

Echoes of Eco



July , 2011

Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

Vol:3 No:5

Coming of the 'Perfect Storm'



In early 2009, John Beddington, chief science advisor to the U.K. government, said the world was facing a "perfect storm" of food shortages, water scarcity, and costly oil by 2030. These developments, plus accelerating climate change and mass migration across national borders, would lead to major upheavals.

A week later, Jonathon Porritt, former chair of the U.K. Sustainable Development Commission, wrote in the Guardian that he agreed with Beddington's analysis but that the timing was off. He thinks the crisis "will hit much closer to 2020 than 2030." He calls it the "ultimate recession"—one from which there may be no recovery. These assessments by Beddington and Porritt raise two key questions.

A lily pond has one leaf in it the first day, two the second day, four the third, and the number of leaves continues to double each day. If the pond fills on the thirtieth day, when is it half full? The twenty-ninth day. Unfortunately for our overcrowded planet, we may now be beyond the thirtieth day.

My sense is that the "perfect storm" or the "ultimate recession" could come at any time.

It will likely be triggered by an unprecedented harvest shortfall, one caused by a combination of crop-withering heat waves and emerging water shortages as aquifers are depleted.

As we think about the ecological deficits that are leading the world toward the edge, it becomes clear that the values generating ecological deficits are the same values that lead to growing fiscal deficits. We used to think it would be our children who would have to deal with the consequences of our deficits, but now it is clear that our generation will have to deal with them. Ecological and economic deficits are now shaping not only our future, but our present.

This is partly because it is difficult to imagine something we have never experienced. We lack even the vocabulary. It is also difficult to talk about because we are addressing not just the future of humanity in an abstract sense, but the future of our families and our friends. No generation has faced a challenge with the complexity, scale, and urgency of the one that we face.

[From Lester Brown' Preface to his new book 'World on the Edge' 2011]

In this issue:

- Coming of the 'Perfect Storm'
- The Happenings – I
- The Happenings-II
- Know Sustainable Technology
- Azolla Bhagiratha : a response
- Visions of Wisdom

The Vow of Humanity



Let him (the knower of Brahman) never condemn food; that is the vow....Let him (the knower of Brahman) never abandon food; that is the vow....Let him (the knower of Brahman) make food plentiful; that is the vow. ...Let him not deny hospitality to anyone: this is the vow. Therefore he should procure much food by any means whatsoever. To guests, he should say: "The food has been prepared for you."

-Taittiriya Upanishad



Service to humanity is the highest form of worship – Swami Vivekananda

There are no mistakes. The events we bring upon ourselves, no matter how unpleasant, are necessary in order to learn what we need to learn; whatever steps we take, they're necessary to reach the places we've chosen to go.

-Richard Bach



Sustainable farming practices: Multimedia session being conducted for the trainees by Sis.Premlatha.



Multimedia session on Bio-Methanation plant training : conducted by Er. Ramakrishnan



Water and Sanitation

Tested water from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist – programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.

Murugan kundram traditional rain water harvesting structure renovation work is continuing.

This month... Networking



On 26th, 6 Trainees from National Academy of Agri Research Management, Hyderabad visited the TRC and Gramodaya Park to study the sustainable agricultural practices of VK-nardap.

79 students from students from Govt.Hr.Sec.School, Vallankumaranvillai came and visited the Gramodaya Park at Vivekanandapuram on 28th.

Interactive session of trainees with Dr. Pillai: on sustainable farming practices.



Health Awareness Programme helps the village communities to recognize the healing potential of local health systems which are

Happenings: This month for Sustainable Agriculture

Workshop on “Sustainable Agriculture was conducted at VK-nardap TRC, Kalluvilai on 5th July. 9 persons participated. The resource persons were: Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai, Shri.S.Rajamony and S.Premalatha.

Meeting on “Organic farming” was held at Janasree Mission, Muscat Hotel, Thiruvananthapuram. The event was held on 16th of July. 40 persons attended and Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai shared our experience in Kozhikottupottai village and Azolla based safe milk, meat and egg production.

Workshop on “Vegetable Cultivation” was held by P.N.Panikar Foundation at V.J.T Hall, Thiruvananthapuram on 22.7.2011. Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai gave a talk on “Sustainable vegetable cultivation with liquid bio-formulations as growth promoter cum pest repellent” 120 persons participated.

A Radio talk on organic farming was given by Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai on All India Radio Thiruvananthapuram, on 7th July 2011.



Done with DST core support



Even as life on earth cannot sustain without water, the same way even virtue too depends ultimately on rain. - Thirukural



Village women are acquainted with the medicinal properties of local herbal resources and are given herbs for creating home herbal gardens.



Health Awareness Programme helps the village communities to recognize the healing potential of local health systems which are endangered.



Networking at Youtube and Facebook...

The channel of vk-nardep in youtube uploaded another video on the Bio-methanation plant training held at Kalluvillai Technology Resource Center:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/VKNARDEP#p/a/u/1/KwWeZfSbSA0>

Our facebook address is:

<http://www.facebook.com/vivekananda.nardep>



We tweet at:

<http://twitter.com/#!/VKNARDEP>

Bio-Methanation Plant training: Video upload at youtube



Happenings: This month for Holistic Medicine

Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team conducted Community Awareness programme on "Traditional Visha Vaidyam" (sponsored by AYUSH, New Delhi) at Adiparasakthi Siddhar Peedam, Nagercoil. The programme was conducted on 31st of July and 430 persons participated and benefited.

Green Health Home at Vivekananda Puram functioned for 8 days and treated 192 patients.

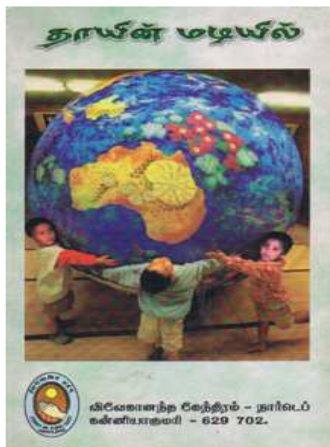
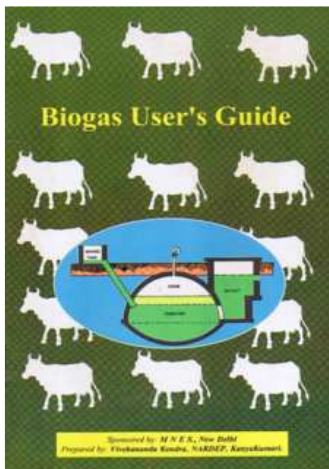
Medical Awareness programme. Village community undergoing medical check-ups.



He whose doshas [laws of nature at work in the body] are in balance, whose appetite is good, whose tissues are functioning normally, whose wastes are in balance, and whose Self, mind, and senses remain full of bliss, is called a healthy person." -- Sushruta Samhita, 15.41

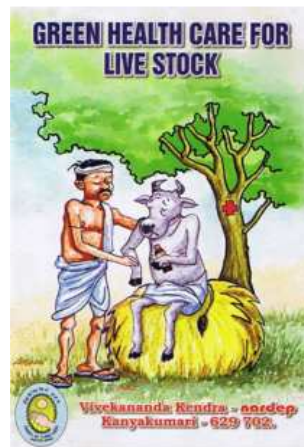
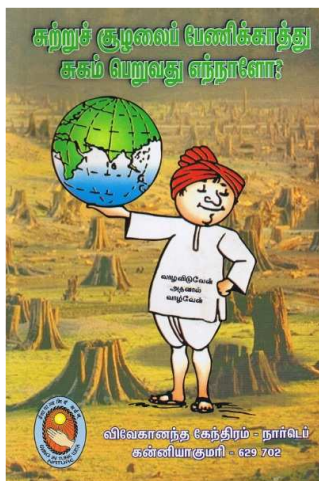
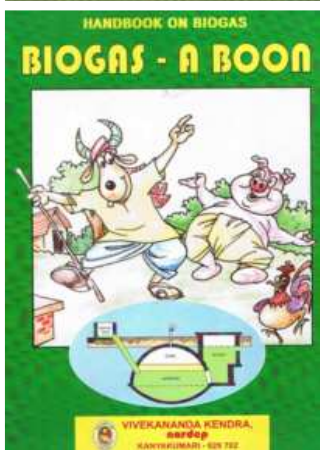


Like the butter hidden in milk, the Pure Consciousness resides in every being. That ought to be constantly churned out by the churning rod of the mind. – Amrita-Bindu Upanishad



Of Development, Machines and Human Spirit

• Does economic progress clash with real progress? By economic progress, I take it, we mean material advancement without limit and by real progress we mean moral progress which again is the same thing as progress of the permanent element within us. – Mahatma Gandhi



• Replying to a question whether he was against all machinery, Gandhiji said, "How can I be when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery? The spinning wheel is a machine; a little toothpick is a machine. What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. . . The supreme consideration is man. I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer's sewing machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented."

**How to feed the future humanity?
How to make development sustainable?
Some of the best publications on the subject for layman and professionals alike are from VK-nardep.
Contact: The Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra-NARDEP
Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari-629702
Tamil Nadu
Phone: 04652-246296 Email:vknardep@gmail.com**

• "But," said the questioner, "if you make an exception of the Singer's sewing machine and your spindle, where would these exceptions end?"

• "Just where they cease to help the individual and encroach upon his individuality. The machine should not be allowed to cripple the limbs of man."



This month... Shakthi Surabhi

This month training programme on Bio-methanation plant (supported by DST, New Delhi) was conducted at TRC, Kalluvilai on 23rd Sri. Er. Ramakrishnan and Shri.V.Muneeswaran were the resource persons. 22 persons attended..



**All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. He who loves lives, he who is selfish is dying. Therefore love for love's sake, because it is law of life, just as you breathe to live.
– Swami Vivekananda**



An Inspiration: And a Response

Last month this newsletter reported Akhilesh Kumar from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, who did a pilot project on “Azolla as cattle feed” at Patna district of Bihar.

Since then he has been establishing Azolla nurseries in Bihar and he reports that it is ‘spreading like wild fire’. He has also been invited by BAIF state head office Patna for giving lecture on Azolla as supplementary cattle feed.

It also generated interest among our readers. Among them was Sri. Solomon Ashok. He sent a letter to Sri. Akilesh and cc-ed it to us. Here we present this interesting letter:

Dear Akhilesh

I am Solomon Ashok. One of the students of Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya (Kanyakumari). I and my family have read your detailed report on “Azolla as cattle feed”.

We in first place extend our congratulations for your successful completion of this project. More over I personally appreciate all your efforts and hard work to get this done. Thanks for making our village proud and appreciate that you have made an effort to make NARDEP proud as well.

I appreciate your interest in Agriculture and I am delighted that you have been dealing with farmers. I am sure that you have positively contributed to their economy.

MY HEARTY APPRECIATIONS NOT ONLY FOR TAKING UP THIS MATTER TO Dr. APJ but for your presence of mind and smartness to stand at the entrance with a tub full of Azolla. I am even more happy when Dr. APJ possibly recognized Azolla and he also was delighted to see that... My Bihari friend I look forward to speaking to you in my mobile.

We at our place have an organic farm where we cultivate Azolla for our own use as Chicken feed under the guidance of Dr. Pillai of VK-nardep.

When you were working on the projects we were constructing Azolla beds at our home. Just to give an introduction please have a look through the photographs and we will speak more about further scope for improvement in your district and ours.

*With Best Regards
Solomon Ashok
A Farmer from Kanyakumari.*

We at VK-nardep are happy that such networks on sustainable technologies are getting created between Bihar and Kanyakumari through such heart-to-heart interaction. For finding more about the work of Sri. Akilesh you can log on to his facebook account at:

<http://www.facebook.com/mediaset/?set=a.228135950546897.77033.100000514821987>

Azolla @ Kanyakumari



- Beds getting prepared.



- Azolla Terrace Cultivation: Photo Courtesy: Sri. Solomon Ashok



I do want growth, I do want self-determination, I do want freedom, but I want all these for the soul. I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted.

-Mahatma Gandhi



Of Buildings ...

The incredible and fascinating part about all this new education I was having was that these strange systems were effective, and slowly I realised that many of the answers to my problems, which I thought I could never solve, lay before me and all round me wherever I went. I suppose it took many years before I really understood and wholeheartedly believed that wherever I went I saw, in the local indigenous style of architecture, the results of thousands of years of research on how to use only immediately-available, local materials to make structurally stable buildings that could cope with the local climatic conditions, with the local geography and topography, with all the hazards of nature (whether mineral, vegetable, insect, bird or animal), with the possible hostility of neighbours, and that could accommodate all the requirements of local religious, social and cultural patterns of living. This was an astounding, wonderful and incredible achievement which no modern, twentieth century architect, or people I know of, has ever made.



Laurie Baker
Architect



Of Water...

The Indian tradition in water management was built on two principles: one, rainwater harvesting had primacy over river water or groundwater harvesting; and, two, community and household water management had primacy over government supply of water. While talking about the importance of water harvesting, we did not want our readers to forget the second key principle.

Hence, the current mouthful of a title but with a purpose behind it. The message is clear: Whoever you are, get involved with water. You will not only help yourself but also help others. The biggest punya that you can do, as the Hindu texts put it. The most beautiful thing about any decentralised water management paradigm like rainwater harvesting is that it not only promotes mass action -- not mass production but production by the masses, as Mahatma Gandhi once put it -- but also myriads of innovations. Traditionally, people had innovated a variety of water technologies and management systems.



- Anil Agarwal
Water Conservationist



Of Health...

Here, then, is a system of medical care, which concentrates more on preserving health and treating diseases only when the need arises. As it is not technology based this could be a very good adjuvant to modern medicine except for emergency care. A judicious mix of the two systems could bring down medical care delivery costs to make most people access care all over the world. The emergency needs are about ten per cent of the sick population and the majority of ninety per cent could be helped using Ayurvedic/Siddha inexpensive methods. Time has come for all of us to give this suggestion a serious thought for doing most good to most people most of the time. The gold mine of data in this system should be audited using modern scientific methods of enquiry as suggested in the article. Since there is a demand for prioritization of the complementary systems of medicine for evaluation, here is the suggestion to try the time tested system in vogue in India, for time (to go) out of mind.



- Prof. B.M. Hegde
'People's Doctor'