

Echoes of Eco



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Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

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Green warrior – Popatrao Pawar

Story of Hiware Bazar

(Extracts from the article written by Poonam Binayak)



Tucked away in the arid Ahmednagar district of the western Maharashtra, Hiware Bazar was in the grips of poverty and drought some 30 years ago. But in the 1990s the fate of the village changed, and it transformed into a wealthy village with nearly 60 millionaires, all of whom are farmers. The credit for this rags-to-riches success goes to Popatrao Pawar the village head, who changed the socio-economic fabric of the village forever.

With a per capita income of just Rs.830/- per month back in 1995, to Rs.30,000/- today, Hiware Bazar is making strides. Inhabited by 1,250 people, out of which 60 are millionaires, this village is, indeed, a quintessential example of a developing nation. The village boasts bustling markets, immaculate roads, lush green fields, and well-built houses.

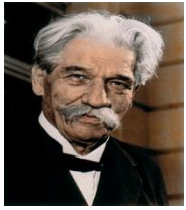
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Narasimha - The Man-Lion

All glories to you, O Lord of the universe, who took the form of a man-lion. As easily as crushing a wasp between your fingers, you tore apart the demon Hiranyakashipu with the pointed nails of your bare hands, which are beautiful like the lotus flower.



"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve"

- Albert Schweitzer



In addition to that, open defecation, tobacco and alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited in the village, along with a ban on deforestation, grazing, and tube wells for irrigation. The village is thriving with each passing year, and it has attained a dignified living standard with earnings almost double that of most rural villages in India.

But this wasn't always the scene. Rewind back to 1972: the village was massively hit by drought, and year after year the condition of the village was getting worse—the wells had run dry and water was scarce, which resulted in fallow lands and thus no source of income. The aftermath of this was depression, addiction to alcohol that fuelled domestic violence, and exodus. Every family was under the spell of these issues. A lack of support or governance in the village meant the problems were further aggravated. In fact, over 90 percent of the inhabitants fled to the cities to find a new life. But to end this desperation, the youth of the village decided to appoint a young village head who could change the course of the village.

In 1989, Popatrao Pawar was appointed as a village head (sarpanch) unanimously, and since then there's been no looking back. First things first, Pawar ended the menace of smoking and inebriation by shutting down all the illicit liquor stores in the village, followed by a ban on liquor and tobacco consumption.

As the village is nestled in a rain-shadow area and receives a scant amount of rainfall (less than 15 inches) every year, it became imperative to meet its water needs. To do so, Pawar took out a loan and started a rainwater harvesting and watershed conservation and management program in the village.



Together with the villagers and using state government funds, he established several water bodies, including 52 earthen bunds, 32 stone bunds, check dams, and percolation tanks to store rainwater, as well as thousands of trees being planted.

This watershed technique helped the villagers with irrigation and to harvest different crops. With just 90 wells back in 1990, this tiny village now has around 294 water wells. In a span of just a few years, the water level began to rise in the wells and other man-made structures around the village, thus farming was back in full swing and became the main source of income for the villagers. Also, the village abandoned the use of water-intensive crops, and instead vegetables, pulses, fruit and flowers that use less water were grown.



"Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace"

- Albert Schweitzer

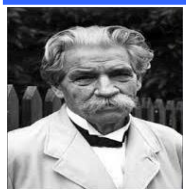


The villagers also started focusing on cattle farming, which led to an increase in milk production, thus raking in huge revenue. Back in the 1990s, about 150 liters of milk were produced per day, while today milk production is around 4000 liters per day. The village learnt to tackle any kind of challenge thrown their way, either by Mother Nature or man-made. Slowly and steadily the village witnessed growth and prosperity, resulting in reverse migration. In 1995, out of 182 families, 168 were marked below the poverty line, whereas today it's just three.

Other noteworthy accomplishments: the village is spick and span, every home has a toilet, each house uses biogas, schools and a healthcare system have been established, electricity and water runs throughout the village.

Pawar's good governance, hard work and dedication, along with village support and participation has led the village to attain the title of Ideal Village by the Maharashtra Government. As a result of this feat, Popatrao Pawar has been appointed as a chairman of the Model Village Programme of Maharashtra, whose agenda is to create 100 similar villages. And if more villages follow suit, there will come a time when no-one is below poverty line.





"Eventually all things fall into place. Until then, laugh at the confusion, live for the moments, and know everything happens for a reason"
- Albert Schweitzer



Happenings this month:
Sustainable Agriculture



Happenings this month:



Happenings this month:
Sustainable Agriculture

Training programme on "Bee Keeping" was held at J.C.Bose Nursery, Vivekanandapuram on 5th October. 03 participants attended the training. Shri.S.Rajamony was the resource person.



Practical demonstration on "Bee Keeping"

"Zero Budget Natural Farming" programme was organized by Dept. Agriculture, Govt. of Tamilnadu at Melpuram, Kanyakumari district on 31st October. 40 farmers attended the programme. Shri.S.Rajamony was the resource person.



Shri.Rajamony explaining the concept of Zero budget farming



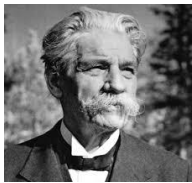
Case Study

Mrs.V.Latha
Panchalingapuram,
Kanyakumari District
Mobile: 9487372157



My name is V.Latha resident of Panchalingapuram, Kanyakumari. I have attended several training programmes organized by Vivekananda Kendra - NARDEP such as Azolla Cultivation, Terrace Garden, Kitchen Garden and Herbal Garden, Pest repellents, Growth promoters etc., I have some spaces behind my house where I am growing vegetables as well as a few medicinal plants. Incidentally, I am using my knowledge of herbal pesticides and growth promoters while carrying out this nature friendly activity. For minor ailments like cough and cold I use plants such as Adathoda, Tulsi, Omavalli etc for preparing Kasayam for me as well as for my family.

Thanks to Vivekananda Kendra - Nardep for empowering me in multiple fields such as kitchen garden, nutritious food, medicinal herbs and preventive and curative care of minor ailments.



"In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit"

- Albert Schweitzer



**Happenings this month:
Renewable Energy
Sources**



Happenings this month



**Happenings this month:
Holistic Health**

Training programme on "Grey water treatment" was held at Villupuram on 17th October. 65 members attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person. The programme was sponsored by Dist. Child Welfare and Protection Unit, Trichy.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan explaining - 'Phyto remediation for Grey Water treatment'

Training programme on "Green technologies for Sustainable Development" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 7th October. 29 NSS Students from Rohini Engineering Collage, Palkulam, Kanyakumari district attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan acted as resource person.

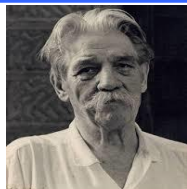
Green health home worked for 4 days and treated 167 patients.

IFAD officials along with Consultants Smt.Girija Srinivasan, Sriram Sankarasubramaniam and Joint Director Shri.Kumar visited VK-Nardep on 30th October and reviewed the work of Bio-methanation plants installation in the coastal districts of Tamilnadu.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan explaining Biogas and Vermi wash technologies to the officials





"The greatest discovery of any generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering the attitudes of their minds"

- Albert Schweitzer



**Happenings this month:
Renewable Energy
Sources**



Happenings this month



**Happenings this
month:
Networking**

Commissioning of Bio-methanation plants for Hand in Hand Inclusive Development and Services, Chennai

- Portable 1 cum - 20 nos. (Rameswaram project)

Commissioning of cow dung based biogas plants - NABARD, Chennai

- Portable 1 cum - 4 nos.



Our staff Shri.Raghupathy and Shri.Periyaswami are helping in commissioning the plant at Rameswaram

District Advisory Committee meeting was organized by IFAD, Chennai at Collectorate, Thoothukkudi on 25th October. Shri.S.Raghupathy attended the meeting.

NABARD, Chennai have sanctioned a project on "Vermi wash units" in Kanyakumari and Ramanathapuram districts. As on today we have completed 13 units out of total 20 in both the districts.

The technology is unique having multiple benefits such as (i) Conversion of farm waste to good quality vermi compost (ii) Liquid Bio-fertiliser and growth promoter in the form of Vermi wash for daily use (iii) Very good quality earthworms after six months which can be used for multiplying the units, for selling in the market or introducing in the field.

Nandavanam,
Behind
Ramnathaswami
temple,
Rameswaram

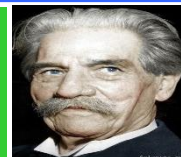


Shri.Raja
Thangachi Madam,
Rameswaram



"Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful"

- Albert Schweitzer



Visions of Wisdom



Spirituality and Development

Slowly but increasingly scientists and economists are recognizing that development is a process that encompasses both the spiritual and the material aspects of life; that personal transformation must go hand in hand with social change, that the values and culture of communities must be woven into the fabric of development and sustainability. Progress must include, as Gandhi pointed out, social justice, a sense of community, of restrained consumption, a concern for the poor, and a sense of the sacredness and spirituality in life.



Kamala Chowdhry
Reputed environmentalist, institution builder and author of many books



No Desa without Darshana

This struggle of the other India will never cease, because it is not merely a political or social struggle, but a moral and spiritual one. It is the struggle, in a sense, of the human race itself, to perfect both itself and the world it inhabits. That is the quest of the metaphysical India, the India which, to use Raja Rao's wise saw, is not just a desa depends on the darshana; the former may or may not always reflect the latter, but without the latter, the former has no meaningful existence. Every society will find ways and means of preserving itself. The state, the political system, the bureaucracy, etc. fail, then it will look elsewhere. It will find alternatives.



Makarand Paranjape
Director of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla
Author & Poet

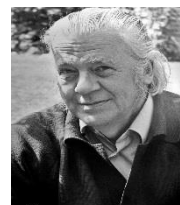
The Materialistic World



How much is happiness?

Self-destructive civilization of the West

The bases of modern civilization, it has been said, are such "that it has been forgotten even by the learned that man ever attempted to live otherwise than by bread alone". In Asia, however, this attempt can still be seen in action in a few places not yet spoiled by the "withering touch" of Westernization. The late Sir George Birdwood, upon encountering such a society in India said that "such an ideal order we should have held impossible of realization, but it continues to exist in India, a proof of the superiority, in so many unsuspected ways, of the hieratic civilization of antiquity over the secular, joyless, inane, and self-destructive civilization of the West".



E.F. Schumacher
German-British statistician and economist and famous for his book "Small is beautiful"