

# Echoes of Eco



April, 2019

Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

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## Green warrior - Wangari Maathai



Wangari Muta Maathai was born in Nyeri, Kenya (Africa) in 1940. The first woman in East and Central Africa to earn a doctorate degree. Wangari Maathai obtained a degree in Biological Sciences from Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas (1964). She subsequently earned a Master of Science degree from the University of Pittsburgh (1966). She pursued doctoral studies in Germany and the University of Nairobi, obtaining a Ph.D. (1971) from the University of Nairobi where she also taught veterinary anatomy. She became chair of the Department of Veterinary Anatomy and an associate professor in 1976 and 1977 respectively. Wangari Maathai was active in the National Council of Women of Kenya in 1976-87 and was its chairman in 1981-87. It was while she served in the National Council of Women that she introduced the idea of planting trees with the people in 1976 and continued to develop it into a broad-based, grassroots organization whose main focus is the planting of trees with women groups in order to conserve the environment and improve their quality of life. **Through the Green Belt Movement, she has assisted women in planting more than 20 million trees on their farms and on schools and church compounds.**

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*This is the eternal Asvattha tree whose roots are above and whose branches below. That is verily the pure, that is Brahman, and that is also called immortal. In that rest all the worlds, and none can transcend. Verily this is that.*

Kathopanishad 6.1



*"If there has been any success in life, that was built on the unshakable foundation of failure..."*

- Jagadish Chandra Bose



## **Wangari Maathai 1940 – 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate of 2004**



In 1986, the Movement established a Pan African Green Belt Network and has exposed over 40 individuals from other African countries to the approach. Some of these individuals have established similar tree planting initiatives in their own countries or they use some of the Green Belt Movement methods to improve their efforts. So far some countries have successfully launched such initiatives in Africa (Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, etc). Her campaign against land grabbing and rapacious allocation of forests land has caught the limelight in the recent past.

Wangari Maathai is internationally recognized for her persistent struggle for democracy, human rights and environmental conservation. She has addressed the UN on several occasions and spoke on behalf of women at special sessions of the General Assembly for the five-year review of the earth summit. She served on the commission for Global Governance and Commission on the Future. She and the Green Belt Movement have received numerous awards, most notably The 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. Professor Maathai was also listed on UNEP's Global 500 Hall of Fame and named one of the 100 heroines of the world. In June 1997, Wangari was elected by Earth Times as one of 100 persons in the world who have made a difference in the environmental arena. Professor Maathai has also received honorary doctoral degrees from several institutions around the world.

The Green Belt Movement and Professor Wangari Maathai are featured in several publications all over the World. Professor Maathai served on the boards of several organizations including the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament, The Jane Goodall Institute, Women and Environment Development Organization (WEDO) etc.

In December 2002, Professor Maathai was elected to parliament with an overwhelming 98% of the vote. She was subsequently appointed by the president, as Assistant Minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Wildlife in Kenya's ninth parliament. She passed away in the year 2011.

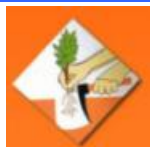
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*"The true laboratory is the mind, where behind illusions we uncover the laws of truth"*

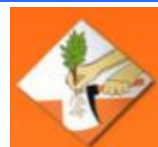
- Jagadish Chandra Bose



Happenings this month:  
Sustainable Agriculture



Happenings this month:



Happenings this month:  
Sustainable Agriculture

Training programme on "Azolla technology" was held at J.C.Bose Nursery on 6<sup>th</sup> March. 2 participants attended the training. Smt.S.Premalatha was the resource person.



*Discussion with the participants*

Training programme on "Vermiwash technology" was held at Green Rameswaram project building, Rameswaram on 24<sup>th</sup> April. 12 participants attended the training. Shri.S.Rajamony was the resource person. The programme was sponsored by NABARD, Chennai.



*Attentive participants during Vermi Wash training*



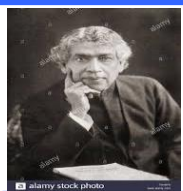
**Healthy nutritious supplements  
through Kitchen Garden**

Ms.Gayathri  
Mankaadu village  
Rameswaram  
Mob: 8124087226



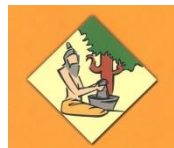
Ms.Gayathri is a resident of Mankaadu village. She started preparing her own grow bags with cement and rice sacks. She grows a wide variety of Spinaches, Tomato, Brinjal, Cluster Beans etc. Some in the sack bag and some in the ground but no space has been wasted. Her efforts in growing have resulted as a model to the entire village. She proudly says that she gives the cuttings of the spinaches grown to her friends and neighbours to grow in their houses. She gives credit to Vivekananda Kendra for her training in developing Kitchen garden.





*"Knowledge is never the exclusive possession of any favoured race; the whole world is inter-dependent and a constant stream of thought had through ages enriched the common heritage of mankind"*

- Jagadish Chandra Bose



**Happenings this month:  
Holistic Health**



**Happenings this month**



**Happenings this month:  
Cost effective  
construction  
technologies**

Training programme on "Vermiwash technology" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 27<sup>th</sup> April. 27 participants attended the training. Shri.S.Rajamony was the resource person. The programme was sponsored by NABARD, Chennai.



*Practical training at Fruit farm, Kanyakumari*

Green health home worked for 5 days and treated 245 patients.

Training programme on "Ferro-cement technology" was held at Sannathi Street, Rameswaram on 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> April. 16 participants attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person.



*Practical training on Ferro-cement technology*

Workshop on "Traditional Siddha Varma Bone Setting Practices" was held at Technology Resource Center on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April. 31 Vaidyas, Students attended the training. Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team acted as resource persons.



*Practical demonstration during Varma camp*



*Krishnamurthiji giving lecture to the participants*

Training programme on "Ferro-cement technology" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 16<sup>th</sup> April. 40 participants attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the main resource person.





*"Metals too have fatigue, a brief period of rest, by removing the overstrain, remove also the sign of fatigue"*

- Jagadish Chandra Bose



Happenings this month:  
Networking



Happenings this month:



Happenings this month:  
Renewable Energy

Training programme on "Ferro-cement technology" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 20<sup>th</sup> April. 76 lady participants attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan explaining about Ferro-cement technology to the participants

Awareness programme on "Cow dung and Biomass based portable Bio-methanation technology" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. 38 participants attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person. The programme was sponsored by NABARD, Chennai.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan explaining about Bio-methanation technology

Construction of plants:  
Portable type 6cum - 1 no.



Awareness programme on "Cow dung and Biomass based portable Bio-methanation technology" was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 24<sup>th</sup> April. 42 participants attended the training. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person. The programme was sponsored by NABARD, Chennai.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan interacting with the participants





*"They who behold the One, in all the changing manifoldness of the universe, unto them belongs the eternal truth, unto none else, unto none else"*  
- Jagadish Chandra Bose



Happenings this month:  
**Networking**



Happenings this month:



Happenings this month:  
**Renewable Energy**

49 students from Dr.Kumaraswami Health Center, Perumalpuram, Kottaram visited Gramodaya Park on 3<sup>rd</sup> April as a part of study tour. Students learned VK-Nardep's Technologies for Sustainable Development.



*Students at terrace garden*

Personality Development Camp for students of Avvai Ashram, Sivasailam, Dindigul was held at Technology Resource Center, Kalluvillai on 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> April. 31 students attended. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan, Shri.N.Krishnamurthy, Sis.V.Saraswathy, Shri.C.Vijaya Ragavan acted as resource persons.



*Children learned Yogasana practices*



*Soap making is on ... during training*

'Cow dung based cosmetics' preparation training was held at Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> April. 15 participants attended the training. Smt.Priyanka Harigaran from Madurai was the resource person. Tooth power, Soap, Toilet cleaner etc. were taught during the training.

Azolla fern is cheapest cattle feed - letters to the editor - Down to Earth - Bimonthly magazine written by VK-NARDEP

# Letters



## Azolla fern is cheapest cattle feed

This is in reference to the article "Of cacti and algae" (16-31 March, 2019). Our organisation, Vivekananda Kendra - Natural Resources Development Project, was the first to promote azolla fern as cattle feed some two decades ago. Today, over 0.2 million farmers are using azolla as alternate cattle feed in several states, especially in Kerala. Incidentally, it is the cheapest nutritious feed that farmers can easily grow in their backyard. Two kilograms of azolla can substitute 1 kg of oil cake in terms of nutrition and boost milk production in cows by 10 to 15 per cent. However, contrary to the author's claim that the fern is highly perishable, our observation has been that azolla does not perish as long as it is in the waterbody.

**V. RAMAKRISHNAN**  
DIRECTOR, VIVEKANANDA KENDRA -  
NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT,  
KANYAKUMARI, TAMIL NADU

### Down To Earth replies:

We agree with your observation. Azolla thrives as long as it is in the waterbody. But once harvested, it starts rotting. This is a limitation for farmers who want to use the fern as green fodder. Many thus dry the surplus in the shade and store it for later use. They say azolla, in dried form, lasts for one to two months.

Down To Earth welcomes



*"Physiological mechanism of the plant is identical with that of the Animal"*  
- Jagadish Chandra Bose



## Visions of Wisdom



### Economic Enslavement

This is why I believe there is a real crisis. It seems to me that the real problem is that western economic ideology is neither science nor art but in fact it is an ideological construct and it is now the chosen vessel, the vehicle of the western universalizing mission. In a sense it is the direct inheritor of the earlier racist notions that the west earlier had something to teach the rest of the world. The same thing is still there, and by and large, it is the western rich telling the rest of the world how to conduct their affairs, what to do, what policies to adopt.

The west offers its advice, its prescription, its indeed its instructions to the whole world.

**Jeremy Seabrook**  
Works for the New Statesman in London and edits a journal – Greening the Planet



### Loosing of Local control in Agriculture

Yet, even as the Green Revolution proves to be a failure, the World Bank has started to promote bio-technology as the 'ecological' alternative to failing chemical agriculture. However, the social, political and ecological assessment of bio-technology has not been carried out. By its very nature, and by virtue of World Bank involvement and financing, bio-technology further removes production of food – humanity's most basic and necessary product – from necessary local control.

The remedy is that the farmers, women groups, indigenous peoples and others should retrieve their ecological spaces from the growing tentacles of powerful global economic actors.

**Upendra Baxi**  
Former Vice Chancellor of Delhi University



### Breakdown of Community and Family

In the west we are only beginning to realise the consequence of destroying society. I am quite convinced that within the next ten years, the west will go the way of Russia. The collapse will be just as bad, probably worse, as America is more centralized, more dependent on high technology, and on the working of the market system, all of which are highly precarious and very vulnerable to disruptions.

One of the reasons why America must collapse is because its society is gone, it no longer exists. If you go to New York and the other major cities there is a complete breakdown of community and the family. The same is happening in England, a massive increase in delinquency, crime, drug addiction.

**Edward Goldsmith**  
Renowned Ecologist and Editor of the most respected publication – Ecologist

