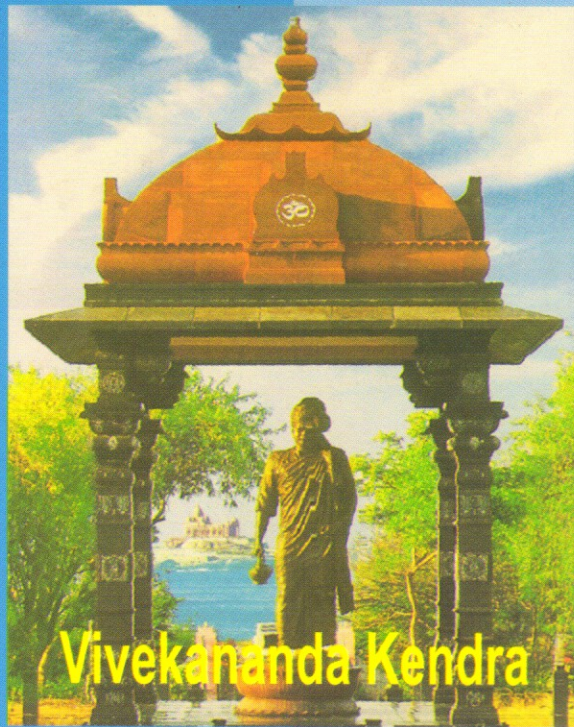


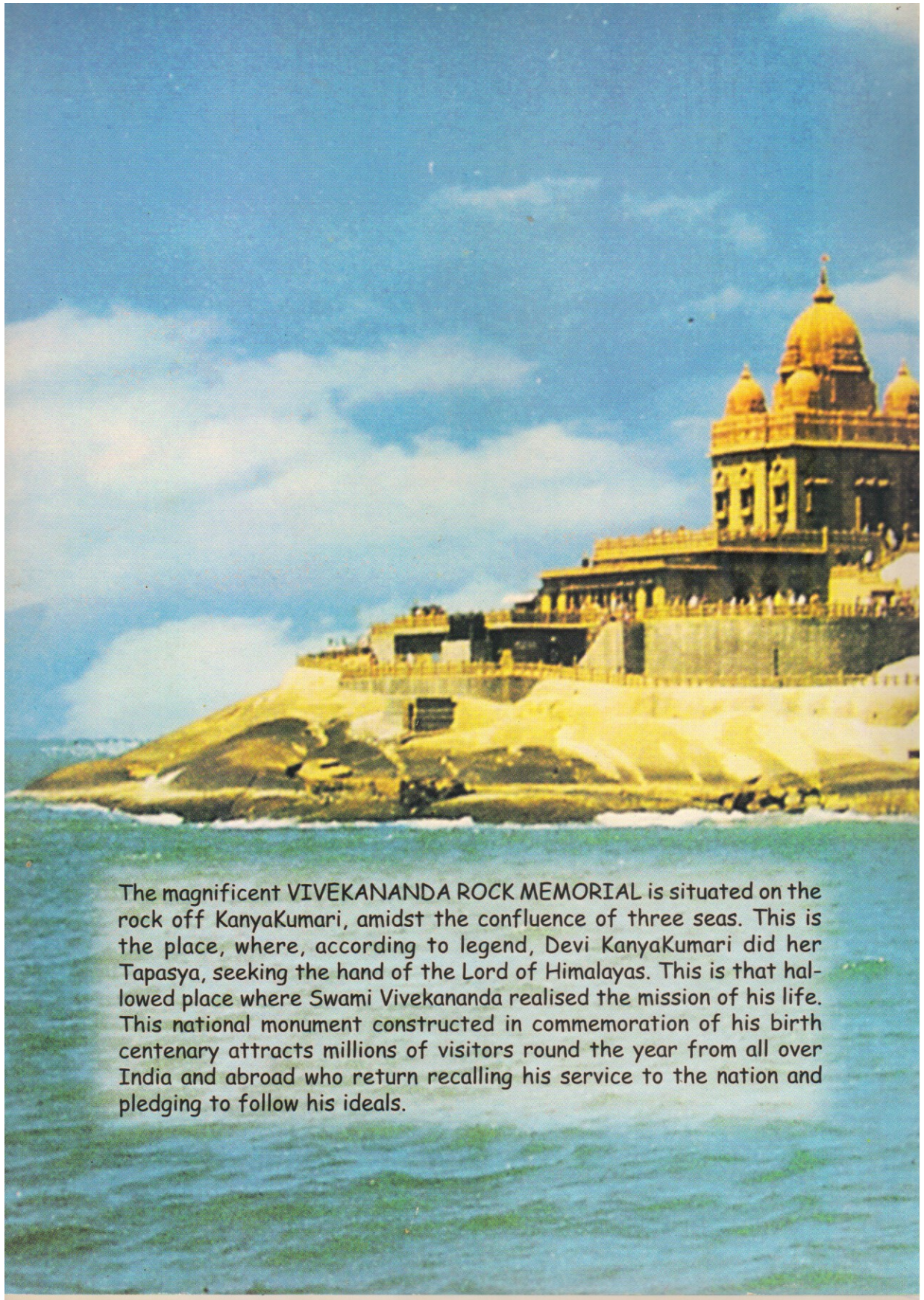
Pramas

experiences in partnership



Vivekananda Kendra

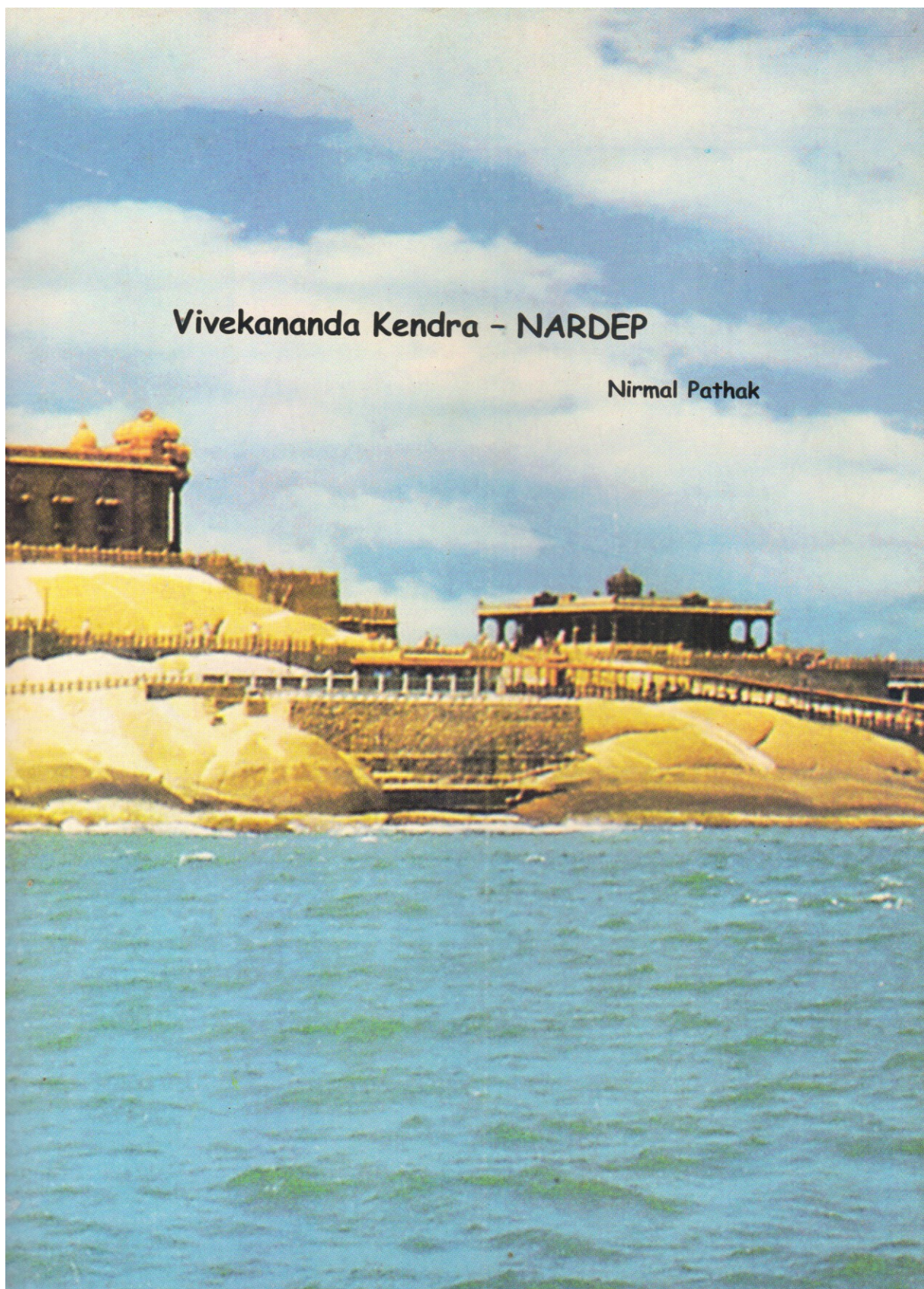


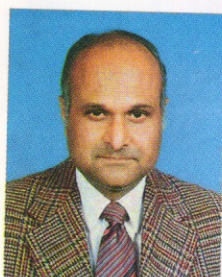


The magnificent VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL is situated on the rock off KanyaKumari, amidst the confluence of three seas. This is the place, where, according to legend, Devi KanyaKumari did her Tapasya, seeking the hand of the Lord of Himalayas. This is that hallowed place where Swami Vivekananda realised the mission of his life. This national monument constructed in commemoration of his birth centenary attracts millions of visitors round the year from all over India and abroad who return recalling his service to the nation and pledging to follow his ideals.

Vivekananda Kendra - NARDEP

Nirmal Pathak





Foreword

Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology, CAPART, has contributed positively to the role of voluntary organizations in rural development, acting as a force multiplier in the activities of such organizations and in the overall development of the rural areas.

Under the aegis of CAPART numerous well known projects have been undertaken. CAPART has liaised with around 8,000 voluntary organizations throughout the country and involved lakhs of people in the process of rural development. Through this process it has also saved, developed and disseminated several rural technologies that otherwise would have been forgotten or gone unnoticed. Yet, much of CAPART's achievements have not been brought to the public notice. One of the aims of this book is to highlight the positive role that CAPART has played in promoting rural development through voluntary action. It is also hoped that such publications will encourage the youth and other voluntary organisations to join in the task of rural development. The strength of an organisation is not just its buildings and staff it employees. In fact the litmus test for this is the capacity of the organisation to mobilise the people and put in place sustainable systems which are run for the people and by the people. **Vivekananda Kendrs (Nardep)** is one such successful organisation.

In this book the larger issues of development have been focussed upon. Details of CAPART's projects have also been given. I hope that these successful projects will, with careful consideration, further encourage not only VK(N) but several other voluntary organisations working in the region to take up such challenges.

As a final word, I would like to express my appreciation of the effort that Shri Sandeep Bagchee, Deputy Director General, CAPART and his team of officers including Shri C. L. Kataria, Asstt. Director who made this issue possible.

Rangan Dutta
Director General
CAPART



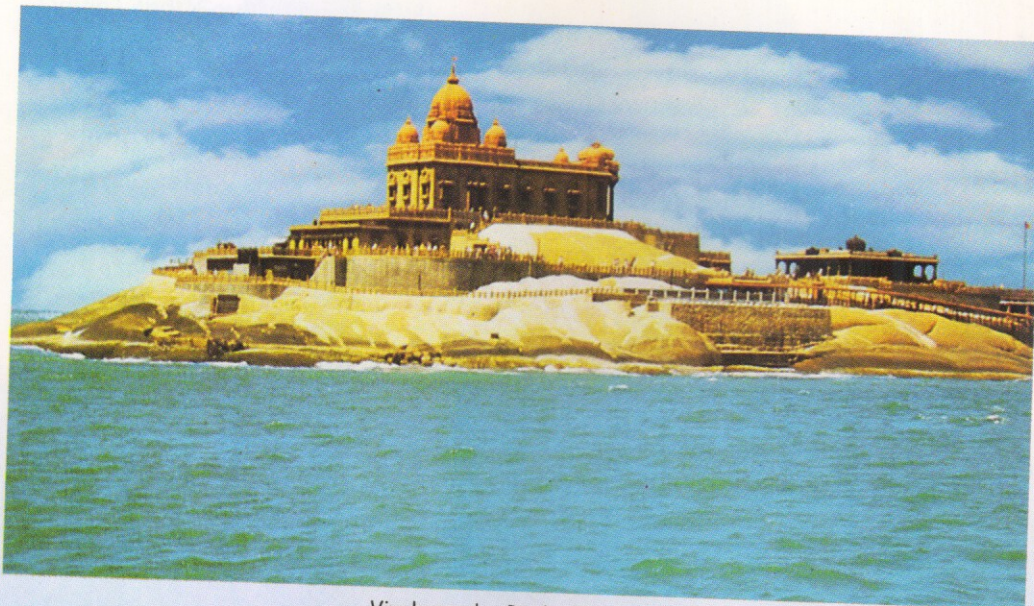
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1. VIVEKANANDA ROCK MEMORIAL

Kanyakumari at land's end is the meeting point, a holy Sangam, of three seas. Sanctified by Devi Parvati's tapas in her incarnation as Devi KanyaKumari, it inspired Swami Vivekananda with the mission of his life during his epoch

of Swami Vivekananda. His tenacity, single minded devotion to the cause and the keenness for perfection have been amply manifested in the part played by him in the erection of this magnificent Rock Memorial.



Vivekananda Rock Memorial

making meditation on Rock, presumably on 25th, 26th and 27th December 1892.

It was to commemorate this historic meditation on the **Shri Pada Parai**, that 30 lakh individuals contributed towards the construction of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial making it a truly national monument.

The spirit behind this entire movement was **Shri Eknath Ranade**, a true disciple

Since its inauguration in 1970, it has become a point of national convergence. Over the years this granite symbol of inspiration has drawn millions of pilgrims and provided them with meaning in their lives. At present 15 lakh visitors—pilgrims and tourists—throng every year to be overwhelmed by the cleanliness and the serenity of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial.

2. VIVEKANANDA KENDRA



Swami Vivekananda - Inspiration behind Kendra

This spiritually oriented service mission is a logical sequel to the Vivekananda Rock Memorial. Launched to embody the **"Man-making and Nation-building"** ideals of Swami Vivekananda, in flesh and blood, it has to day numerous Branch centers and implements various projects to reach the masses all over India. The backbone for the nation-wide activities of this thought movement, is its dedicated cadre of Jeevan Vratīs and the fully devoted whole- time workers, both men and women, who have consecrated their lives, full-time or part, for the regeneration of their motherland. The Kendra assures such workers life-long facilities for simple living.

The Kendra also welcomes the services of middle aged men and women, who have preferred early retirement from their service or vocation or have renounced interest in mundane affairs to dedicate the rest of their lives to the service of society.

The 190 branch centers and the service projects disseminate the ideals of "Tyaga" and "Seva". The major thrust is on character-building EDUCATION, culture-based service oriented RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, YOGA to re-establish it as a socially relevant way of life and the invigorating PUBLICATIONS to further the cause of 'Man making and Nation building' - ideals in print.

2.1 EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Swami Vivekananda pinpointed that lack of proper education among the masses



Shri. Eknathji Ranade - Spirit behind Kendra

as the root cause for the malaise in the Indian society. Kendra has therefore



Students of Kendra Vidyalaya - Arunachal Pradesh

taken up education as one of its main service activities.

It runs 19 schools (most of them residential) in Arunachal, 4 in Assam, 5 in Andamans, 2 in Tamil Nadu and one at Kallabalu near Bangalore in Karnataka.

2.2 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Swami Vivekananda said that a new India would emerge through the awakening of the neglected rural masses. Keeping this in view, Vivekananda Kendra started service activities with a cultural thrust.

Balwadis, Balasamskara Vargas, Cultural Classes, Competitions, Youth Camps and



Adopt a Granny Scheme

Rural Libraries for children and the youth, Deepa Pujas and Awareness camps for women, Medical care and eye care for the old and the needy, are



Community Deepa Puja



Bal Samskar Varga

undertaken in KanyaKumari, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts of Tamil Nadu and also in the district of Thiruvananthapuram.

Rural Development activities are also carried out in Chandil in Singhbhum district of Bihar and at Kallabalu near Bangalore in Karnataka.

2.3 YOGA - A WAY OF LIFE

Vivekananda Kendra has been playing a very useful role in propagating yoga among the common public, students, professionals and Sadhaks, through Yoga

shibirs, personality development camps and spiritual Retreats held regularly.

Every year innumerable persons enriched from these camps, return to their lives attuned to a higher goal.



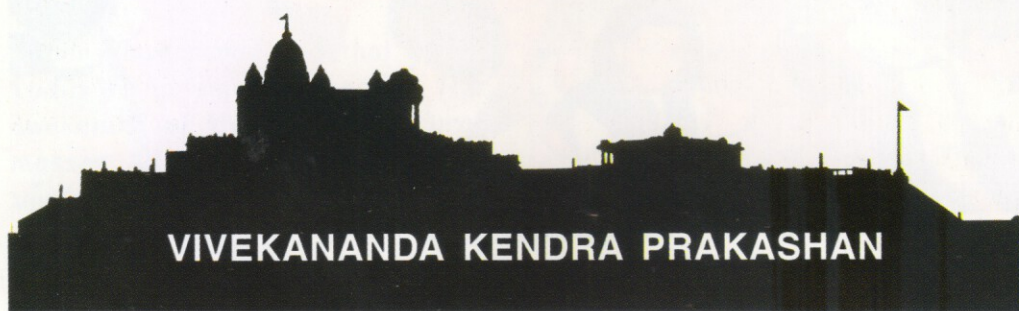
Pranayama Class

2.4 PUBLICATIONS

Journals and books are powerful media for disseminating ideas and ideals. Kendra's journals mentioned below contribute to project and popularise higher values of life amongst the readers.

Kendra Bharati-Hindi Monthly
Vivekananda Kendra Samachar Annual
in English, Hindi & Marathi

In addition, books based on cultural and spiritual heritage are also brought out from time to time in different languages.



Yuva Bharati
English Monthly
Vivekananda Kendra Patrika
A thematic English half - yearly
Vivek Vani
Tamil Monthly
Vivek Vichar
Marathi - four monthly
Jagriti
Assamese and English quarterly



3. NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT- NARDEP

More commonly known as VK-NARDEP, it is yet another integral project of Vivekananda Kendra. In a world beset with dwindling resources and rising consumption levels, it seeks to address the real issues and suggests refreshing alternatives. Endeavoring to promote indigenous traditional sciences and technologies, supplementing them with the modern ones, it organises demonstrations, awareness camps, seminars, workshops and publications.

Working in harmony with other like-minded organisations and in technical collaboration with several scientific research institutes, it has undertaken to promote technologies - simple, eco-friendly technologies - which help the common people, practice conservation. The aim is to translate opportunities offered by time-tested methods into tangible benefits of the people.



Education through street play

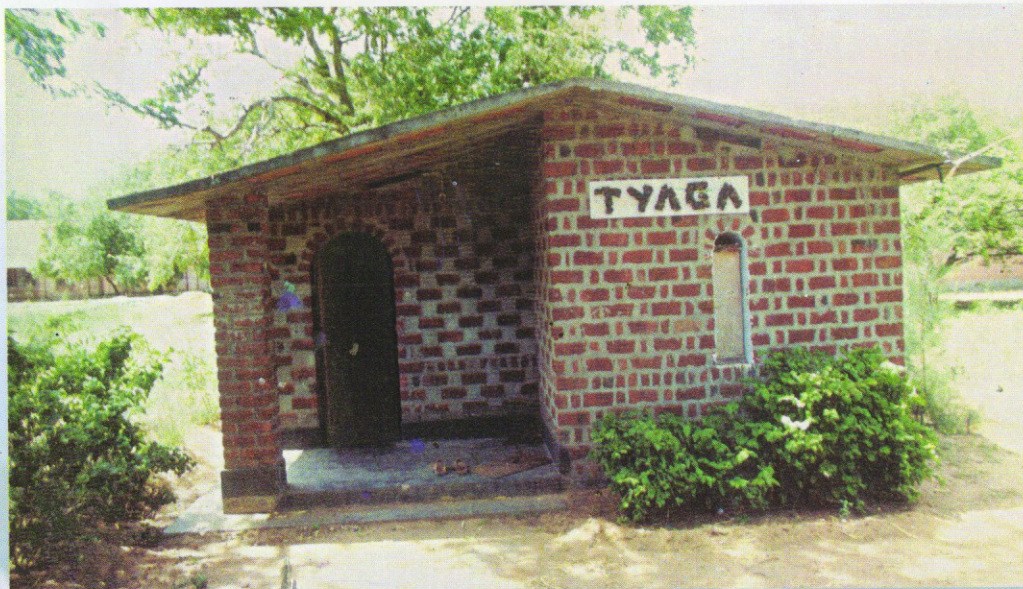
VK-NARDEP is working in the fields of

- i. Cost-effective Construction Technology
- ii. Water Management
- iii. Organic Farming
- iv. Medicinal Herbs
- v. Renewable Energy Sources

3.1 COST EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

Alarmed by the high costs of house construction, VK-NARDEP went in quest

of locally available alternatives. The traditional knowledge-base spawned Grand temples which stand even today, sans mortar and steel rods, after centuries of ravages of time. It found in Laurie Baker of Thiruvanthapuram, a pioneer in "Cost-effective Housing Technology". VK-NARDEP in its **"ROOF FOR THE ROOFLESS"** project has constructed hundreds of cost-effective houses at a considerable less cost in Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts. Kendra also constructed a few houses in Orissa after the havoc of recent cyclone.

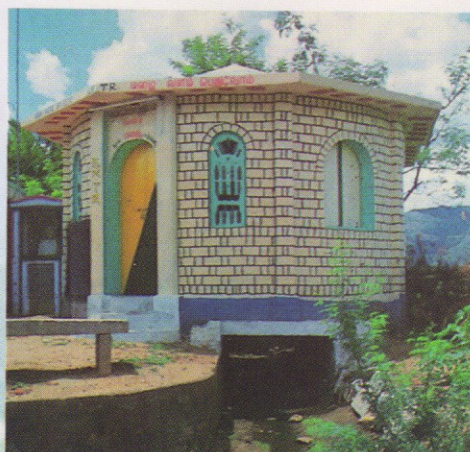


Cost Effective House



Office of NARDEP

Lauri Baker got inspiration from **Mahatma Gandhi** who insisted on making use of local material, which is available within a range of 5km. Kendra has a conviction that by using cost effective construction technology, we can build beautiful, eco-friendly houses.



Eco center

The salient features of such houses are avoidance of excessive use of cement and steel and usage of locally available material. The innovative shapes of doors, windows and domes lend aesthetic appeal and beauty to these "Love-able, Live-able and Affordable" homes.

3.2 WATER MANAGEMENT

There were about 40,000 irrigation tanks dotting the landscape of Tamil Nadu. The tanks not only sustained agricultural development but were also useful to meet the water requirements of the community for a multiplicity of purpose. They were community-owned, operated and managed under a formal or informal institutional arrangement.

With the advent of British rule, the management of tank irrigation system

was taken over from community and vested with the government agencies. In the process the tanks fell into a state of total disrepair affecting not only the farming but even drinking water became a problem.

Madurai and Ramanathapuram Districts of Tamil Nadu had the maximum number of irrigation tanks. But today Ramanathapuram is one of the worst districts in India as far as the availability of water is concerned. So **Vivekananda Kendra - NARDEP** de-



Complete village is at work - Dist. Ramanathapuram



Artificial Recharging of water is on.....

cided to work in one of the blocks - Muthukulathur of Ramanathapuram District for reviving the age-old techniques of water harvesting.

Ramanathapuram district is in the coastal region and as per the studies of Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), ground water is potable only in the small area of 100 km². In the rest of the area it is saline. The average rainfall in the district is 800 mm but even then, every drop of water matters.

VK-NARDEP carried out an exhaustive survey of possible sources of water harvesting by involving the commu-

nity and came to the conclusion that reviving the traditional water ponds (Ooranis in Tamil) would be an ideal solution.

Most of these ponds - Ooranis have become useless because of (i) reduced storage capacity by silting and encroachments (ii) reduced inflow due to improper inlet and (iii) Poor maintenance leading to collapse of sides.

After establishing rapport with the villagers, **VK-NARDEP** approached **CAPART** for funds for remodeling a few Ooranis in Mudukulathur block. A beginning was made at Tattankudirappu in the year 1991.

The remodeled Oorani has an inlet structure with cement pipe, pitching of sloping side walls with cement blocks, sand filter bed to purify the water and a draw well located outside the structure.

Participation of local community was ensured by motivating the villagers through series of group discussions, awareness camps, showing of films etc. Caste and religion were not a barrier and villagers actively participated

in desilting work as a part of their contribution. A village level committee was formed with a corpus fund for maintaining the Oorani.

After seeing the success of work, Kendra was emboldened to carry out further renovation in water harvesting. Two years back, Kendra successfully implemented the project of Artificial Recharging of tube wells at Kottakudi and Selvanayagapuram in Mudukulathur block.



Renovated tank of Kanyakumari temple

In addition, last year VK-NARDEP renovated three temple tanks - Kanyakumari, Chakkarkulam and Krishnankoil in Kanyakumari district. After a gap of 25 years, people are bathing in the tanks and at the same time nearby wells are getting charged as these tanks also work as percolation tanks.

The work is a trail - blazer and now a chain reaction has started as other individuals and organisations too are coming forward to carry out such works.

3.3 ORGANIC FARMING

Use of chemical fertilisers in farming damages the natural cycle, killing the beneficial micro-flora and fauna leaving the crops vulnerable to pest attacks. Measures to prevent this, increase the cost of the produce as well as environmental pollution.

Organic Farming - use of easily available organic manure and pesticides - comes as a boon in this scenario. To propagate these methods, VK-NARDEP undertook the dissemination of following technologies: i) Farm Yard Manure ii) NARDEP Compost iii) Biogas Slurry iv) Vermi Compost, etc.



Vermi Compost

In addition, NARDEP propagates Azolla and Blue Green Algae as Bio-fertilizers and many varieties of Bio-pesticides.



Bio-fertilisers - Azolla and Blue Green Algae

Besides reducing the costs and increasing the yield, the residue is non-toxic, preserves the soil nutrients, and enlivens the **MOTHER EARTH**. The produce is also of a better quality.

3.4 MEDICINAL HERBS

With the harmful side effects and contra-indications of synthetic medicines taking their toll, the search is on for a more humane alternative. For us long reared on mother's medicine chest, it comes as no surprise that the grandma's household herbs are proving their worth today.



Medicinal chest of Grand Mother

Long forgotten, and once freely available, these herbs today scream for attention. Widespread deforestation has



Medicinal Herbs

also confined their spread to a few places. The aggressive patenting and



Saint Agastya-
Originator of Sidha Medicines

copyright of these remedies by the commercially oriented world interests make it imperative that we safeguard our age - old wisdom.

VK-NARDEP, in pursuit of the above aims, appreciates the need for proper documentation of the geographical spread and use of various herbs be-

sides their non-commercial motive production. Armed with its widespread contacts with scientific institutions, other agencies and general public, **VK-NARDEP** is endeavoring to establish a network of indigenous health workers and physicians to: i) Raise herbal nurseries and gardens ii) Train people in raising such nurseries and iii) Prepare herbal medicines.

To implement this programme **NARDEP** runs a Green health Home, and conducts periodical Green Health Camps, Seminars, Workshops and Exhibitions.

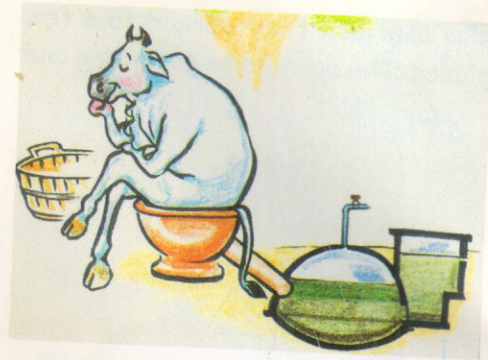
3.5 RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

Keeping in mind the problem of Pollution and Energy Crisis, **NARDEP** started its activities in 1986 by propagating Biogas technology. In the process, the organisation conducted various training programmes for users and masons and constructed more than 1500 plants in a few districts of Tamil Nadu.

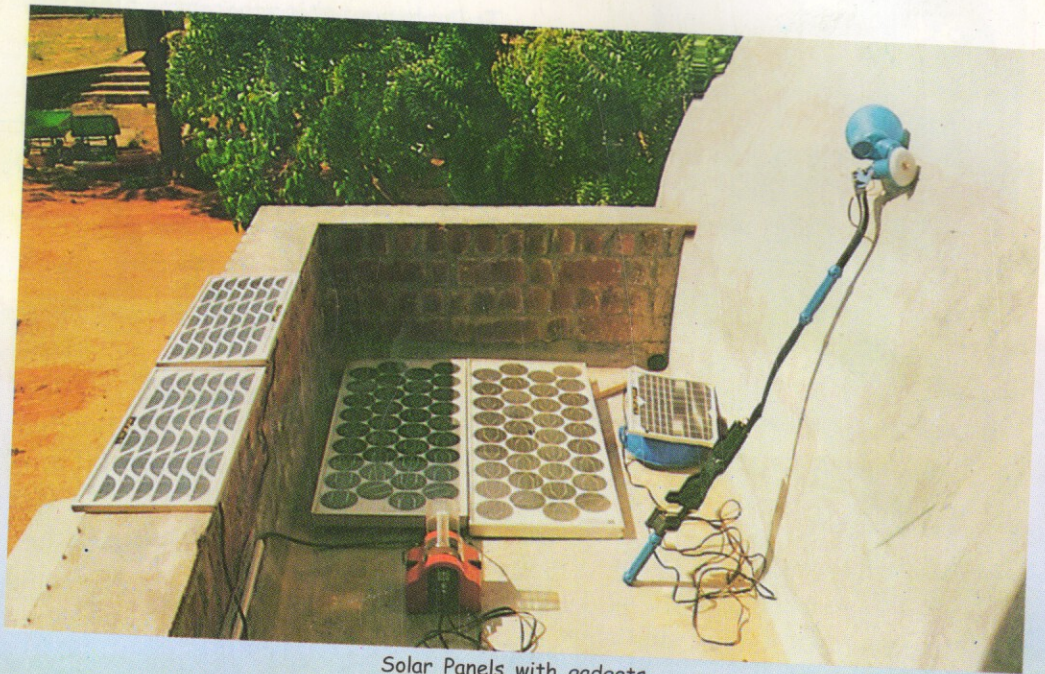
With the help of **CAPART**, **VK-NARDEP** developed a cost effective Biogas plant called **VINCAP**. At present this model is undergoing rigorous field trials for its performance.

Apart from Biogas technology, **NARDEP** also propagates the usage of smokeless Chula, Energy plantation and various solar devices.

Kendra has also established "Energy Park" at its TRC having different solar devices along with 5 kw Wind Generator.



Biogas - Plant



Solar Panels with gadgets

4.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE CENTER

As a happy culmination of **VK-NARDEP's** dedicated efforts, **CAPART**, New Delhi has recognised Vivekananda Kendra as a **TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE CENTER (TRC)** at Kanyakumari.

Office, Hostel, Kitchen, Dining hall, Lecture hall and computers etc, to conduct seminars and residential workshops. Energy utilised in this campus is mainly



Office of the Technology Resource Center

CAPART has given a grant to establish this TRC which is situated at a village Kalluvilai, about 5km distance from Kanyakumari town.

The three acre serene and quiet campus known as Anjaneyapuram has all the facilities and infrastructure such as Of-

fice, Hostel, Kitchen, Dining hall, Lecture hall and computers etc, to conduct seminars and residential workshops. Energy utilised in this campus is mainly

from Biogas, solar and wind power for lighting and other usage. The Technology Resource Center is envisioned as a nucleus where the stakeholders of the society will assemble together to ponder over our shared heritage - Mother Earth. It is here that

they will share their expertise, their age-old wisdom and return enriched to propagate this concern, translating it into a glorious greener future for generations to come.

- i) Here **VK-NARDEP** provides the cost effective construction

- iii) Here people are taught waterconservation along with the water harvesting techniques.

- iv) Here, with the help of Mother Nursery having 400 different plants, Voluntary Organisations and Village Vaidyas are taught that every plant has a medicinal value



Technology Resource Center - Residence and Dining Hall

technology, which is in tune with the Nature.

- ii) Here farmers are taught the holistic approach to organic farming starting from seed selection, water management to different types of Composting, Bio-fertilisers and Bio-pesticides.

which is useful not only to the human beings but also to the cattle and plants.

In short TRC tries to create a model for sustainable development by adapting various technologies

5 DIALOGUE WITH SHRI.A.BALAKRISHNAN, GENERAL, SECRETARY - VIVEKANANDA KENDRA

What are the ideals and activities of Vivekananda Kendra?

Vivekananda Kendra would like to spread the message of **Swami Vivekananda** - "**Service to humanity is a real worship to God**". To translate this message into reality Kendra believes that Renunciation and Service are the twin ideals by which we can undertake "**Man Making and Nation Building**".

To achieve this, Kendra has various service activities in different fields. In fact no activity is a taboo to us. However, first we create dedicated workers and then engage them in different service activities.

What is your approach to Development?

In India, people have a wrong notion that the leaders and Government will take care of the development of the Nation. Unfortunately political leaders also encourage such notion during election time.

Vivekananda Kendra feels that people's participation is a must in any developmental activity.

A unique aspect of all our programmes has been the enlisting of the beneficiaries to contribute their labour of love as "**Shram Dan**". Besides helping the project, it helps the beneficiary own it, providing for long-term collaboration.

We can understand people's participation in development but what about its direction?

Man has paid a heavy price for his "development" at the cost of Nature. Treating the natural resources as inexhaustible and as subservient to man's wishes and desires has led us to a position where we are at variance with Mother Nature's methods.

Fortunately now we have realised that Man is inter-connected, related and dependent on Nature. And so Sustainable Development will be possible only when we adopt the method of milking the Nature rather than conquering it.

How it is possible?

To begin with, there is a need to change the mind-set and so Vivekananda Kendra feels that spirituality should be one of the important ingredients in the development model. Fortunately this line of thinking is based on our Culture, Religion and Philosophy.

Are you working in other parts of India other than Tamil Nadu?

Vivekananda Kendra is having branches in all over India. However our major focus is on North East and particularly Arunachal Pradesh.



Akshaya Vikas - Sustainable Development

Kendra is working in various fields but in which areas, you received maximum success or satisfaction?

Vivekananda Kendra made a mark in the field of Education in Arunachal Pradesh. Today many of our past students are playing an important role in the development of the Nation.

Similarly our Rural Development work in Tamil Nadu made a lasting impact on the rural people of Southern districts.

What are the sources of income for running the Service activities?

We receive substantial grant from **CAPART** for Rural Development work. District Administration, State Governments, as well as central Government also help us in various projects. For example, we receive grant from Social Welfare Board for running Balwadis. In the field of Renewable Energy, **MNES** provides necessary help. In addition, Industrial groups and Kendra's innumerable well wishers give us donation for carrying out this noble task.



MANAGING COMMITTEE OF VIVEKANANDA KENDRA

President	:	Shri.P.Parameswaran
Vice President	:	Prof.K.N. Vaswani
General Secretary	:	Shri.A.Balakrishnan
Joint General Secretary	:	Kum.Rekha Davey
	:	Shri.Pravin Dabholkar
Treasurer	:	Shri.D.Bhanudas
Members	:	Shri.S.G.Subramaniam
		Shri.S.Gurumurthy
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		Shri.N.Krishnamoorti
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		Shri.Vishwas Lapalkar
		Shri.Anil Sarode
		Kum.B.Nivedita
		Kum.Aparna Palkar
		Kum.K.Shailaja
		Smt.S.Shantha
		Shri.Kishore Tokekar

**CAPART'S CONTRIBUTION TO
VIVEKANANDA KENDRA - NARDEP**

Total Sanctioned Projects	-	31
Completed Projects	-	26
Amount Sanctioned	-	Rs. 1,47,35,997.00
Amount Received	-	Rs. 1,06,56,305.00

(All figures are provisional)



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Kanyakumari - 629702.
Tamil Nadu.



We look forward to your suggestions and comments.

Please write to us at :

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