it.



Dr.Ganapathi giving a practical demo of the ethnic medical system of Tamil Nadu.



Happenings this month: **BIO METHANATION** **PLANT & RENEWABLE** **ENERGY**

Training programme on “Bio-methanation Technology” supported by DST, Core Support Grant, was held at TRC, on 27th and 12 persons attended the training programme. The resource person was Shri.V.Ramakrishnan.



Bio-Methanation Plant **Training**



Bio-Methanation Plants **Installation this month:**

- 1 cum [1 No]
- 0.5 cum [1 No]
- 0.25 cum [1 No]

The Secret of a genius is to carry the spirit of the child into old age which means never losing your enthusiasm.



Looking at the works of art that are considered worthy of preservation in our Museums, and that were once the common objects of the market place, I could not but realise that a society can only be considered truly civilised when it is possible for every man to earn his living by the very work he would rather be doing than anything else in the world, a condition that has only been attained in social orders integrated on the basis of vocation, "svadharma". -Ananda Coomaraswamy



From our Publications

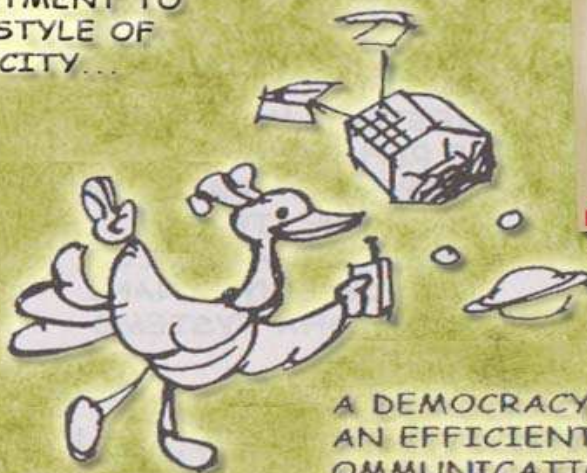


Many times it is thought that proponents of sustainable development are against technology. However sustainable development is not about shunning technology but the choice of technologies which will empower maximum benefit to the maximum number of humanity over long lasting periods spanning generation. Maximizing welfare without plundering nature is what eco-democracy is all about. These concepts are explained in this excerpts presented here from our publication 'Akshaya Vikas'.

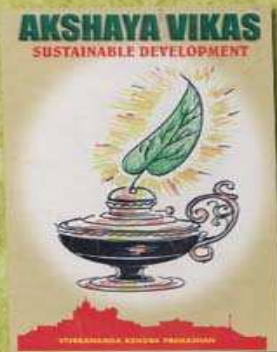
ECO-DEMOCRACY



DEMOCRACY'S SOUL LIES IN THE COMMITMENT TO A LIFESTYLE OF SIMPLICITY...



A DEMOCRACY MUST HAVE AN EFFICIENT SATELLITE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM



Music should continue

One thing seems obvious, humanity has reached a certain state of general tension – tension in effort, in action, even in daily life – with such an excessive overactivity, so widespread a trepidation, that the whole mass of mankind seems to have come to a point where either it must break through the resistance and emerge into a new consciousness or else fall back into an abyss of darkness and inertia.

By Mother

A FAILURE TO UPHOLD THIS IDEAL ENCOURAGES CONSUMERISM BASED ON THE GREED OF UNFAIR COMPETITION





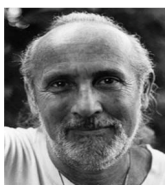
An aimless life is always a troubled life. Every individual should have an aim. But do not forget that the quality of your aim will depend the quality of your life. Your aim should be high and wide, generous and disinterested; this will make your life precious to yourself and to others. Whatever your ideal, it cannot be perfectly realized unless you have realized perfection in yourself.—Sri Aurobindo



True Economy

Fueled by advertising, we dig the Earth up and chop it down to make the —goods|| which we can stuff into that great big hole where our soul used to be, each item promising that this time its going to work, —buy me and you'll finally feel alright||. But do we know anyone who has ever reached the end of this particular path, has finally bought the one last thing that finally resolved for them the utter catastrophe of the human condition? Far from it. What we find is that the more that you feed this addiction, the more addicted you become. We need a kind of social therapy, and a change in the programming.

It has long been recognized that that GNP is a distorted measure of value — the more motor accidents we have the more GNP goes up, the more anti-pollution equipment we are forced to manufacture, the stronger the economy etc. Its no use sacrificing our desire for ever more material junk, we have to stop wanting these things, stop finding them pleasurable rather than bravely forgoing their pleasures. Like with any addiction we must ask: —What is the real underlying problem? What is it we're not facing up to and avoiding by our consumption habits? And for this we need a spiritual movement which replaces the false promises of the church of greed with something which really does feed us.



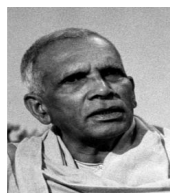
— John Seed
Deep-Ecologist



True Education

Our education must help our children to develop such a critical, scientific, truth-seeking attitude. What is truth? What is a true life? How to live a true life and not a false life? This kind of questing and questioning attitude will help to bring out the highest possibilities hidden in our children; and through such transformed children, our whole nation will develop its true wealth, namely, human energy resources, this is true human resource development. This is what will integrate man with man, irrespective of caste, creed, race or sex, and make our nation truly great.

Vedanta, emphasizes the truth of our essential oneness. It is one and the same Shakti or Divine Energy that courses through every being says Vedanta. Therefore, love and concern for others becomes a by-product of this spiritual growth from individuality to personality, from *vyaktivta* to *vikasita vyaktivta*. ... Vedanta through Vivekananda defines the science of religion as: 'the manifestation of the divinity already within man.' Even a little manifestation of this divinity makes for love, service, creativity, and peace. It endows one with more energy, and the inclination to use that energy in the service of society. That is the very soul of education — increasing the energy resources in man and giving it a humanistic direction.



Swami
Ranganathananda
Spiritual Guru



True Nature

We may make arbitrary divisions for the convenience of collective life, for analysis, but essentially any division between inner and outer has no reality, no meaning. We have accepted the watertight compartments of society, the fragmentation of living as factual and necessary. We live in relationship to these fragments and accept the internalized divisions the various roles we play, the contradictory value systems, the opposing motives and priorities as reality. We are at odds with ourselves internally; we believe that the inner is fundamentally different from the outer, that what is me is quite separate from the not-me, that divisions among people and nations are necessary, and yet we wonder why there are tensions, conflicts, wars in the world. The conflicts begin with minds that believe in fragmentation and are ignorant of wholeness. Life is not fragmented; it is not divided. It cannot be divided into spiritual and material, individual and collective. We cannot create compartments in life: political, economic, social, environmental. Whatever we do or don't do affects and touches the wholeness, the homogeneity. We are forever organically related to wholeness. We are wholeness, and we move in wholeness.



Vimala Thakar
Socio-spiritual activist