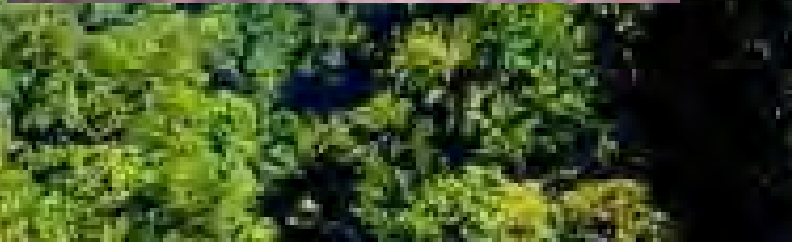
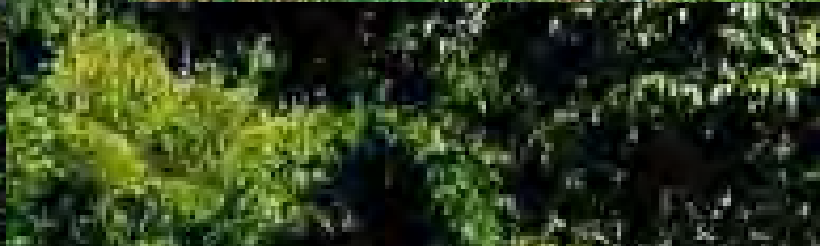
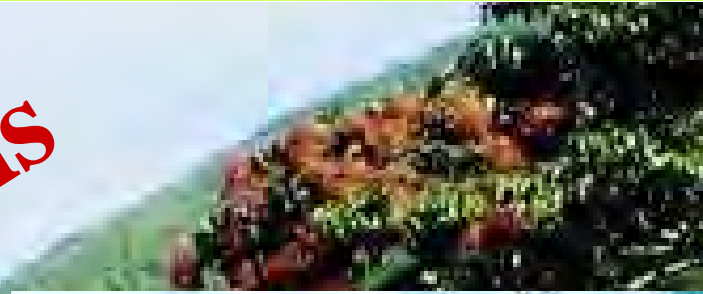


# livelihoods

*today and tomorrow*

April 2009

## Forest-based Occupations



Hope, Now is the Time! - 10

Bamboo Value-Chain - 18

Manifestos from Parties - 22

**Happy Ugadi!**

**Buzz of Elections all around in the Summer! For the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha! Amidst election buzz, let us also remember Dr BR Ambedakar on his birthday.**

Forgotten World Water Day (22 March)! Earthquake in Italy! Crises in South Asian countries!

If we see the history of the world, once it was all forest. All human beings were completely dependent on forest for their living. Their basic needs – food, clothes, shelter etc. - came from the forest. Leaves, Fruits, Roots, Wood, and other forest produce used to meet their daily needs and consumption needs. Their use was limited to their need, nothing more. They moved and added hunting to gathering. Animal meat and skins were also used. If in surplus, they used to share. Gradually, they moved into settled agriculture. Forests started dwindling. Their dependence on forests also became limited. In due course, we were in two groups – one that lived in the forests and the other which lived outside. While the ones who lived in the forests remained as earlier, the ones outside were going to forests for their limited needs. They used to bring out more than their current need, store and even sell. Some of the people living in the forests also started pooling and selling the forest produce needed by the outsiders. Slowly, forests dwindled further. Forests 'went' farther away from the people living outside. The middlemen and contractors came in to gather, collect and sell forest produce. Slowly commerce began. People living in forests became almost zero. Still some were living in the edges of the forests. They were pursuing agriculture, animal husbandry etc., for their living. Yet, some dependence on the forests was still there. They were bringing produce from the forests, using some, and selling some. However, some of them were fully dependent on forests for their livelihood.

In due course, ownership and control on the forests shifted from the people to the state. They were classified as reserved forests, unreserved (community) forests and social forests. Satellite pictures show that forests reached a lower proportion than the proportion required for our sustainable survival. While the reserved forest management is in the hands of the forest department, other forest management is partly handed over to people's Vana Samrakhana Samitis as part of joint/community forest management. The traditional dwellers of the forests and those on edges have got rights for the non-timber forest produce collection. The bio-diversity is still not lost. We still need to appreciate tribal medicine. Many discoveries are seeing the light of the day from the usage of the forest produce by the indigenous. Cleaning nuts (*strychnos potatorum*) that clear the water, multi-use gum karaya, diabetic-friendly *gymnema sylvestre*, etc, continue to benefit the mainstream.

Forests – through its produce/services - Wood, NTFP, bamboo products, herbs, forest conservation, regeneration, watersheds, medicine, eco-tourism, etc., - in all contribute to the livelihoods means for more than 10% families directly and/or indirectly. Still, not even a quarter of the consumer rupee is reaching the dependents. They remain the poor/poorest of the poor. In this context, the fourth sector, explored by 'livelihoods', is "forest-based livelihoods".

In the buzz of elections, one thing that did not come into limelight is the manifestos of the parties. Sure enough, these are released, but there is no healthy debate. Only exaggerated claims, criticisms and ridicules! Actually, there are no real differences in the content of manifestos. It is only in the degree. The voter is also not digging deep. May be there is no possibility.

Sunderlal Bahuguna is synonymous with Chipko movement and No Tehri Dam. He is a tireless activist and inspiration to eco-movements. Foundation for Ecological Security is showing models across the country on collectives of the poor around common lands and people's forests. Dr Sivaramakrishna (of Sakthi) is leading the fight for the rights of the tribals on their lands. 'Dhani' forest conservation is a good example for replication. It may be pertinent to appreciate the rights of the forest dwellers once. Some 'social' entrepreneurs are making a difference globally – see the book 'How to change the world?' It may give you some ideas for you to begin to make a difference.

**Do not forget to vote and choose the leaders who love the life.**

In the journey of India and the world into change, 'livelihoods' is becoming a trickling stream therein. With the faith that you remain and join us in this stream(s), we remain.



G. Muralidhar

the 'livelihoods' team

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March 22 World Water Day

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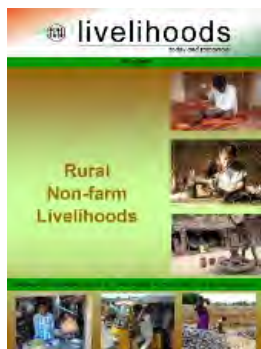
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# Response



This month edition is very informative and I have shared this to our partner agencies during a workshop. They were very happy to see the livelihoods. Thank you very much for sending this magazine regularly.

M. Prakashan

I read your Livelihoods March 2009, its really a good one. It's something different talking about rural economic activities with financial focus. I saw in the list of institutions for poor "one legal form is missing" that is Producer Company. I think producer company is also a regulatory form under poor farmers can organise themselves for mutual benefit like cooperative. Thanks for your monthly update.

Murugesan

The hard work put in bringing out the Magazine is appreciated. The cover page topic is very good. However, I think, the team would have taken little bit care in page 26 (Institutions Of/For Poor– Related Acts). Few points are given below:

Deposit taking by various MFI legal structures :

1.NBFC : At the page no. 26 detailing about the Acts related Institutions of Poor in Livelihoods 2009 March it is mentioned that "Deposit taking is well deregulated and not permitted until an NBFC is rated A".

The above sentence is somehow sounding not well because the acceptance of public deposits and interest rate are well regulated by RBI and the link is given below. Apart from rating, the minimum capital and maintenance of prudential

norms is also very much essential.

<http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FAQView.aspx?Id=71>

2. Societies, MACS, Cooperative societies can take deposits from members only.

3. Cooperative banks can take public deposits and regulated by RBI act as applicable to Cooperative banks and cooperative acts of concerned state or central government.

4. The Charitable trusts and Sec.25 companies cannot take public deposits.

RBI has exempted MFIs licensed under section-25 of the Indian Companies Act from registration, maintenance of liquid assets and transfer of profit to Reserve Funds, provided

- ♦ They are engaged in micro-financing activities (Rs50,000 for small businesses and Rs150,000 for housing)
- ♦ They do not mobilize public deposits

[http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/BS\\_NBFCNotificationView.aspx?Id=2467](http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/BS_NBFCNotificationView.aspx?Id=2467)

Sec.25 companies cannot pay dividends also. So attracting equity is also a problem.

5. Microfinancing licensing rules: As of no comprehensive act is there to give license to MFIs. However under various forms of registrations the MFIs are registered and working under those rules. The Microfinance regulation bill is placed in Parliament in 2007 and still it is pending with parliament. See the link for full text:

<http://www.sampark.org/Documents/Micro%20Financial%20Sector%20-%20MF%20Bill%202007.pdf>

Dr. Swaroopa Rani

'livelihoods' team appreciates the comments made with respect to the article - "Institutions of/for Poor - Related Acts" published in March issue of the magazine. We regret the gaps. The future issues of 'livelihoods' will deal with each form of People's Institutions in greater detail. We assure the readers that good care will be taken in presenting the information.

"My final words of advice to you is - Educate, Agitate, Organize - have faith in yourself...the battle is in the fullest sense spiritual. There is nothing material or social in it. For ours is a battle not for wealth or for power. It is a battle for freedom, it is a battle for the *reclamation of the human personality*"





## **Activists Meet Develops Alternative Plans:**

In an effort to develop alternative paradigms for governance, the Centre for Development Studies and Activities (CDSA), Pune and India Habitat Centre, Delhi, held a workshop on 'City and Sustainability' at CDSA, where various organizations and activists participated to facilitate the development of vision for "sustainable urbanization in India." The Pune consultations were a precursor to the Habitat Summit 2009 to be held from September 23 to 30 in New Delhi with an objective to anchor an ongoing dialogue on challenges and opportunities inherent in the inevitable urbanization of India.

## **Health Foundation Award For Dr Sudarshan:**

Dr H Sudarshan, honorary secretary of Karuna Trust, was presented an award by the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) for his outstanding contribution and commitment to protecting the right to health of the vulnerable and less privileged communities, and his dedication to strengthening primary health care at the grass roots level with the aim of securing the fundamental needs of indigenous people.

## **Indian Banking System Still Away From Poor:**

There has been no perceptible change in the condition of the rural poor over the decades despite the banking sector in India undergoing transformation. Studies have revealed that 73% of farmer households have no access to formal source of credit. Financial inclusion is a challenging area in the banking sector. According to economist professor G V Joshi, coordinator, Corporation Bank Chair in Bank Management at Mangalore University, moneylenders had staged a comeback in rural credit sector and their share in the total dues of rural households had increased.

## **Drinking Water Should Be Fundamental Right':**

Speaking to the media at the national workshop on "Water entitlements and allocations for livelihood and eco system needs and the legal-institutional framework for

conflict resolution", professor at Center for Policy Research, Ramaswamy Iyer said that the constitution should be amended to make drinking water a fundamental right. Iyer is a honorary research professor at the Centre in New Delhi. He was also responsible for formulating the National Water Policy.

## **Incentive For Keeping Green:**

Uttarakhand that has more than 60 per cent of land mass under forest cover, may finally get some incentive for its contribution to the forest wealth of the country. The Union Planning Commission has proposed a formula to decide on incentives to be provided to forest-rich states in lieu of the forest cover maintained by them. At present there is no mechanism to give incentives to states for protecting its forests. Forest-rich states like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and the states in the North East have been expressing concern over forests proving to be an hindrance in carrying out development activities in their respective states. Union Planning Commission has been quite some time contemplating modalities to provide incentive to all forest-rich states. But then finding a criteria to compensate these states has not been easy. The Planning Commission held a meeting on "avoided deforestation incentive mechanism" at the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education in Dehradun on March 23, where it entrusted the latter to come up with a formula that could help decide on the quantum of incentive to these states. Sources say Uttarakhand is bound to benefit as the new formula will take into consideration not only the percentage of forest cover at the national level, but also its tree cover.

## **Global Crisis Left 10 million More Children Hungry':**

International charity - Save The Children said an extra 10 million children are now malnourished because of the global rise in food prices and asked the G20 leaders to keep them in mind while taking decisions. An additional 400,000 children could die by the end of the year as a result of the global financial

collapse. The international charity warned that millions of children could go hungry due to the impact of the credit crunch on developing countries, combined with continuing high food prices, which meant that the world's poorest families cannot feed their children properly.

## **Micro-finance Model Can Fuel Economic Activity, Yunus:**

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus Founder of Grameen Bank and widely acclaimed as the father of micro-finance said the micro-finance model of financial inclusion is the best answer to financial crisis that has impacted growth prospects in India. Yunus said with no dependence on borrowings or external funding, this is a model which can fuel economic activity at the local level. But Yunus believes that for the micro-finance model to succeed there has to be a separate legal framework. Normal banking laws are not enough to deal with the niche banking needs.

## **Bureaucracy Perceived As 'unresponsive, insensitive, corrupt':**

According to the 12th Report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, bureaucracy in India is perceived to be "unresponsive, insensitive and corrupt" and a common complaint against it pertains to excessive red-tapism. The Commission said that during its interactions with a large number of people in various states, most of them complained about the poor quality of services provided by the government, the indifferent attitude of government servants, corruption and abuse of authority and lack of accountability.

## **Rural Development Institute Wins 2009 Evergreen Award:**

The Rural Development Institute, an international non-profit working to secure land rights for the world's rural poor, has received the 2009 Evergreen Award for its success in helping to alleviate poverty through innovative public and private partnerships. The "micro-land ownership" program of the Institute in India has resulted in securing land rights for more than 85,000 of the

nation's poorest people of which many of them are women.

**Unseasonal Rains Damage Haryana Crops:** Unseasonal rains and thundershowers during the last week of March have damaged the wheat crop in Rohtak in Haryana. The wheat which was ready to be harvested has been damaged by the heavy showers causing substantial loss to the farmers.

**Rain Forest-Saving Credits May Cut Carbon-Emission Prices :** According to an economic study, awarding tradable credits to countries that reduce deforestation will cause carbon prices to plummet worldwide and may make global warming worse by pulling investors away from renewable energy. Including permits for not cutting down trees in carbon markets could push prices 76 percent lower by 2020, the New Zealand-based economic modellers KEA 3 said in a study for Greenpeace International. That would remove the incentive to invest in renewable energy in poorer nations, Greenpeace said.

**Bio-Villages In West Bengal:** The West Bengal government, which is keen to spread organic cultivation, has resolved to set up one bio-village in each of the 341 blocks in the state in the next two years. The objective behind setting up bio-villages is to create role models for adaptation to organic farming. Already 75 bio-villages have been set up across the state up to 2007-08 since its launch in 2004-05. There are plans to set up another 64 bio-villages in 2008-09. In these villages, work is in progress to train farmers on the proper use of bio/botanical pesticides and use of microbes and parasites to wage a biological warfare against prevalent pests and plant diseases

**New Microfinance Ecosystem Unveiled At Sa-Dhan's National Microfinance Conference 2009:** Sa-Dhan, The Association of Community Development Finance Institutions, hosted National Microfinance Conference 2009 at New Delhi under the theme "Microfinance Ecosystem "Equilibrium Between Growth &

Effectiveness". In the inaugural address, Nobel laureate and founder of Grameen Bank, Prof. Muhammad Yunus called upon Indian MFIs to keep up the national and international lead in social business. At the conference Prof Yunus said "The bottom line is to operate without incurring losses while saving the people and the planet - and in particular those among us who are most disadvantaged - in the best possible manner." Prof. Yunus appreciated the example Indian Microfinance gives to the world, with some of the most innovative MFIs and the NABARD-led SHG-bank-linkage programme, which is world's largest microfinance programme with over 4 crore households reached since its inception. The conference, through its technical sessions, deliberated upon various aspects of microfinance and economic growth at the base of pyramid, growth in microfinance and gaps in practice, structural challenges of scale and the balancing act and unveiling the new microfinance ecosystem.

**Crops Worth Rs.25,000 crore Lost Annually:** According to Bhartiya Krishak Samaj, a farmers' organization, Indian farmers lose close to Rs.25,000 crore worth of crops annually due to sub-standard pesticides and insecticides. Much of this loss is reported from sugarcane, wheat, paddy and potato. It is estimated that nearly 25 per cent of the annual sale of the pesticides and the insecticides are sub-standard. More than 75% of the samples tested at the Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology failed to meet the standards.

**World Health Day:** World Health Day is observed on 7th of April every year and this year in 2009, the focus is on the resilience and safety of health facilities and the health workers who treat those affected by emergencies. The theme for this year's World Health Day is "Health Facilities in Emergencies". The WHO and its international partners emphasized the importance of investing in health infrastructure that can withstand

hazards and help people in immediate need. The urge health facilities to implement systems to respond to internal emergencies such as fires, and ensure the continuity of care.

**India 54th In Networked Readiness Index:** Among 134 countries in the world, India ranked 54th in the Networked Readiness Index according to the Global Information Technology Report prepared by the World Economic Forum in partnership with INSEAD, a leading business school. The index is prepared after evaluating the capability of nations to leverage Information and Communication Technology for their overall benefit and economic progress. Denmark occupies the first position and Chad comes last. India slipped down four positions compared to last year. India has been ranked 60th in the environment component sub-index, 40th in the readiness component and 59th in the usage component. The report however states that India remains impressive as far as business readiness is concerned largely due to high-quality management schools and significant corporate spending on R&D and a broad base of suppliers.

**High Birth Rates Hit MDGs:** According to a policy paper submitted by the Population Division of the U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, rapid population growth and high fertility rates are hampering poverty reduction efforts and the attainment of MDGs. Women in many of the least developed countries still have five children on average. The paper states that the lack of access to means of family planning including modern methods of contraception is the major cause of the persistence of high fertility. According the paper low fertility increases the number of people of working age per capita as well as output per capital. Further, it also leads to an increase in the supply of female labour, particularly in the urban areas in the developing countries. Also smaller size family will allow for greater investment in health and education of the children. ■

## March 22-World Water Day

In many ways World Water Day is still a relatively unknown event to the general public even with the support of the United Nations (UN) and efforts by leading NGOs and committed individuals. According to the latest survey of UNO, more than 1 billion people live around the world without regularly being supplied with drinking water.



2.4 billion people, more than one third of the world's population drinks untreated water. Currently, 2.2 million people die of diseases caused by mistreated or absolutely not treated drinking water. Water is an essential component of life. Without it, plants would dry out, seeds would not sprout, and there would not be either animal or human life. We need water for each and every life function, no exceptions can be made. It becomes more valuable than any treasure of the world if suddenly one doesn't have as much as necessary.

The World Water Day was formally proposed in Agenda 21 Chapter 18 of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The agenda was about the protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources which confirmed that water is needed in all aspects of life. One of the objectives of this agenda is to make certain that adequate supplies of water of good quality are maintained for the entire population of this planet. Therefore, one year after, in 1993 the UN General Assembly declared March 22 as World Day for Water (also known as World Water Day). International World Water Day is a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

In 2009, the theme for World Water Day is "Shared Water - Shared Opportunities". Special focus will be placed on trans-boundary waters. Nurturing the opportunities for cooperation in trans-boundary water management can help build mutual respect, understanding and trust among countries and promote peace, security and sustainable economic growth. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) lead the activities of the World Water Day 2009 with the support of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN.



Besides commemorating World Water Day, there is a water decade action lead by the UN General Assembly together with the relevant UN bodies, specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations

of the UN. The first water decade is proclaimed from 1981 to 1990 and the second water decade is proclaimed from 2005 to 2015. The UN has coordinated the International Decade for Action (2005 – 2015) as a way to implement three goals related to international water issues: to reduce in half the amount

of people that do not have access to clean drinking water and sanitation by 2015 (Millennium Development Targets), to stop the unsustainable harvesting of water resources in developing countries (Johannesburg Summit) and to develop extensive water resources and water management plans (Johannesburg Summit).

As world citizen, we can start to reflect upon ourselves on

Each year World Water Day has a different and very important theme. Since 1995, the Day is being commemorated through various themes including - *Caring for Our Water Resources is everyone's Business* (1994), *Women and Water* (1995), *Water for Thirsty Cities* (1996), *The World's Water, Is there enough?* (1997), *Groundwater – The Invisible Resource* (1998), *Everyone Lives Downstream* (1999), *Water for 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2000), *Water and Health* (2001), *Water for Development* (2002), *Water for the Future* (2003), *Water and Disasters* (2004), *Water for Life 2005 – 2015* (2005), *Water and Culture* (2006), *Coping with Water Scarcity* (2007), *Sanitation* (2008) and *Share Water – Share the Opportunity* (2009).

how we use the water and how we have to try to use it in smart, effective and efficient way. And there are so many ways we can help bring this day to the forefront of the world's attention. We can make a splash on Water World Day to celebrate and promote the Day and Decade by organizing children's drawing competition, creating water and health greeting cards, organizing information events at workplaces, organizing photo competitions etc.

We have to become aware, believe and reflect in our actions and also lead the next generation by example in conserving the precious gift of nature - WATER. As the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan aptly stated, "The world's water resources are our lifelines for survival, and for sustainable development in the 21st century. Together, we must manage them better." ■ - Ira Rambe



## Eco-leader - Sunderlal Bahuguna

Sunderlal Bahuguna is an Indian eco-activist and Gandhian peace worker. He spearheaded the infamous Chipko movement, fighting for the preservation of forests in the Himalayas. He undertook hunger strikes on the banks of Bhagirathi to stop the construction of Tehri dam that would alter the flow of the Ganges and jeopardize the mountain villagers. Recognizing his invaluable contribution to the environment and the poor, Sunderlal was recently awarded Padma Vibhushan by the GOI.

Sunderlal Bahuguna was born in 1927, in a village called Maroda, near Tehri. He began his political career when he was only 13 and that lasted until his marriage in 1956. He learned how to create change through nonviolent means from his guru Sridev Suman. Following his marriage to wife, Vimla, Sunderlal retired from public life and moved to a village near the Himalayas. Here, Sunderlal would walk to the villages and work with the women, encouraging them to eradicate alcohol from the mountains.



5,000 kilometre Trans-Himalayan foot march in 1981-83 was crucial in spreading the Chipko message.

After Chipko, it was the Tehri dam. Sunderlal fought against the construction of the dam which affects the flow of the Ganges from the Himalayas. The intention of the dam is to divert water to New Delhi at the cost of water supply to the mountain villages. Because of the dam many women now have to wait all night for their household allotment of 4 liters of water per day.

After achieving success in the elimination of the threat of alcohol, Sunderlal and the mountain women turned their energies to another rising threat, the deforestation of the Himalayan Mountains. The forests of India are critical resource for the subsistence of rural people throughout the country, especially in hill and mountain areas. Forests have been increasingly felled for commerce and industry. In this context the villagers, encouraged by Sunderlal, sought to protect their livelihoods through Gandhian methods of satyagraha and non-violence resistance. In the 1970s and 1980s the movement against the destruction of forests spread throughout India and became organized and came to be known as the Chipko Movement.

Chipko literally means "to stick" in Hindi. Sunderlal and the local women would chain themselves to the trees, hug them so that the loggers could not cut the trees down. This method often slowed the logging work and eventually brought the deforestation actions of the governments to limelight. Even today, Chipko is still working to protect the trees through the same nonviolent methods. The movement spread to HP in the North, Karnataka in the South, Rajasthan in the West, Bihar in the East and to the Vindhyas in Central India. In addition to the ban in UP, the movement succeeded in halting clear felling in the Western Ghats and the Vindhyas, as well as generating pressure for a natural resource policy more sensitive to people's needs and environmental factors.

The Chipko movement was the result of hundreds of decentralized and locally autonomous initiatives. Its leaders and activists have primarily been village women, acting to save their means of subsistence and their communities. Men have been involved too, however and some of them have given wider leadership to the movement. Sunderlal Bahuguna made an appeal to Mrs Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, which resulted in the green-felling ban. His

The Tehri project began in 1972. Sunderlal remained a strong force behind the anti-Tehri Dam protests for decades. He used satyagraha methods, hunger strikes at the banks of the river Bhagirathi. In 1995, he called off a 45-day-long fast following an assurance from the then Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao for the appointment of a review committee on the ecological impacts of the dam. Not happy with the outcome, he went on another long fast which lasted for 74 days at Raj Ghat. A case was filed in the Supreme Court against the dam. In spite of all these efforts work resumed at the Tehri dam in 2001. Sunderlal and his fellowmen protested, following which Sunderlal was arrested on April 20th, 2001. Sunderlal vowed that this is not the end; he will continue to fight for ecological protection in India. Sunderlal protested with many others until 2004. Finally in 2004 the dam began to fill and Sunderlal and his wife Vimla were forcibly moved to government issued home upstream.

Along with his wife, Vimla, Sunderlal taught in the villages, worked for the welfare of the Harijans (the so-called untouchables), lobbied against deforestation and encouraged forest-based small scale industries.

Sunderlal was awarded Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian honour recently for his invaluable services in the area of environment protection. All of Sunderlal Bahuguna's work is a form of philanthropy in motion. Sunderlal has given his time and talent freely to work for the good of India. Sunderlal has not established or contributed to any existing foundation. He has however, been the catalyst of change encouraging thousands of people to work without pay for the good of India's people and ecology.

A true Gandhian, Sunderlal Bahuguna continues to inspire many development/environment workers across the country to work selflessly with perseverance for the cause of sustainable development. ■



# ‘Dhani’ Forest Management Program

Forests offer variety of livelihoods to the people who live in and around forests. But during recent years the degradation of forests has become an issue of great concern. Many initiatives have been taken up by the government and NGOs to protect the forests from degradation but with limited success, as there is no ownership and involvement of the community. The Dhani forest management program has proved that the community participation in forest management can offer better results in not only protecting the forests but also in protecting the livelihoods of millions of people.

Dhani Forest is located in the Khurda Forest Division of Orissa. It is a large tract of Reserved Forest (RF) having mixed dry deciduous type of forest vegetation. Dhani Forest has an area of about 2200 hectares. Until the early 60's the flora and fauna of Dhani was undisturbed, after which, the forest saw destruction, because of the pressure on forests for forest produce and increasing conversion of forest land to agriculture due to population increase. The revenue oriented exploitation of forest by the State only added fuel to the fire.

Forest degradation put the local people and their livelihoods in jeopardy. The cleared forest patch was no more able to meet the demand for fuel wood, house building materials, wood for agricultural implements, etc. The loss of forest cover resulted in decline in soil fertility thus giving poor yields to the farmers. Those depending on forest directly, were the worst sufferers.

In this context, the affected villagers along with few educated individuals resolved in 1986/87, to protect the forests. On 10th of September 1987, Dhani South Paancha Mouza Jungle Suraksha Samiti, the forest committee of the five villages (Barapalli, Arjunpur, Balarampur, Kiyapalla and Panasapur), was formed. The committee discussed extensively the various problems relating to the forest and their causative factors. The possible ways to tackle these problems were also discussed in detail and a work plan was determined by the committee to initiate forest protection.

In order to ensure the protection of forests and forest wealth, the Samiti adopted different management systems taking into consideration the forest based local needs, surrounding environment, their experience and ecological knowledge.

- ♦ **Management through institution:** Dhani South Panch Mouza Jungle Suraksha Samiti as the committee looks after the protection, management, utilization of the forest and related issues such as framing rules, resolving conflict, taking action against the forest offenders, maintaining records, implementation of decisions, conducting meetings, interaction with external agencies, disseminating information etc.
- ♦ **Management through protection and restriction:** In the initial period of forest management the communities took up complete protection of the degraded patch. People were restricted from entering into the forest area. No one was allowed to extract root stocks and graze

their cattle in the forest.

- ♦ **Management through sustainable utilization:** The village communities also have traditions of conservation coupled with sustainable use. After the regeneration of the forest cover the communities allowed sustainable extraction of forest products to meet their bonafide requirements.
- ♦ **Management through Economic Upliftment of the Poorer Sections:** Recognizing the need to minimize the dependence of the people on forest resources, the committee has taken an initiative to negotiate with the Forest Department, and other government and non-government agencies to carry out economic developmental programs in these villages.

The present forest ecosystem of Dhani has more than 250 plant species, 40 birds, 19 reptiles and about 20 other types of animals. The committee has banned hunting in the forest. It has constructed a waterhole in the middle of the forest to provide drinking water to the animals. The villagers through the forest protection initiative have also established a school. Renovation work of a dilapidated pond near the forest has been undertaken by the committee to provide irrigation facility to the agricultural land.

The protection initiative has been recognized and lauded internationally. For the pioneering efforts towards community based forest management, the villages have been conferred with the Prakruti Mitra Award, the highest award in the state of Orissa in the field of environmental protection. Also, The Dhani Success Story has been picturised in to a documentary film by the state Government to be used as a model for participatory forest management. The Dhani Case study has appeared in various publications in India and abroad, the most noteworthy being the report of IUCN, the World Conservation Union. The Dhani Forest is a unique case of Community Forest Management system. It is unique in the context of its strong community institutional structure and a case where a cluster of five villages have come together around the common cause of protecting and managing the forest. It is now more than a decade and the united efforts are still going strong. Dhani has offered the community - as well as the world - some basic lessons in the value, degradation, and restoration of forest ecosystems. Dhani's efforts have reiterated the faith that things can change for good by making the community participating owners of any development/conservation effort. ■

# Hope, Now is the TIME!

## Happy Ugadi!

**It is an election quarter – March, April and May 2009. Results are expected on 16 May. Time for new phase, new lease for the people in general and poor in particular in India! We got used to recession now, living on hope and optimism that we will be through it soon. Pakistan continues in crisis.**

In the midst of the elections, we continue to ignore many international days - World Water Day (22 Mar); World Health Day (7 April). We may not celebrate World Creativity and Innovation Day (21 April) and World Earth Day (22 April).

Half of India went through versions of New Years – Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Tamil, Punjabi etc. Examinations of students have ended. The students began preparations for their entrance examinations and admissions. The election code is in operation for more than a month now halting some initiatives in the public domain. Of course, a very hot summer has set in meanwhile.

There are five National Parties of significance contesting more than 100 out of 545 Lok Sabha seats in these elections. There are two existing fronts - the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Congress, and the opposition – National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by BJP. Two more fronts – third and fourth fronts - have come into being. The regional parties are able to call the shots in many states. The parties have released their manifestos. They have also announced their candidates to a large extent. Many of them are still tackling their rebel contestants. National and regional opinion polls are being conducted and projections are being made. Most projections talk about no clear winner.

Simultaneously, the elections for the Assemblies in AP, Orissa and Sikkim are also being held. Most seats are seeing multi-cornered contests.

Of the many issues that have been talked about, three things struck me – taking out the black money from Swiss Bank Accounts amounting to a whopping (at least) Rs.25 lakh crore; Cash transfer (to poor) scheme; only BJP (national) and TRS (regional) talk about Telangana and Darjeeling. On many other issues, there seems to be a broad agreement amongst all the players.

While the opinion polls talk about 'hung' results, still the 50% of all the voters ('new half') in the country, can cause miracles. Further, the untiring campaigns for voting by all, the 'new' voter turnout, if inspired, can make a huge



difference to the country, the people in general and the poor in particular, and their livelihoods.

If we take a cursory look at the manifestos of the parties, most of them talk about: universal compulsory education for 10-15 years; access to health care and insurance, health security; universal pensions to elders, disabled, widows etc.; universal subsidized public distribution system, food security; universal self-help groups and their higher order organizations, to meet their credit and other livelihoods needs; universal access for 100-150 days of employment/year; minimum wages and minimum support prices to produce; cash transfer to families; skill development for jobs, employment, self-employment and collectives/cooperatives; smaller administrative and governance units (panchayat, block, district, state...) and devolution of powers, budgets and responsibilities to them. Most manifestos talk about security.

## Perspectives

G. Muralidhar

While INC talks about 9% of GDP on education, its manifesto is rather sketchy with no in-depth treatment. While BJP is talking about low tax and low interest regime, its manifesto is more detailed, touching almost all the relevant aspects of

development and social justice, and offering insights into their thinking. It is also sustainability-friendly. Both of them project their likely Prime Ministers – Manmohan Singh and LK Advani. The manifestos of the parties in the third front are rather sketchy and does not offer comprehensive inputs for a common minimum programme. In fact, there is no likely three-digit winner amongst them. And no leader is projected for the Prime Minister. Of course, there is also a fourth front. It can be decisive king maker. There is NCP, as part of UPA, with Pawar projected as the PM.

As the road shows, rallies and campaigns progress, some meeting with accidents, some getting caught with bundles of unexplained cash, the election juggernaut is rolling on.

**Forget not to choose a good leader who loves life in all its manifestations and vote. All you know this can be the decisive moment of our history. Let us play our part.**

Seeing elections with livelihoods lenses, elder care, entrepreneurship and our now-regular engagement with young development/livelihoods professionals are the main foci of the month. Personally, with the full 36 hour fasting per week now, all my physiological, intellectual, emotional and spiritual systems are functioning far better. I am getting cleansed and tested with deeply explosive churning processes within. I remain excited and enjoying every bit of it, including my deep drenching and quiet 'progression' in the flow of the nectar of the universe.

It keeps coming back to me - **recession is an opportunity to transform the financial, economic and monetary structures** in this country and the world.

Borrowing is nothing but spending our future, unearned,

uncertain income today. When we borrow we are committing ourselves to certain payout from future uncertain income. Therefore, borrow if you have to, to meet your basic necessities in life like housing, health care and education. Once you have borrowed, get out of it as soon as possible. One of the prudent borrowing rule of thumb suggests that your liability should not be more than 50% of your assets for which you are borrowing. Further, we need to remember, when we service loan we are earning for someone else. When we pay interest from our hard earned income, it becomes income for the lender. This means we are working hard to generate income for the lender.

Recession may mean cut in remuneration for some and for some others, it may be a job loss. Then, the way out is to find another job, to be self-employed or to start an enterprise. First step for going forward is to make an assessment in terms of management capabilities, team engagement/work capabilities, multiple task handling capabilities and versatility, ability to act independently with systematic, meticulous and detail-orientation, and self-motivation, apart from the achievements, experience history and technical and other soft skills. The next step is to zero on employment you want – job/self-employment/enterprise. Recession is not a bad time to start new. It costs less!

In general and in recession time in particular, please appreciate that our basic needs are food, water, air, clothing, shelter and entertainment. Then, the following tips, gathered together, may help: eat at home; carry a bottle of water; buy the items that you need and not what you come across; buy in bulk; buy local products; choose unbranded items; shop less frequently; buy off-season; and pay cash rather than swipe a card.

If we understand broadly how we reached here – from self-consumption to local consumption and barter to local market to 'free mobility of goods' - from swaraj to interdependent economy. This globalization with free mobility of goods and services and this recession has made us realize that we do not know what goods and services make up India's competitive edge. For sure, we know many of our agri-products are not competitive. It is a bad news for a country with 70%+ living on agriculture and allied activities. While we need to explore the goods and services we are good at globally, do not we build local self-reliant communities, their organizations and networks that exchange products and services? Is not the quality of life intrinsically linked to simplified life patterns and style?

While we get used to the impact of global economic recession, our economy seems to be heading towards deflation (negative inflation), driven by ongoing demand destruction. Deflation is a decline in the general price level. It is caused by factors such as low money supply and credit, and a curb in spending by households, industry or government. The lower demand during deflation often leads to a rise in unemployment levels. For starters, in a deflationary environment, sectors with high proportion of variable costs compared to fixed costs are likely to benefit from falling input prices. RBI may cut the cash reserve ratio further by some 150 basis points to reduce/reverse the trend.

We always guessed it. Here is an endorsement now. A

background paper for the DFID annual conference (9-10 March 2009, London) argues that the current global recession seriously threatens the achievement of the Millennium



Development Goals, and **may push more than 90 million people into poverty**. Times are uncertain, because the scale of the downturn is not yet known, and the impact could be even more serious. Already, it is estimated 1.4 billion people live in extreme poverty in the world. 800 million people are food insecure before the recession and the figures might have, now, doubled after onset of the recession.

Unfortunately more than a third of them live in South Asia and around India. No poverty reduction, no hunger reduction, no unemployment reduction can happen in the world, unless they are addressed here. This requires lovers (of life) and believers (that the world belongs to all), pooling the best brains (with heart) of the world to work for hunger-free, poverty-free and unemployment-free world. This would mean working for structural transformation in this world. This would mean shifts in existing paradigms. How can we have a person who finds no work and if s/he finds it, the wage can be as low as Rs.20-30 per day when another person can take wage of more than Rs. One million per day – some 50000 times? How can we have a person living on the street without a roof and another living in 100+ rooms at the same time? If we become aware that there is enough for everybody's need, we need to find ways to create wealth differently but equitably, and channelise the wealth for caring the world and the life that needs care, as a right and entitlement. We need to find ways to redistribute the wealth to all the communities from whom it was taken/is being taken. We need to discover how we can be a part of the solution. Can we? Should not we? Should not our new leaders? Can we not choose our leaders with passion in this? Is it not a historic time?

**Yes, if we love life, if we love India and if we love the world. Now is the TIME.**

Apart from the political leadership, we need community leadership, business leadership and social leadership, with these thoughts, abilities and passion. These will be men and women, mostly young. These will be entrepreneurs; professionals in collectives; community leaders managing their collectives etc. All of them and us need to appreciate that leadership is about leading - inspiring people, building new leaders, building relationships and leveraging them – and living the change they are leading.

**We need facilitators to work on/with these leaders. Can we get into this task, as quickly as possible, and exhaust ourselves in this?** I know it takes time, energy and persuasion. It can be tiring, and frustrating, at times. But there is hope - some of these new leaders can walk the talk and bring the legacy of change we are yearning for. ■







Forests constitute 23.28 per cent of the geographical area of India which is about 77 million hectares. Of this the dense forest, open forest and mangroves constitute 11.48, 7.76 and 0.15 per cent respectively. Among the states in the country, Madhya Pradesh accounts for 20.68 per cent of the forest cover followed by Arunachal Pradesh with 10.80 per cent, Orissa 7.38 per cent, Maharashtra 7.32 per cent and Andhra Pradesh 6.94 per cent. The seven North-Eastern states together comprise 25.70 per cent of the total forest cover. In the sphere of mangroves, about 85 per cent occur in the inter-tidal regions of West Bengal, Gujarat and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Forest lands across the country are notified either as Reserved Forest (R.F) or Protected Forest (P.F) or Private Protected Forest (P.P.F) by the government. These notified areas are governed by Forest Acts. In some areas, village forests come under the Revenue Department and are managed by the village level bodies as per the prescriptions of the State Acts, Rules and Customary Laws.



many more products specific to the particular areas from which they originate. About 3000 species in the forests of India are the potential source of NTFP. In India nearly 50 million people are dependent on NTFP for subsistence and cash income. 60 per cent of NTFP is consumed as food or dietary supplement especially during lean season by forest dwellers.

The revenue from NTFP is growing faster than the revenue from timber. Export earnings from NTFP on an average account for about 60-70% of total exports of forest products. Commercial NTFPs alone are estimated to generate Rs.3 billion annually. However, there is still vast untapped potential in this arena. The current production of NTFP is only about 60% of potential production, and in the case of non edible fibres and flowers only 7-12% of the potential is exploited.

NTFP collection, an important source of income for forest dwellers and rural poor, varies from state to state ranging from 5.4 to 55 percent. Most significant contribution in terms of quantity and revenue of NTFP comes from five states in India namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa. It is estimated that NTFP collection alone generates over 2 million person days of work annually. This number further expands significantly when the person days engaged in NTFP processing and marketing are considered.

With the promulgation of Wildlife Protection Act some brakes have been set on access to NTFP and in some states this has caused deterioration of relationship between forest department and forest users group. However, some states where the forest rules are less stringent have given relatively easy access to collecting some NTFP including fodder grasses, dry and fallen twigs and branches, leaf litter and leaves and where available mushrooms, edible tubers, flowers, fruits and medicinal herbs. Even here, more valuable NTFP like cashew nuts, bamboo and fibrous grasses are excluded from free access. Another dimension to NTFP collection is that the local communities most often do not realize fair price/get reasonable incomes for NTFP collection. They get only collection charges even for products that have a very high market value. There are also products for which appropriate prices have not been set in the market. In some cases, marketing channels do not even exist. Most often than not, the market price for the NTFP or the profits from products is appropriated by middleman contractors, traders, industry etc.

The marketing of almost all important NTFP in the country is channeled through government bodies/agencies and the stated intention is to help tribal communities and other rural poor to get a fair deal. But these efforts in some ways have reduced the number of other buyers and also created delays in the free flow of goods and payment to collectors. These



Indian forests are rich in resources and offer a variety of livelihoods for the people depending on them. An interesting contrast is that two third of the rich forests in the country are also home to some of the economically poorer tribal communities. There is an estimated 100 million people in the country who live in and around forests and another 275 million for whom forests constitute an important source of livelihood. Shifting cultivation, livestock rearing, collection and processing of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), employment in forest based industries and mining together make up for some of the prominent forest based occupations impacting a large section of the population.

NTFP alone generates about 70 per cent of employment in the Indian forestry sector. NTFP includes a variety of fruits, nuts, seeds, oils, spices, resins, gums, medicinal plants and

gaps gave room for the entry of contractors and other spurious elements. These players though appear to benefit the collectors on the face of it; they thoroughly exploit the system in reality.

The next significant forest-based occupation seems to be shifting cultivation popularly called Podu / Penda or Jhum cultivation. It is estimated that about 3 million people practice shifting cultivation in the country. Nearly 5 million hectares in



the country is under this type of cultivation. After a piece of land is selected, trees or bushes are cut down partially or fully, left to dry and then burnt in situ. In the cleared land seeds of crops are dibbled into holes or broadcast, without using ploughs or animal power. When the crop yields begin to decrease after some years the cultivator moves to a new patch of forest to repeat the process, and allows the abandoned land to recuperate. After a period varying from two to twenty years, he returns to the same land for cultivation.

This system of shifting cultivation works towards self sufficiency. It does not lead to any capital formation or growth. Human labour and land, in its widest sense, are the chief factors of production. It is both a labour-intensive and land-extensive system, based on low technology.

There are two divergent views about shifting cultivation one condemning it and another, a liberal one, upholding it as a humane practice. The first one, often termed an "outsider's view", states that it dries up the springs of the hills, causes soil erosion, destroys valuable forests and adversely affects rainfall and deprives people of the benefits of forest produce. The second one, often called an "insider's view", considers it as "an organic response of the people engaged in it to certain specific ecological conditions, rather than to a particular eco-techno system.



Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs), including trees, shrubs, grasses and vines, are a central resource for traditional health systems, as well as for pharmaceutical medicines. There are more than 8,000 plant species in South Asia with known medicinal uses. The MAPs that grow in the forests play a vital role not only in providing native health solutions but also in creating livelihoods to those

engaged in collecting and processing them. According to the WHO, MAPs are an accessible, affordable and culturally appropriate source of primary health care for more than 80% of Asia's population. Marginalized, rural and indigenous people, who cannot afford or access formal health care systems, are especially dependent on these culturally familiar, technically simple, financially affordable and generally effective traditional medicines.

The collection, processing and trading of medicinal plants contribute significantly to the cash income of the poor and women in the forest regions. For instance, in the Great Himalayan National Park of Himachal Pradesh, almost all the local people are dependent on medicinal plants collection for their livelihoods and earn around \$100/HH/year through collection and sales. Medicinal plants have also been used to develop family-based health and livelihood oriented enterprises in rural areas. Many traditional healers have been running MAP-based health care system to earn their livelihoods.

The native forest-dwellers, the adivasis also engage themselves in making beautiful handicrafts from the raw material available in the forests and earn a living by selling those products. In majority of cases, handicraft is considered as a part time occupation or territory activity in the economic ladder. But still the revenue generated from the handicrafts has substantial share of the total household income. During a survey conducted by the Planning Commission of India, it is observed that the income from the handicrafts constitute more than 30% of the total household income of the craftsmen. Handicraft items based on wood, cane, bamboo, reeds and grasses have good market in some areas and in some cases have also entered the export market. Various state governments have taken initiatives to promote these crafts and set up exclusive tribal craft shops in their respective states. National level melas are also organized at various centers displaying these forest-based crafts. In spite of the lucrative market, the producers of these products end up making a pittance for their workmanship. Both the demand and supply side potential largely remains unexplored. Efforts towards refining the existing skills or efforts to reorient the producers to the changing markets are almost minimal to absent. Middlemen play a critical role in the selling of forest-based handicrafts.

Nearly 30 per cent of the fodder requirement of the country is met from forests. More than half of the livestock population in



the country grazes in forests. However, conservationists claim that this large extent of grazing, which is much more than the sustainable capacity of the forests, adversely affects the forests. The debate goes on. Forming joint forest management collectives/groups by local population can be a way forward to conserve the traditional forest rights, forest-based livelihoods and also the environment.

Forests also attract tourists, thereby providing scope for



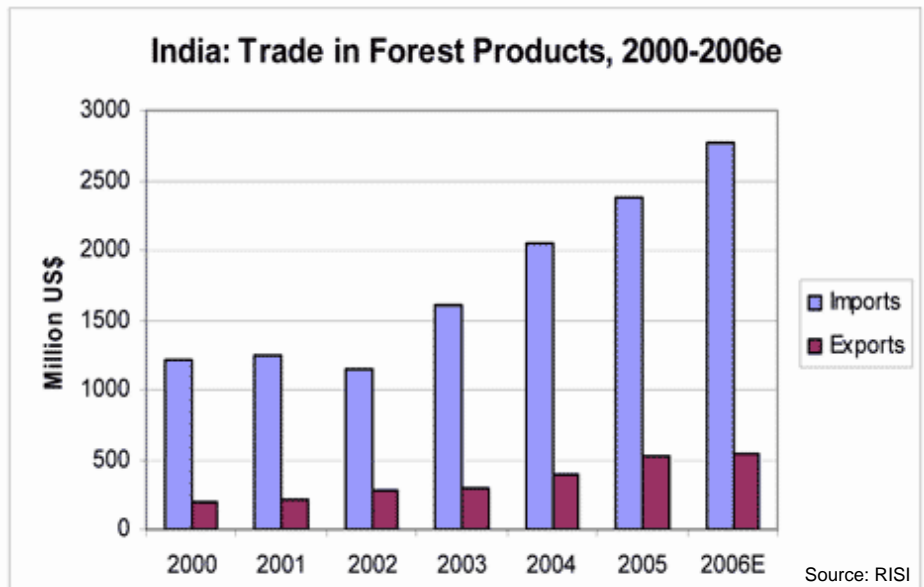
tourism-based livelihoods. Ecotourism is gaining popularity and is providing employment to many youth like guides, tour operators, travel agents, security guards, porters, personnel manning rest houses etc.

Apart from generating local livelihoods, forests also play a significant role in the country's industrialization, development and growth. Furniture, building and transport materials, several agricultural and industrial implements reading and writing materials boxes and containers and leather or fur articles have their sources in the forests. Pharmaceutical firms draw richly on forest bio-diversity with a number of commonly used and vital drugs sourced from natural vegetation. The growth possibilities of the pharmaceutical sector further open up prospects of bio-prospecting in which local knowledge is valuable.

In spite of the multitude of livelihood avenues that forests offer, much of the forest potential is mostly untapped. Average forest productivity is about one-third of potential rates. But on the contrary, an estimated 40% of the forest cover has been degraded in the past several decades. From the graph it is evident that India's deficit in forest products trade has more than doubled over five years.

Agricultural expansion, logging, hunting, over-grazing and forest fires are destroying or degrading forests and in turn reducing the contribution that forests make to people's livelihoods. Deforestation and logging destroy wild plants used for food and medicines and may also increase certain infectious diseases such as malaria, leishmaniasis, chagas, and yellow fever. The over-exploitation of timber products can eventually lead to less wood to cook meals and fewer raw materials for small-scale entrepreneurs and artisans to use for generating income.

The national government is committed to conserving the forest and developing new forests to meet the goal of increasing forest cover to 33 percent of the land area by 2012. To achieve this goal the Government of India has actively promoted the Joint Forest Management Program



(JFM) throughout the country. Under this program the state governments have to involve local communities in the management of forests. It is envisaged that the communities, in lieu of their participation in protection and development of forest areas, will be entitled to sharing of usufructs in a manner specified by the concerned State Forest Departments. Most communities participating in JFM fail to tap the potential of forests to improve local livelihoods. Forest communities still tend to use forests mainly as a safety net during difficult economic periods, or for seasonal subsistence products, such as fuel wood and fodder. For communities to capture more of this untapped potential, wide ranging and phased reforms are required at both the national and state levels.

Similarly, incomes and the environment are threatened when local people lose access to forests in favour of commercial farmers, ranchers, or when logging and mining companies move onto their land. Many times government policies frequently favour these groups with concessions, licenses, permits and new roads, while denying similar rights to poorer inhabitants. In India the forests are endowed with very rich mineral wealth. Mining is being promoted in the country under the guise of generating employment. But the truth is that the modern mining industry is highly mechanized and requires less manpower. According to the CSE Report, between 1991 and 2004, the value of mineral production in India increased four-fold but at the same time, employment plummeted by 30 per cent in this sector.

The presence of large mineral deposits in ecologically sensitive areas threatens India's already vulnerable forests. Though the government states that the total forested land diverted for mining between 1980 and 2005 was only 95,003 ha, the truth of the matter is that an estimated 1,64,610 ha of forest land has been lost to mining. Apart from mining, many "development" projects are displacing traditional forest dwellers from their lands and livelihoods. These people after migrating to the areas away from the forests and are taking up unskilled wage labour because their forest-based skills seem to be irrelevant in the migrated areas.



Further, declining markets and increasing competition from foreign producers also threaten the contribution forests make to the day to day income of the poor or less advantaged. Trade liberalization has forced many small farmers and forest-based micro-enterprises to increase their timber and forest product harvesting in order to compete with multinational companies and their cheaper imports.

It is important to protect our forests to protect the livelihoods of about 300 million people in the country. Government policy-makers and those designing poverty-reduction strategies need to consider all of the options available to protect those forest and tree-based resources that are important to the livelihoods of rural households. This will also be in the interest of sustainable development and environment conservation.

It is important to give the local communities control over forest resources and encourage equitable distribution of these resources. Government should avoid the policies that encourage forest destruction. Livelihood and landscape approach should be brought into conservation efforts so that forest dwellers do not lose access to their resources. A newly-released World Bank Report states that with greater community control over forest management, income from forests could rise from an estimated US\$222 million in 2004 to approximately US\$2 billion per annum in 2020. The report indicates that community-based forestry offers vast potential for poverty reduction and rural economic growth in India while also supporting critical national conservative goals. This is possible by undertaking effective reforms in managing community forest resources and improving forest productivity.

The development of local forest-based enterprises including local aggregation, storage, grading and processing through community collectives represents an opportunity for strengthening the livelihoods of poor, forest-dependent people, at the same time providing an economic incentive to conserve forests through sustainable management. At the same time, markets are complex, and heavily dominated by particular interest groups. Local and national markets are generally easier to enter but less remunerative than international ones. A good understanding of the relevant markets is crucial for the development of Local Forest-Based Enterprises and their successful positioning in supply chains. A number of international market trends currently act in their favour. Small-scale operators can benefit from innovations in production technologies, as well as communication and information systems.



There is a growing world demand for many naturally derived products. Scarcities in some of them like particular tropical hardwoods, various NTFPs mean that prices are higher than in the past. A growing international awareness of issues of product origin is also increasing the market for goods produced through fair trade, with ecological and or/social certification – although it is



often difficult for small producers to enter these particular markets. Collectives of people involved in NTFP collection, processing and marketing can be promoted and strengthened so that they can enter into these potential markets. Further NTFP collectors have to be trained in sustainable harvesting methods of NTFP. New market instruments like certification (Fair trade, Organic and Eco-friendly) should be proactively used with institutional safeguard to ensure the interests of the poor.

The urgency and need to protect the fast disappearing medicinal plants-based traditional knowledge, which is still abundant with the forest dwellers cannot be overemphasized. If proper values can be added to the traditional medical knowledge-based health practices and subsistence-oriented Medicinal and Aromatic Plant applications, a large number of jobs can be created in the rural areas. Even at current level of conversion of traditional medicinal knowledge into economic opportunities, enterprise-based application can account for thousands of jobs in rural areas.

Recently Ecotourism has emerged as development tool, which aims to protect the natural environment and cultural diversity by attracting the eco tourists and generating the source of revenue for the local people without harming the nature. It has the potential to create many livelihoods and to enhance the incomes of the poor households. But efforts should be put into making ecotourism into responsible tourism which does not cause any damage to the environment and also to the traditions and cultures of the local people.

Apart from the above, serious efforts should be put into increasing the forest cover in the country. Planned conservation and afforestation efforts and promotion of eco-friendly development models, can help create significant employment and income enhancement opportunities for the poor. Joint Forest Management efforts can be taken up more vigorously and seriously. Providing technical/scientific inputs to the collectors of forest produce, making sure that they realize a fair share in the market value of their produce and facilitating value-addition activities will not only help enhance their income levels but also pave way for sustainable forests.

Robert Frost said “The woods are lovely, dark and deep.....” Indeed, they are! And we have promises to keep towards preserving those woods for protecting the mother earth and the lives and livelihoods of millions of her poor children. If not now, it may be a little too late... ■



## ‘Poor or Rich, Elder is Elder.’

Satrunjay Singh is a small farmer who belongs to Jagadishpur village of Sadar block of Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand state. Presently he is representing an elder's federation of Hazaribagh district and is working actively to solve the issues of elders. 'livelihoods' interviewed Satrunjay to know more about his life.

**Q:** What is your name?

**A:** Sathrunjay Singh.

**Q:** Please tell about your family?

**A:** We are five members. Me, my wife and three sons.

**Q:** Can you say about your childhood?

**A:** We are 4 brothers. When I was studying 6<sup>th</sup> class my mother and father expired. After that I studied up to 8<sup>th</sup> class. But I couldn't continue my studies because of my economic condition.

**Q:** What did you do after discontinuing your studies?

**A:** I took up tuitions to lower class children for some years. But that is only for a short period of time. Later I went to Kujju area (Famous for coal fields) along with my elder brother to supervise the coal loading and unloading work.

**Q:** How much were you paid for that work?

**A:** Very little. They used to give a wage of Rs 10 per day. But after few days the employers increased my wage to Rs 20 per day. While working in the coal fields I gained some experience regarding the coal business. With that experience I started small scale coal business.

**Q:** How was your business?

**A:** Quite well. I got regular offers from some of the big business firms in the state to supply coal and my business went on very smoothly for some years.

**Q:** What happened after that?

**A:** At about the same time I started the business, I also got married. After few years we had a son, but soon he died of pneumonia. I was very depressed. I stopped my business and stayed at home for some months. But later with the support of my brothers and relatives I recovered.

**Q:** Have you started your business again?

**A:** No, this time I did not want to go away from home in the name of business. So I started doing agriculture in my 2 acres of ancestral land. Since then I am doing agriculture.

**Q:** What crops do you cultivate?

**A:** I cultivate paddy, wheat, maize and vegetables. I used to get good yields and income in the beginning. But now agriculture is not remunerative as before.

**Q:** What changes have you observed in agriculture?

**A:** I am doing agriculture since 25 years. Previously we used to utilize compost and other natural fertilizers and pest control methods. But now people are using chemical fertilizers and pesticides indiscriminately. The cost of cultivation increased



by many fold. Due to the usage of chemical fertilizers soil fertility has come down and there are very less yields. Labour cost also has increased in the recent years because of NREGS. It may be good for the labour, but small farmers like us are suffering a lot with these consequences. Even if we invest more money we are not getting good returns as there is no support from the side of government to small farmers in marketing our produce. Middlemen are eating away all our hard earned money.

**Q:** What about the studies of your children?

**A:** All my sons are studying well. The elder son is doing his graduation, the second son is in Intermediate and the third son is studying 9<sup>th</sup> standard.

**Q:** What do you think of your future?

**A:** All my sons are doing well at education. So there is nothing to worry about them. They can stand up on their own feet. Whenever I get time I always try to help others. Many people of my village take my support in resolving their family, property issues.

**Q:** How did you become President of Adarsh Vridh Kalyana Sangh (District level Federation of Elder's Self Help Groups in Hazaribagh district)?

**A:** Few years back some people from HelpAge India (an organization working for the Elderly) and Nav Bharat Jagruthi Kendra (an NGO working in Hazaribagh district) came to my village and organized meetings with old age people. They asked us to form into SHGs to fight for our rights and entitlements such as pensions and other social security schemes. I participated in those meetings actively and wanted to be a part of the SHGs. When I joined the SHG, the other members in the group selected me as the president of the group. As the president of the group I took active part in the group activities with support from HelpAge. Last year all the elder SHGs in Hazaribagh district were federated into a district level organization called Adarsh Vridha Kalyana Sangh and I became the president of the district federation.

**Q:** Now what are you doing as a representative of elders of your district?

**A:** I conduct regular meetings with Elder SHGs to know their problems and try to resolve those problems through our federation. Though he is poor or rich, elder is elder. Elders across are suffering with isolation, neglect, ill health and lack of social security. I tried to highlight these issues whenever I happened to meet some influential persons. I try to do good to others as long as I live because I believe that if I think good and do good to others, God will do good to me. ■

# Bamboo



Bamboos are aptly called the poor man's timber and are found in great abundance. Their strength, straightness and lightness combined with extraordinary hardness, range in sizes, abundance, easy propagation and the short period in which they attain maturity make them suitable for a variety of purposes.

India is the second richest country in bamboo genetic resources after China. These two countries together have more than half of the total bamboo resources globally. There are 136 species of bamboos occurring in India. Fifty-eight species of bamboo belonging to 10 genera are distributed in the northeastern states alone. Bamboo is expected to create eight million jobs, lift five million families out of poverty and earn \$3.6 billion annually and thus bamboo is called by many as India's 'Green Gold'. Out of the 22 genera in India, 19 are indigenous and three exotic. The annual production of bamboo in India is about 4.6 million tonnes; about 1.9 million tonnes is used by the pulp industries. The annual yield of bamboo per hectare varies between 0.2 and 0.4 tonnes with an average of 0.33 tonnes per hectare, depending upon the intensity of stocking and biotic interferences.

According to the Forest Survey of India report, about 12.8 percent of total forest area is under bamboo cultivation, with the northeast region accounting for 66 percent of the country's bamboo resources in terms of

value and 28 percent in terms of area.

During the last 15-20 years, bamboo has developed as an exceptionally valuable and often superior substitute for wood. Bamboo-based panels and boards are hard and durable and may successfully substitute for hardwood products. Bamboo may replace wood in many industrial applications and thereby contribute to the savings and restoration of the world's forests.

Bamboo is a major construction material in many countries, particularly in rural areas. It can be used for almost all parts of houses, including posts, roofs, walls, floors, beams etc. People also use bamboo to produce mats, baskets, tools, hats, traditional toys, musical instruments and furniture. Bamboo is also used for making license sticks, foot rulers and matchsticks. In the food sector, bamboo shoots are becoming more popular. Bamboo has a tremendous potential for economic and environmental development and international trade.

Agriculture scientists have so far identified around a dozen varieties of high-value commercial bamboo for cultivation by farmers that could be used as an alternative to wood for construction, furniture making and even weaving cloth using bamboo fibers. In fact, bamboo fiber clothes and saris are fast catching the fancy in some parts of the country. Efforts are also on to promote cultivation of edible bamboo varieties.



Inputs	Pre-production	Harvesting	Post-harvesting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Knife</li> <li>◆ Sickle</li> <li>◆ Rubber (Bicycle Tube)</li> <li>◆ Saw</li> <li>◆ Sharpening stone</li> <li>◆ Gunny bag</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Seed collection by shaking bamboo poles</li> <li>◆ Sowing the seeds</li> <li>◆ Replanting the tubers in between March-April</li> <li>◆ The bamboo tree will grow with in 70-90 days after the tubers are replanted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Bamboo harvesting in sustainable methods from the trees which are having as age of 3-6 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Transporting bamboo by road or through rafters from the area of harvesting to the area of selling</li> <li>◆ Storing bamboo to increase its life span</li> <li>◆ Treating bamboo to increase its lasting period</li> <li>◆ Selling bamboo to the people who process it and make different varieties of goods</li> <li>◆ Making different types of goods with bamboo and marketing</li> </ul>

Income and Expenditure of a family which is dependent on making bamboo products			
Income	Amount	Expenditure	Amount
Selling bamboo by cutting into different shapes	120.00	Machete to cut bamboo	250.00
Selling Bamboo baskets	60.00	Saw	60.00
Selling Bamboo mats	55.00	Sickle	100.00
Selling Bamboo pan used for separating husk	20.00	Knife	60.00
Selling decorated bamboo baskets		Rubber (Bicycle tube)	10.00
Selling bamboo screens	600.00	Gunny bag	20.00
Selling ladders	130.00	Sharpening stone	30.00
Selling cots made of bamboo	300.00	Transport	40.00
	550.00	Excise duty	200.00
		Labour (3 People)	630.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1835.00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1400.00</b>

Thus the total expenditure for 3 people to make bamboo goods in 3 days is Rs 1400.00  
The total income they get from selling of those goods is Rs 1835.00  
Hence the profit that the family of 3 persons make with 3 days labour is Rs 435.00

among the people who make bamboo products

\* The traditional bamboo goods producers are unable to capture the growing market demand for bamboo products

### Solutions

\* Proper steps to be taken to develop bamboo in the potential areas

\* Traditional bamboo goods producers are to be trained in modern products and

methods

\* Government should take appropriate steps so that the bamboo goods producers can get fair price in the market

Thus Bamboo has the potential to show solutions to 4 key problems of the poor households. They are the House security, Livelihoods security, Environmental security, Food security

There are large number of people involved in the bamboo processing industry in the country. There are certain communities in the country for whom the traditional occupation is making bamboo products. These people are struggling with lot of problems such as lack of remunerative market, increase in the cost of raw material etc. Bamboo collectors who are predominantly the forest dwellers are also facing so many problems. Some issues that are faced by the bamboo collectors and bamboo craft persons and the possible solutions are mentioned below.



### Issues

- \* There is no proper awareness on bamboo cultivation, development among the bamboo collectors
- \* Some bamboo goes waste during collection and transportation
- \* Bamboo collectors are not aware of the process of storing and making the bamboo long lasting
- \* Lack of knowledge of modern designs and methods

Though bamboo is having so much potential in creating employment and providing food security, the full potential of bamboo has not been tapped. As against an estimated demand for 26.9 million tons of bamboo, India is currently able to supply only 13.47 million tons. The country today exploits just a tenth of its bamboo-producing potential. The commercial consumption of bamboo globally is worth around \$10 billion, which is expected to reach \$20 billion by 2015. By realizing this growing demand for bamboo and its ability to create employment Government of India is promoting bamboo cultivation and trade through a National Mission on Bamboo Trade and Technology Development.

There is a growing demand for bamboo as a substitute of wood across the world. Bamboo regenerates much quicker than other wood plants and therefore government should find out ways and means to tap this opportunity. There is also a growing market for processed and packaged bamboo shoots representing an opportunity for the establishment of commercially run processing units. With the increasing population pressure, natural stands of bamboo are being indiscriminately cut for fuel wood and furniture. This should be curtailed in order to tap the vast potential that the bamboo sector has in terms of creating employment and generating incomes to the poor families. ■





## Foundation For Ecological Security

Most of the nation's land is degraded and laying bare, and our ecological security, indeed the survival of the people of India, inextricably linked with this degraded forest base are under threat. The situation can be reverted only if restoration of forests on degraded lands were placed in the hands of the people. This belief has proved to be true with the concerted efforts of an organization Foundation for Ecological Security (FES).

Registered under the societies Registration act XXI, 1860, the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) was set up in 2001 to reinforce the massive and critical task of ecological registration in the country, through the concerted and collective efforts of the rural communities.



setting in place the process of collective management in governance.

The objective of NTGCF is to contribute to the restoration and protection of the ecological security of the country by creating self-sustaining village institutions that work towards ensuring

Previously, the program of FES was implemented as the Tree Growers Cooperative Project by the National Tree Growers Cooperatives Federation (NTGCF). In August 1986, in response to a request from National Wasteland Development Board (NWDB), the National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB) initiated a pilot project on Tree Growers Cooperatives. The aim was to develop an institutional structure to regenerate the degraded common lands to meet the fuel wood and fodder necessities in the villages. The pilot project was initiated in eight districts, spread over five states including, Gujarat, A.P, Rajasthan, Orissa, and Karnataka each of which has widely varying and distinctive socio, economic, political, topographical and climatic features. These districts, where the project is still under implementation, are characterised by the existence of uncultivated wastelands, poverty, large livestock population and general scarcity of fuel wood and fodder. Under this project National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB) initiated pilot efforts in creating village wood lots through Tree Grower's Cooperatives (TGCs).

After achieving good results with TGCs in regeneration of waste lands, NDDDB promoted a federation of the cooperatives called the National Tree Growers Cooperative Federation in 1988 to scale up the efforts. The vision of NTGCF is to restore the ecological security of village communities in eco-fragile and marginalized zones, and

the functioning of ecological processes by restoring the biological productivity of marginally productive and unproductive degraded lands, primarily common lands, and establish ecologically self-sustaining fuel wood and fodder plantations to meet the essential needs of the villagers. NTGCF's organisational policies are determined by an elected board comprising one elected representative from each Tree Growers Cooperative Society (TGCS) in each state and a representative from NDDDB.

Land leased to TGCS, transformed into a green resource and revived the faith of not only rural poor in their capacities in the management of natural resources but also of the bureaucracy to support and facilitate decentralised management of village commons. It has helped NTGCF to get more support from the state/central governments in terms of simplified procedures for leasing of wastelands to the TGCs. Subsequent to the signing of MOUs, in the states where the project is being implemented, and the formation of the state level coordination committees, the process of land lease to the TGCS got decentralised. The process which used to take four to five years is now taking only four to five months.

The NTGCF has set up a Neem Biocide plant at Hadud near Anand, Gujarat to manufacture neem based pesticides. The total cost of setting up the plant is RS.34 million. Twelve acres of land have been provided by Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) on a 99year lease. NDDDB provided all the necessary assistance in setting up the plant, improvement in the process and the commissioning of the plant. Bio-efficacy trials conducted in four Agricultural Universities have proved that the product is effective against insect pests on a range of vegetable, and oil seed crops.

NTGCF also initiated energy conservation programmes in its projects areas and other villages. It facilitated the setting up of improved chullahs and bio-gas plants and worked through 60 milk unions across the country in this effort.

In the arena of marketing, NTGCF's efforts include





coordination of income generation activities, collection and processing the tree produce, identifying appropriate marketing techniques, setting competitive prices, conducting market studies and providing strategic support to the cooperatives. The main focus is on developing an appropriate infrastructure for organising, procurement, processing and marketing non-wood produce, fuel wood and timber in a sustainable manner.

The major accomplishment has been breaking the centuries old system of centralised management of natural resources and transferring the resource base to the grass root level. Efforts are on to associate TGCs in the Joint Forest Management programme and to take up conservation of natural resources in a comprehensive manner. Accordingly TGCS are undertaking the Integrated Wasteland Development Programmes to develop larger tracts of waste land.

However, it has been realized that collectivization around common lands and forests can happen in more forms than cooperative alone. In response to this realization, FES came into existence to support these forms. NTGCF continues to be a national solidarity of collectives around common lands.

Interaction with several organisations within the country and abroad helped NTGCF to confirm the new approaches, that are being evolved while implementing the project, of dealing with people, management of natural resources, techniques of plantation and strategies for institutional development.

On the basis of more than ten years of learning, it has been decided to establish the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) in the year 2001 to reinforce the massive and critical task of ecological restoration in the country, through the concerted and collective efforts of the rural communities and by restoring the biomass productive capacity of the rural landscapes. To achieve this purpose in an environment as complex and diverse as that is prevailing in our country, FES endeavours to be an organisation that is imaginative, versatile, innovative and that accelerates the process of people's participation in ecological restoration of the country. The Foundation looks beyond the human dimension and encompasses the much broader ecological concerns required to ensure the security of the natural processes that human, plant and animal communities, including myriad micro organisms, depend on.

With ecological well being and social justice as the central tenets that guide FES, its actions include influencing policy, work on issues concerning the critical role that forests play in providing clean water so as to integrate forests in land use plans, the problem associated with land degradation the arid and semi-arid context in the face of increasing desertification.

The organization aims at highlighting the critical role that forests play in sustaining agriculture, animal husbandry and rural livelihoods, so as to surface its true value in the day-to-day lives of rural people. FES assists village communities and their conglomerates in designing judicious land use plans by juxtaposing their visions of progress on a sound

synthesis of ecological, social and economic considerations. By working on systemic issues FES would like to nurture initiatives that would bridge sectoral disciplines, limit linear progressions and trigger a multiplier effect

The erosion of local institutional arrangements and the ineffectiveness of the regulatory mechanisms have exacerbated the process of degradation of natural resources. The importance of natural resources in the rural economy can hardly be overemphasised in our country where a bulk of the populace continues to depend on forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry for their livelihoods. It concerns are largely centred on the poorer section of the rural society that depends up on natural resource. Hence FES works in the area of enhancing the livelihoods of rural poor in an ecologically sustainable manner.

In about two decades, FES has grown into a body that has a sound understanding and experience on supporting and energizing processes of collective action in rural communities; strengthening and crafting appropriate institutional designs for the conservation of common lands and other natural resources; appreciating the inter-linkages between different components of an ecosystem; and locating conservation oriented community action in the larger social, economic and ecological trajectories.

This organization has been instrumental in influencing State Governments in arranging for long-term lease of revenue wastelands - 15 years in Orissa and Gujarat, 20 years in Karnataka, 25 years in Rajasthan, 50 years in Andhra Pradesh and 99 years in Madhya Pradesh. Such an arrangement ensures secure tenure over the common lands and produce at a nominal lease fee to the communities. In order to hasten the process of re-vegetation, the powers to lease vast stretches of revenue wastelands have been delegated to the District Collectors. Till March 2005, 11,060 ha of revenue wastelands, 5,749 ha of grazing lands, 8,383 ha of Van Panchayat lands in Uttaranchal and 1,329 ha of Gramya Jungle lands in Orissa have been brought under secure tenurial arrangements and management of the village communities.

Currently FES is focussing on the areas of restoration of forest cover, common lands and private lands in an inter-related manner in ecologically degraded and economically deprived area, Improving grazing lands to offset the pressure on forest in livestock domination production systems in dry land area, improving economic condition of the poorer people within the communities to ward off the threat that their poverty poses to the viability of the local institutional arrangements to protect forests, capturing critical information on the bio-diversity water and agriculture systems to highlight their critical value and accelerating measures to conserve the use of firewood and water through energy and water conservation measures.

FES/ NTGCF's consistent efforts has shown a way forward for sustainable development of natural resources and their associated lives and livelihoods. The key seems to be - ***People's Ownership and their Involvement in the Management*** of common properties. ■

# Manifestos from Parties

**India is going through general elections for 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. The elections are scheduled on 16, 22, 23, 30 April and 7, 13 May 2009 and the counting day is 16 May. Next Government is expected to be in office by the end of the month, May. The election code is operational since 2 March and this election is in the background of global economic recession and a possible deflationary environment, threatening terrorism and security concern in the wake of 26/11 attacks in Mumbai, and looming crises in the neighborhood in general and Pakistan in particular. A momentous quarter that can change the direction of the history in India!**

There are seven recognized national parties – Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM), Indian National Congress (INC/Congress), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD); about 50 recognized state parties; and more than 1000 registered parties. They are contesting 545 (actually 543) Lok Sabha seats. Further, there are two existing coalitions - the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Congress, and the opposition – National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by BJP. Two more fronts – third and fourth fronts - have come into being. There are many regional coalitions. The regional (state) parties are able to call the shots in many a place. Most seats are seeing multi-cornered contests, some of them are intensely fought and some are not.

Simultaneously, the elections for the Assemblies in AP, Orissa and Sikkim are also being held.

Time of nominations ended for majority of the seats. Most parties have announced their candidates, to a large extent. National and regional opinion polls are being conducted and projections are being made. Most projections talk about no clear winner. Campaigns, Rallies, Road Shows are in progress. We are having advertisements - some mud-slinging; some comic; and some showing the exaggerated past achievements. We hear lot of lists of achievements, criticisms, political equations, vote banks etc. We hear slogans. We hear about door-to-door canvassing. We see details of some declared assets, educational qualifications and criminal records of the candidates. We hear about rebel contestants. We hear about distribution of money, liquor etc., and their occasional seizure. We are also hearing about payment of money and showing evidence of money spending power to get tickets. We are also hearing about distribution of tickets across various social sections.

But we do not hear much about what the intentions and plans

of the political parties and their coalitions for the five years in office, if they come to power. True, many of the recognized parties have released their manifestos during 24 March to 6 April 2009. Bahujan Samaj Party went public with its intent of not releasing their manifesto. While most others have gone through a formality, some of them made a meticulous effort. Unfortunately, these are not discussed in the public domain, media etc, widely. Mr Advani's demand for a public debate has not been conceded. Here and there, election watch groups could arrange a semblance of debate on 'intentions', the 'logic of intentions', the feasibility and concrete plans of the same.

At the national level, BJP, Congress, CPI, CPM, and NCP have released their manifestos. More than 50% of the recognized state parties and significant registered parties have released their manifestos. Most of these regional/state parties focused mostly on the regional aspects, unlike the national parties. It is pertinent to note that no alliance/coalition at the national level or at the state level has released any manifesto/common minimum program so far. However, strengthening security and fighting terrorism remained a concern for all. BJP has provided detailed steps and Congress has articulated their emphatic intent.

If size of the manifesto is some indication of the depth of thinking, BJP has devoted 14000 words for the plan, Congress – 6000 words, CPI – 3000 words, CPM – 4500 words and NCP – 1200 words.

Two registered parties from Hyderabad - Prajaraajyam (led by Chiranjeevi) and Lok Satta (led by Dr Jayaprakash Narayana) – have released manifestos for the Assembly elections in AP, although registered recently. Congress and Telugu Desam have also released manifestos for the same.

In this context, the attempt here is to see the manifestos of the national parties through livelihoods lenses. While the tones of the manifestos varied from party to party, there appears to be a broad consensus amongst all these seemingly diverse political parties, as far livelihoods of the people/poor is concerned. This is despite their ideological leanings and underpinnings. Manifestos broadly included the following:

⇒ National Identity Cards (Multi-utility)[only BJP]

⇒ Food Security

- \* Right to Food, Food Security Act
- \* Universal (not targeted) subsidized public distribution system (PDS), decentralized and local PDS; expanded Antyodaya; National Food Security Act to provide 25 kgs rice/wheat

@Rs.3 per kg [INC]; 35 kgs @ Rs.2 per kg [BJP] through redeemable food coupons

- \* Community kitchens for homeless and migrants; mid-day meals
- \* Reduced prices on petrol, diesel

⇒ Employment and Jobs

- \* Guarantee - universal access for 100-150 days of employment/year at Rs.100 as real wage per day, for all works that enhance the quality of life; employment guarantee to urban areas
- \* 2% of GDP on employment guarantee
- \* minimum wages, equal wages; National Minimum Wage (no wage below this)
- \* skill development for jobs, employment, self-employment and collectives/cooperatives; National Skill Development Mission with Rs.30000

Crore for imparting widest spectrum of skills; learn and earn schemes

- \* Amendment to Unorganized Sector Workers' Act

- \* Support to Small entrepreneurs

and enterprises; Support cluster development

- \* Moratorium on job cuts, wage and pay cuts;
- \* Jobs from roads, highways, river linkings; all-weather roads to all villages; Tourism centres

⇒ Poverty

- \* Focussed effort to Reduce Poverty;
- \* cash transfer to families;
- \* Introducing a system of subsidies where they are needed for encouraging production, reducing cost to the producers, and protecting the livelihood of the poor
- \* Take steps to prevent families falling below poverty line.

⇒ Agriculture

- \* waiver of loans; interest relief; low interest

loans; Kisan Credit Cards to all

- \* efforts for profitable occupation;
- \* crop insurance,
- \* cash transfer to poor farmers,
- \* minimum support prices to produce (MSP) and procurement at door step; Price Support Fund; Increase commodities under MSP;
- \* free movement of commodities;
- \* increase in investments in agriculture and irrigation;
- \* Public production and marketing of seeds, inputs etc.;
- \* KVK in each block;
- \* agro-processing; value-addition in villages;
- \* organic farming; *shift in subsidy from chemical*



*fertilisers to rewarding farmers for pursuing conservation and enhancement of local crop varieties; Offer attractive support prices and incentives for traditional rain-fed crops and promote markets for them*

- \* Support Livestock, Poultry, Horticulture, Floriculture, Pisciculture, Fishing

etc.,

- \* Grazing land and ponds
- \* SEZ – market rates for the land of the farmers; no acquisition of land by government; National Land Use Authority
- \* Land to Poor (Distribution)

⇒ Water

- \* Security, Universal Drinking Water Access,
- \* Clean all rivers, water bodies

⇒ Energy

- \* Security
- \* alternative sources - solar, wind, nuclear

⇒ Urban Development – basic amenities, infrastructure, shelter

- \* 50 new cities

- \* Shelter for all; low interest loans;

- \* GIS-mapping

⇒ Youth

- \* National Youth Corps for 18-23 years for participation in nation building for 2 years, and/or reviewing NCC and NSS

- \* reservation for youth (18-35 years) in PRIs

⇒ Education

- \* universal compulsory education for 10-15 years;
- \* 6-9% of GDP on education;
- \* scholarship/loan to all; Free education to SCs/STs and scholarships;
- \* 2 model schools each in all blocks [Congress];
- \* school curricula under a national body; National Education Commission
- \* Vocational Education – wide-spectrum

⇒ IT

- \* broadband network in all villages; affordable computers; internet-enabled education;
- \* bank account to every citizen [BJP];
- \* IT everywhere; open standard and source software [BJP]
- \* 1.2 crore jobs [BJP]

⇒ ICDS – Universalization

⇒ Population – stabilization

⇒ Women

- \* universal self-help groups (at least



half of the women in the country) and their higher order organizations, to meet their credit and other livelihoods needs;

- \* smart cards;
- \* pensions to widows;
- \* 33% reservation in Lok Sabha and Assemblies; 33% jobs for women

⇒ Mile-stone based monetary incentives to studying girls

⇒ Social Justice

- \* special social security schemes for occupational groups;
- \* Comprehensive Social Security for all at special risk
- \* *Extremely Backward Communities Development Bank [BJP];*
- \* Reservations for Economically Backward
- \* Withdrawal of Coastal Management Zones Notification

⇒ Tribal Development [BJP]

- \* Vana Bandhu Kalyan Yojana/Tribal Development Authority – comprehensive;
- \* Minor Forest Produce
- \* Forest Conservation, Bio-diversity,

⇒ Senior Citizens

- \* from 60 [BJP]
- \* universal pensions, as per the cost of living;
- \* separate department

⇒ Disabled

- \* pensions;
- \* barrier free access;
- \* institute of vocational training for the disabled in each district

⇒ Minority Communities – special package for 90 minority concentration districts





⇒ Low tax and interests

- \* low interest regimes (3-4% per annum)
- \* Omnibus Goods and Service Tax, in lieu of various tax structures
- \* Low Tax Regime (no tax up to Rs.3 lakh income per year); no tax to pensioners/senior citizens; no tax on savings; Fringe Benefit Tax to go [only BJP talked about this]

⇒ Retrieve Black Money [except Congress]

⇒ Retail Trade – unincorporated retail, loans at 4% [BJP]

⇒ Labour – workers' bank; trade unions (secret ballot)

⇒ Cooperatives – cooperative friendly laws

⇒ Consumers – Consumer rights and informative labeling

⇒ Climate Change

- \* National Action Plan for Climate Change [Congress],
- \* Billion Trees every year; Arresting melting of Glaciers [BJP]

⇒ Health Security

- \* access to health care and insurance for all;
- \* district hospitals upgraded as all facility hospitals;
- \* 3-5% of GDP;
- \* no privatization [CPI/CPM];
- \* Primary Health Centres active; affordable life saving drugs; universal 108 service
- \* mid-day meals
- \* Health, Sanitation and Hygiene for all

⇒ Panchayat Raj Institutions - PRIs - Small states

- \* smaller administrative and governance units (panchayat, block, district) and devolution of powers, budgets and responsibilities to them and their computerization
- \* Telangana; Darjeeling states [BJP]

⇒ More courts - Gram Nyayalayas

Manifestos offer possibilities. More than the articulation, these are not discussed. The voters have not become aware

of the positions of the parties on various issues. There is no healthy debate on them. Because of broader consensus on many an issue, debates, criticisms and discussions are conspicuous by their absence. There is no deep exploration, probing and assessment of the need, feasibility, viability and funding etc., for many of the elements on the manifestos. The media, by and large' dealt with them perfunctorily.

Of these many issues, some are strikingly refreshing – retrieving black money from Swiss Bank Accounts amounting to a whopping Rs.25-75 lakh crore; Cash transfer (to poor families, farmers, women etc.); only BJP endorsed Telangana (and Darjeeling) separate statehood; allocations for education, health, employment, plan expenditure in terms of % of GDP (9%, 5%, 2% and 10% of GDP respectively); organic farming; and rights, security/guarantees, for all and universalization are the key words for most elements.. This is an important development towards the empowerment of the poor.

The moot question then shifts to whether these elements see the light of the day or just remain on paper, like earlier – women reservation, Telangana statehood, decentralization etc. As ever, we need to remain optimistic and display hope. **This question comes** from the previous track record of dodging on one hand and **from the lack of a road map for realizing them in these manifestos** on the other. The leaders are telling the voters – we deliver what



we promise and promise what we deliver; trust us. If we do not deliver, give us more time. If that is the yard stick for choosing, there is no difference really from the point of view of manifestos. These contain lists of intended actions, some actions more detailed and some less detailed. Some intentions transcend the rhetoric and some could not.

In this background, the candidates matter, more than the parties, more than the coalitions.

While the opinion polls talk about 'hung' results, still the 50% of all the voters ('new half') in the country can cause miracles. Further, the untiring campaigns for voting by all, the 'new' voter turnout, if inspired, can make a huge difference to the country, the people in general and the poor in particular, and their livelihoods.

There is hope - some of these new leaders, across the party lines, can walk the talk and bring the legacy of change we are yearning for. **This can be the decisive moment of our history, like always. May be the 15<sup>th</sup> time.** ■

# Forest Rights Act 2006

Millions of people have been living in forest for the centuries in India. Many of them belong to Schedule Tribe category. They are living in and around forest area and most of the people depend on shifting cultivation, NTFP, livestock rearing and fishing. These people are living in most vulnerable conditions due to the lack of rights, sustainable livelihoods, health, education, sufficient food, housing, electricity and other facilities. Their rights were not recognised and recorded. They are forced to live in the insecure conditions.

Schedule Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers are suffering for centuries in the name of conservation of forest and wildlife. Governments are declaring some areas "Protected Forest Areas" and "Wildlife Conservation Areas" in the forest. Some Acts were formulated which curtailed the tribal people's rights. Forest dwellers are not allowed into these protected forests for their livelihoods. Governments are displacing them for various reasons such as project construction, mining, forest conservation, wildlife protection and also on the name of peace maintenance. If forest dwellers dare to enter in the forest, they get severe punishments including extortion of money, harassment, evictions and sexual molestations. The tribal people throne from their homeland forest. Most of the forest land was illegally occupied by non tribal people in the name of the tribal. The tribals are alienated from their home land and traditional livelihoods and suffering with poverty. The tribal people and pro tribal organizations have been struggling for decades demanding the restoration of the traditional rights of tribal people on the forest lands and their livelihoods security.

In this context "The Schedule Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 was formulated by Government of India on December 2006. The Act is also called "Forest Rights Act", "Tribal Rights Act", "Tribal Bill" and "The Tribal Land Act". This Act is recognising and vesting the forest rights and occupation in forest land of Scheduled Tribes and traditional forest dwellers, who have been residing in the forest for the generations. The Act recognised the rights of the Schedule Tribes and traditional forest dwellers and while ensuring livelihoods and food security it also included the forest dwellers responsibilities and authority for forest resources, conservation of biodiversity and maintaining of ecological balance.

The Tribal Rights Act describes itself as a law intended to correct the "Social injustice" done to the forest dwellers by the failure to recognise their rights on forest. The Act grants different types of rights to. These rights broadly can be divided into four categories. 1. Title rights: - Ownership on land which they are cultivating (maximum of 4 hectares to the family). 2. Usage rights: - To use and having ownership on forest produces. They have given right to sell all non timber forest products. 3. Relief and development rights: - To protect tribal rights in the case of illegal and forced displacement and also ensuring to provide sufficient rehabilitation and secure livelihoods before their displacement. 4. Forest Management Rights: - The tribal people get authorised right to protect forest and conservation of wildlife. They already have been

doing this voluntarily for the generations. The Act gives legal rights to them regarding forest protection and wildlife conservation.

The Act is the first legislation to clearly mention about nature and extent of forest rights. The rights in the Tribal Rights Act are confined for the people those who depend predominantly on forest and forest land for a livelihood and they must belong to Scheduled Tribes and also they have been residing in the forest for at least 75 years. Regarding the process of recognition of rights, initially the Gram Sabha pass a resolution recommending the tribal people rights on land under their cultivation family wise. This resolution will be screened and approved at mandal level and also at District level. The screening committee will be constituted with three Government officials and three local body members.

The Act concerns particularly on displacement of tribal people at the time of conservation of wildlife. As per the Act, before displacement of tribal people, Government have to prove that the relocation is scientifically necessary and there are no other alternatives except relocating them from their home place. The second step is that the local body must consent to the resettlement. Finally, resettlement must provide sufficient compensation including secure livelihood.

The Tribal Rights Act has some drawbacks. The Act excluded non tribal people those who are residing in the forest. There is no clear distinction between those who are in the forest for survival and livelihood and those who are in the forest for commercial purpose and profit making. The Act includes "Other Traditional Forest Dwellers" but there is no clear definition. It fails to exclude the vested interested people. The Act says that those who are to access the tribal rights, they have to prove that they have been residing in the forest for 75 years. It means that they have to produce residence certificate from the date of 1930. In that colonial period there was no records regarding residence. The Act is merely regularising forest which is already cultivating by tribal people. That too these lands are only heritable but not saleable or transferable. The community should regulate and manage the common resources and it should have right to punish the persons who violate the community decisions on common resource conservation. In the Act there is no legal means for forest conservation. On common resources if problems arise between the two Gram Sabhas, there is no clear procedures to solve the problems.

Despite the short comings, the Forest Act 2006 is very important and significant for tribal and other traditional forest dwellers that depend on forest and its resources. It is the first Act, which recognized and gave the rights to the tribal communities on their cultivating forest land and also mentioned about forest protection and wildlife conservation. Formulation of the Forest Dwellers Act 2006 is the beginning of the process of restoring traditional rights of people over resources and also it is a victory for the tribal people's united struggle to protect their rights. We hope this Act will be implemented in true spirit and provide justice to the Schedule Tribes and other traditional forest dwelling people. ■

# Volunteer for Impact

Many people from different walks of life want to volunteer for the cause of development. But people coming from fields other than development don't know how best to volunteer in many cases. They may have the passion, they may have the energy, time and resources to work as volunteers, but they may not know the best ways in which they can volunteer and work towards impact. Many a time, the agencies for which the volunteers work, also do not know how to use the services of volunteers and thus contribute to impact. Here are some ways that a person can choose to volunteer and show development impact.

For any person who wants to volunteer, it is important to understand what development is. In short, we can say development is 'reducing the impact of poverty in its worst forms'. A poor family is unable to participate in markets for goods/services and labour, and in social and political institutions (State, neighbourhood, CBOs and family). Further, these people are unable to cope up with even normal risks of life, and to demand their rights and entitlements. Several of the poor feel that they are not emotionally supported by family/society. These disabilities are not absolute and many times poor people don't even know that these disabilities exist within them – they might consider several of these disabilities as culture and as a way of life. **A person who wants to volunteer can put effort to make the poor aware of the degrees of disabilities, and thus motivate them not to take these disabilities for granted.** Since this requires constant one-on-one interaction, such inspiration does not happen in the course of regular development projects. Hence, the chance for volunteers to fill-up the gap and contribute.

As we know, poverty is multi-dimensional. There are multiple causes to poverty and hence a poor family needs multiple supports to come out of poverty. Poverty is a vicious cycle, and can suck in even the not so poor people into its fold if proper support is not provided to the not-so-poor. Hence the not so poor require support from sliding back into poverty. Though this phenomenon is well known at a larger level, the specific ways in which the household or a community faces the vicious circle and the multiple causes for the poverty that afflicts a community could require articulation by the community itself. This can pave way for the community articulating its needs and plan for the poverty reduction. Since larger projects are not highly locale specific, there is a need to bring out the local specific causes of poverty and manner in which these interact with each other. **A volunteer can support the poor to articulate these causes and supports required for them to come out of poverty.**

Lives of people are a play of four arrows (Income, Expenditure, Employment and Risk) and six capitals (Natural, Physical, Social Human, Financial and Spiritual) within four contexts (Ecological-Environmental, Techno-Economic, Distribution pattern, Investment-Expenditure pattern). These arrows, capital and contexts interact with each other in myriad ways. **Volunteers can bring out these interactions in the case of specific families and, thus inform other the actions/ policies that can be initiated to support the livelihoods of poor.**

Knowledge plays a key role in any development activity or in improving the livelihoods of poor. But all knowledge related

to any livelihood is not at one place. Some knowledge is with the people who are practising that livelihood (People's Knowledge), some knowledge is with us who are working with the people for enhancing their livelihoods (OK-Our knowledge) and some knowledge is with others who do research in that particular livelihood's area (OK-Other's Knowledge) and there is of course some knowledge which is unknown to any. **A volunteer can increase interaction between People's Knowledge (PK) and his/ her Knowledge (OK) and Others Knowledge (OK) and can bring all this knowledge to one place as far as possible and can offer that knowledge back to the people who are practising that particular livelihood which can help them in enhancing their livelihood.**

With the huge increase in the number of Self Help Groups and micro finance organizations, lots of money is flowing to the community collectives. So there is lots of money available with the collectives but what they lack is the ideas in which they can put that money. Hence ideas that can help the people in improving their livelihoods can bring lot of change in the lives of people. But those ideas should be based on appreciation of the current reality. If the ideas are not based on the reality of the people they may not own it and they may not willing to act upon those ideas as they feel they are irrelevant to them. Hence **a volunteer has to understand the reality of the people and can volunteer to generate ideas.**

Many Not for profit organizations which are working with people involve in training the people on various issues to improve their knowledge base and also to improve their skills that are required to enhance their livelihoods. But in any of the trainings the highest cost item is the cost of resource persons. The outside resource persons charge high fees for their service as customizing the content according to the needs of the trainees is the most difficult task. **Volunteers can try to understand new subjects, articulate them well and can volunteer as a resource person in the training programs. Otherwise a volunteer can design the content of a training program and the pedagogy of that program in an innovative way by using his/her creative abilities.**

The present role of the volunteer by being on the board of the non-profit is any way useful. A volunteer can also be a resource person in the management of a community based organization. He/ she can identify a critical area for action and also identify efficient/ effective method of implementation. Volunteers can clarify goals and clarify steps in operations to the organization for which they are working. They can help in reflection of organization and passing on the ability from top to bottom. ■



## Mint Minting In!



Shining Livelihoods

## Soda Fizzling Out!



Declining Livelihoods

## ‘SAKTI’ Siva Ramakrishna

A school teacher turned cultural anthropologist turned social activist Dr Siva Ramakrishna has made a significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of the marginalized people in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Dr Siva Ramakrishna is leading an organization called SAKTI (Society for Action and Knowledge for Tribal Initiative) which is fighting for the tribal land rights in East and West Godavari districts of AP.



Siva Ramakrishna got his doctorate degree in 1982 on “Tribal Knowledge Systems”, from Osmania University. Before he started working with tribal communities, he worked as a school teacher for some time. He began his work with the tribal communities of East Godavari district while researching on his doctoral thesis. In the process of documenting and interpreting the tribal cultures through their music, dance and folklore, he was exposed to the plight of the tribal people and the exploitation of their resources by government officials, bureaucrats and big businesses. This exposure motivated him to start SAKTI in the year 1985. Soon Siva Ramakrishna started mobilizing the tribal communities to fight for their rights with the help of his colleagues. Later he married Sarada Devi who decided to join him in the work of SAKTI.

SAKTI has since been working to protect the forests and the tribal communities depending on the forests in the state of AP. Based at Hyderabad, SAKTI operates in the East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh and in the area of Nallamala forest near Srisailem. Both areas have rich forest lands and are home to several tribal communities like the Koyas, the Kondareddies, the Valmikis and the Chenchus.

One of the first issues addressed by SAKTI was tribal land rights. A notion alien to the tribals, property rights, was introduced to them by the British. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the British administration assigned land to individual tribals. But over time, land was stolen from the tribals by conniving non-tribals and corrupt government officials. One of the biggest obstacles the tribals face when fighting for their rights is their lack of understanding of the judicial system and the administrative machinery. To overcome this barrier, SAKTI volunteers not only taught the tribals to read and interpret land records but also trained them to handle legal issues themselves. Out of 26 people trained from a dozen villages, 15 learned skills to read village land maps, adangal, field measurement book, and Resurvey Register and can locate the targeted plot in the field.

SAKTI in collaboration with ITDA had taken up cashew plantations in the ‘unreserved’ lands in the year 1985. Later the Revenue department issued titles to the people cultivating the unreserved lands. SAKTI is promoting renewable energy technologies in the tribal areas and now planning to implement a micro-hydel power generation project to provide electricity to the remote tribal villages.

Siva Ramakrishna is actively involved in public litigation cases against development projects that threaten the

environment and the survival of the tribal people. Through SAKTI he actually forced the government to implement the instructions of Chief Secretary to cancel the mining leases to non-tribals in scheduled areas. Siva Ramakrishna also has been involved in various developmental activities in tribal as well as non-tribal areas. He provided training to the tribals in income generation activities like making cane and bamboo furniture.

In the non-tribal arena, Siva Ramakrishna is assisting the weavers community in Amalapuram area in adopting their skills to suit the new market requirements and he is also actively seeking to market the woven products after a devastating cyclone that struck AP coast in 1996. All of these activities he does together with SAKTI either directly or indirectly.

Siva Ramakrishna is well-known and much respected in administrative and activist circles. He is intelligent and hard working. Under his dynamic leadership SAKTI won a public litigation case against the Godavari Plywood factory, an industry that was threatening the livelihood of the tribal people by cutting mango and jackfruit trees in the forests. And recently, SAKTI also won a case against the construction of Bhupatipalem reservoir in the East Godavari district. The reservoir project, if implemented, would submerge 6 tribal villages and thousands of acres of fertile forest land that provides livelihood for thousands of tribal population.

Dr. Siva Ramakrishna was a member of the Regional committee of CAPART, Hyderabad, (Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India) from 1999 to 2002. He is also a member of Steering Committee of the UNDP Project on “People’s Empowerment through Panchayat Raj in Schedule V Areas and Studies on Laws affecting the Poor” convened by NIRD (National Institute of Rural Development). He is also a Member of State Board of Wildlife. Together with Biksham Gujja, S. Ramakrishna and Vinod Goud, he edited a book that attracted the attention of both common man and intellectuals/activities, titled “Perspectives on Polavaram – A Major Irrigation Project of Godavari”. This book is giving contribution to the controversial debate about Polavaram mega irrigation project that is located in Godavari delta, which is a part of the major irrigation expansion program of the Government of AP, which includes 26 projects with an outlay of Rs. 46,000 crores (\$10 billion).

Dr. Siva Ramakrishna along with SAKTI has been contributing significantly for the betterment of the marginalized people by educating and empowering them on various issues and making them fight for their rights and entitlements. SAKTI’s way of protecting the rights and entitlements of indigenous people and empowering them can serve as a model to many organizations and individuals working for the cause of tribal communities and their development. ■

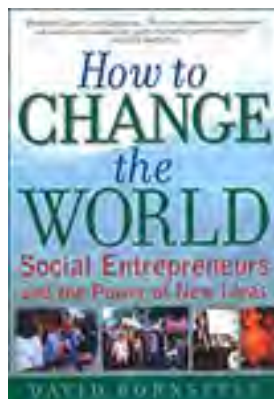
# Books

## Book Summary

Name: **How to Change the World**

Publisher: **Oxford University Press**

Author: **David Bornstein**



This book documents the true and inspiring stories of the Ashoka fellows – bright, energetic, and creative individuals who are leaders in a growing citizen (non-profit) sector. These innovators for the public are instrumental in introducing change in their countries through practical solutions. Most of them started out with tiny budgets, armed only with an idea and strength of will. These social entrepreneurs are those who build their programs from nothing, drawing strength and energy from the sheer belief that change can happen. They challenge governments to pass and enforce new laws, generate funding, and support their solutions.

This book concentrates on stories of persons like: Fabio Rosa, Bill Drayton, Jerro Billimoria, Erzsebet Szekeres, Vera Cordeiro, J. B. Schramm, Veronica Khosa, Javed Abidi, and James Grant. These individuals are models of human capability. They worked tirelessly in the service of others.

After reviewing the case studies of successful social entrepreneurs, the author brings out the follows as common characteristics shared these people:

1. Social entrepreneurs display willingness to self-correct. They are not attached to one right way of doing things. They are willing to modify plans, adjust details, and work around

barriers. They are willing to admit mistakes. Most stumble around at first and then use the mistake to improve their projects.

2. Social entrepreneurs have a willingness to share the credit.

3. Social entrepreneurs are willing to break free of established structures.

4. Social entrepreneurs cross disciplinary boundaries, pulling together people from diverse backgrounds who can work together to create a solution.

5. Social entrepreneurs display a willingness to work quietly in the background. They don't make front-page headlines. James Grant was such a moving force in global immunization programs for children, saving millions of lives, but his name is unfamiliar to the man on the street.

Social entrepreneurs have strong ethical impetus. Money is only a tool they use to drive their programs and get projects moving forward. Everything else, from the books they read to the ideas they support, is filtered through the prism of their thinking.

The happiness of social entrepreneurs does not lie in making a lot of money but in building a better world. They prefer to be a part of the solution than part of the problem. Like most people with great passion, they are practically married to their work.

Bornstein explains that by "sharpening the role of government, shifting practices and attitudes in business and opening up waves of opportunity for people to apply their talents in new, positive ways, the emerging citizen sector is reorganizing the way the work of society gets done." He shows readers how inspired individuals can use determination and innovation to make a difference.

*How to Change the World* reveals fascinating stories about remarkably creative people who have been able to challenge the status quo and facilitate positive change for others. Any organization can use these stories that address many of the most difficult issues facing people today to gain inspiration to solve problems where others have failed. ■

## New Books

Name: **Imagining India-The Idea of a Renowned Nation**

Author: **Nandan Nilekani**

Publisher: **The Penguin Press**



Name: **Governing Sustainability**

Editors: **W.Neil Adger, Andrew Jordan**

Publisher: **Cambridge University Press**





# Training Community in Marketing

Marketing consists of so many different activities-sales, advertising, customer service, the product/ service itself, pricing and discounts, reputation, strategies, and much, much more. In marketing, we must plan and coordinate a great many activities in order to reach customers and compel them to purchase, use, and repurchase our product. Thus marketing is always a tedious task which involves lots issues.

This is particularly true when we are working with poor people to market their products or services. Generally poor people with entrepreneurial skills start their own enterprises to provide certain goods and services but they are unable to market their produces in a remunerative market due to small scale of operations. Majority of small producers depend on middlemen to market their produce due to which they are not getting their fair share of consumer rupee. Many individuals/ non profit organizations are working with these poor producers to help them in marketing issues. Here are some books that can help these individuals/ organization to improve their knowledge in marketing issues of poor producers.

**MOVE (Market Oriented Value Enhancement):** MOVE is a trainer's manual to promote access to market for the landless and women published by 'Books for Change' publications. This manual is a practical guide for community organizers to replicate the process of Market Oriented Value Enhancement process, which is discussed in detail in the book, which begins with motivation, progresses to general business concepts, market research, and finally the formulation of a business. The MOVE process is a single idea-i.e., the customer centric approach to business. By focusing the demand of the market and the needs and wants of the customers, participants can enter the marketplace as confident and independent entrepreneurs. Most importantly, it provides a real alternative for improving the livelihoods of the poor

MOVE has opened up possibilities for the illiterate to understand the market. Complex business concepts are communicated through methods that have been tailored for an illiterate audience. Every step of MOVE process is driven by the knowledge of the participants and every step forward is based on the decisions the participants have made. Therefore, the modules are designed for participants to share what they know, expand their knowledge base, and move forward based on what they have learned about the market and potential customers.

**Rapid Market Appraisal (A Manual for Entrepreneurs):** This manual by International Labour Organization (ILO) is for people who own and operate micro and small businesses. The business probably has no more than ten employees and may have no employees. Large companies spend considerable time conducting market research. Often they employ firms to conduct market appraisals to develop and market new products. Micro and small businesses may not even consider conducting market research, and their businesses suffer as a result. This manual will help the small business owners conduct market research on their own. Ideally, they will use this manual while undergoing three days of training in *Rapid Market Appraisal* (RMA) with about 10 to 15 other entrepreneurs. But the manual is designed so that they can follow the course without the class if they have no opportunity to join an RMA course.

*Rapid Market Appraisal* is a way for micro and small-scale entrepreneurs (MSEs) to collect market information to identify and develop new products or market products to new customers. Customers are the main source of information; they help the small entrepreneurs determine the market demand for products. The market demand is how many people are willing to buy your product and at what price. Many MSEs do not try to study their market at all. They continue making the same products as their neighbours, and everyone is competing for a smaller and smaller portion of the market. Some MSEs do not even talk to their customers, but only sell their products through middlemen. Customers can give valuable ideas to make better products or develop new products. Apart from entrepreneurs manual on Rapid Market Appraisal, ILO also published a manual for trainers on Rapid Market Appraisal. It is aimed at those agencies which are interested in promoting self-sustaining Business Development Services (BDS) with high impact.

**Training Community in Collective Marketing:** This module developed by Akshara Network for Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), AP details the issues and aspects to be considered during planning and implementation phases of any collective marketing enterprise. Depicted pictorially this module helps bring the issues into active discussion during community training.

The above books are very useful for any organization/ individual involved in promoting enterprises of the poor or who are in the job of marketing the products of the poor. These books explain the critical concepts of marketing in a simple manner and help the trainers teach even the illiterate small entrepreneurs easily and effectively. These books really help the poor producers in marketing their products and in improving their livelihoods. ■

Source: First Annual symposium on "Financing Livelihoods of Poor": Grants, Equity, Debt or Venture funds is being conducted by ALCI, Hyderabad on April 20 and 21, 2009. For further details visit ALCI website: [www.alcindia.org](http://www.alcindia.org)

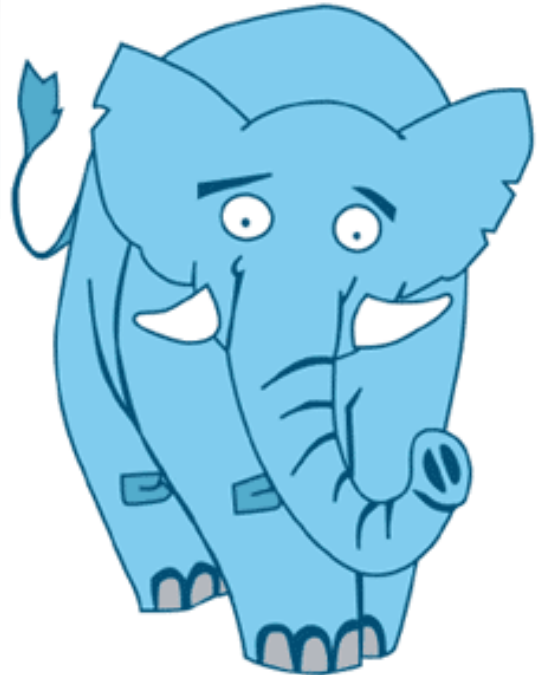
## A Sparrow and An Elephant

A good collective plan of action and sticking to the plan could help even the small and weak people to fight against a big and strong enemy. This small story of a sparrow and elephant rightly points out that, when a person is in distress, the actions of persons around them matter and not those of the person in distress.

Once upon a time there lived a sparrow with her husband on a tree. She had built a nice nest and laid her eggs in the nest. One morning, a wild elephant with spring fever, feeling restive, came to the tree in search of shade and in a rage broke the branch of the tree on which the nest was residing. Unluckily all the sparrow eggs were lost though both parents were saved. The she-sparrow was deep in lament. Seeing her lament, the woodpecker bird, a friend of hers offered her consolation that she would think of a way of killing the elephant. Then she went to her friend the gnat, who in turn went to the counsellor frog for advice. The frog then devised a scheme for killing the elephant. He asked the gnat to buzz in the ears of the elephant, so

that the elephant would be thrilled to listen to the music of the gnat and close its eyes. Then she asked the woodpecker to pluck his eyes. She herself would be on the edge of a pit and would croak misleading the elephant to think that it is a pond.

The next day at noon the three carried out the plan and the elephant was killed when he fell flat into a pit after being blinded by the woodpecker when he closed his eyes in response to the gnat.



So the revenge was taken with collective wit of all three animals.

Despite the suffers being very small, a good collective plan of action and sticking to the plan could help them fight a big and powerful opponent. The injustice done to the sparrow could not be avenged but for a series of consultation by the smaller beings. When a person in trouble, it is another person (like the woodpecker in the story) who needs to take lead, organise consultations and facilitate the emergence and execution of a plan.

When a person is in distress, the actions of persons around them matter and not those of the person in distress. We routinely see that the some other persons take up the cause of the persons in distress and not those in distress themselves. Probably, there are limits to asking the person suffering injustice to lead the fight! ■

# Conversion Factors for various Agri-Commodities

Commodity		Conversion Factor (in weight)
Rice (Cleaned) Production		2/3 of Paddy Production
Cotton	Cotton Lint Production	1/3 of Kapas Production
	Cotton Seed Production	2/3 of Kapas Production, 2 Times of Cotton Lint Production
Jute	100 Yards of Hessian	54 lbs. of Raw Jute
	4148 Yards of Hessian	1 Ton of Raw Jute, 5.55 Bales of Raw Jute (of 180 Kgs. Each)
	1 Ton of Sacking	1.11 Tons of Raw Jute, 6.17 Bales of Raw Jute (of 180 Kgs. Each)
	1 Ton of Hessian	1.05 Tons of Raw Jute
	Sacking etc.	5.85 Bales of Raw Jute (of 180 Kgs. Each)
Groundnut	Kernel to Nuts in Shell	70 Percent
	Oil to Nuts in Shell	28 Percent
	Oil to Kernels Crushed	40 Percent
	Cake to Kernels Crushed	60 Percent
Sesamum	Oil to Seeds Crushed	40 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	60 Percent
Rapeseed and Mustard	Oil to Seeds Crushed	33 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	67 Percent
Linseed	Oil to seeds Crushed	33 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	67 Percent
Castorseed	Oil to Seeds Crushed	37 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	63 Percent
Cotton Seed	Oil to Seeds Crushed	14 to 18 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	82 to 86 Percent
Coconut	Copra to Nuts	One Ton of Copra = 6773 Nuts
	Oil to Copra Crushed	62 Percent
	Cake to Copra Crushed	38 Percent
Nigerseed	Oil to Seeds Crushed	28 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	72 Percent
Kardi Seed	Oil to Seeds Crushed	40 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	60 Percent
Mahua Seed	Oil to Seeds Crushed	36 Percent
	Cake to Seeds Crushed	64 Percent
Neem Seed	Oil to Kernels Crushed	45 to 50 Percent
	Cake to Kernels Crushed	50 to 55 Percent
Soyabean Seed	Oil to Soyabean Seed Crushed	18 Percent
	Meal to Soyabean Seed Crushed	73 Percent
	Hull from Soyabean Seed Crushed	8 Percent
	Wastage from Soyabean Seed Crushed	1 Percent
Sugar	Gur from Cane Crushed	11.20 Percent to 11.50 Percent
	Crystal Sugar from Gur Refined (Gur Refineries)	62.5 Percent
	Crystal Sugar from Cane Crushed (Cane Factories)	10.20 Percent
	Khandasari Sugar (Sulpher and Non-sulpher) from standard Gur Refined	46 Percent
	Molasses from Cane Crushed	4.0 Percent to 4.5 Percent
	Cane - Trash* from Cane Harvested	8.0 Percent to 12.0 Percent
Lac	Seed Lac	66.0 Percent of Stick Lac
	Shell Lac	57.4 Percent of Stick, or 87.0 Percent of Seed Lac
Cashewnut	Cashew Kernel	25 Percent of Cashewnuts

\* This consists of leaves and portion of the top of stalk which are removed from the cane stalk, while harvesting and before sending the cane for milling



## Best Farming Practices Help Rajanayak!

Deshavat Rajanayak was a resident of Dushmanpet village, Ipuru mandal of Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. Agriculture was his only livelihood. He inherited four acres of dry land from his forefathers.

Rajanayak used to cultivate castor and red gram crops. As he was not having any irrigation facility, he had to depend on rains to irrigate his fields. But the rain fall is not consistent in this area. If there were good rains in a particular year, he used to get good income otherwise he had no income.

Rajanayak had taken loans for investing in agriculture at high interest rates and but was unable to pay the loans for some consecutive years. Apart from that, as he didn't get any returns from the land he made further loans to feed his family. Due to this his debt has spiraled. His condition became dreadful.

But still he didn't think of leaving agriculture. Agriculture is his passion. So he thought of improving his condition. He took a loan again from a relative and dug a bore well in his field. Now he got water to his field from the bore well.

Having good water facility, Rajanayak thought of cultivating any other crop. He saw some farmers in the neighbouring

villages cultivating chillies at that time and therefore he took to chilli cultivation himself. He learnt all the best practices of cultivating chillies and followed them diligently. He got good income from chilli crop and was able to come out of the debt trap. Apart from paying off his debts he was also able to keep some money aside as savings in a short period of time.

With the savings Rajanayak bought some more land. His income has thus increased slowly. At that time, he also constructed a pucca house with the support from a government scheme.

Around this time his in-laws gave a cow to Rajanayak. As he has land he had no problem for grass and for feeding the cow. His wife started rearing the cow carefully and the family got some additional income from the cow's milk. Slowly they bought some more cows.

Rajanayak increased his livestock along with the agriculture. He performed his first son's marriage. He invested some money for his second son's education. In this way his family got prosperous in time. Rajanayak changed his destiny by working hard with perseverance and meticulous planning.

## Daniel's ill-calculated 'Real' Risk!

Few years back Daniel and his family lived in Nalgonda district, Rajapet village of Andhra Pradesh. Daniel has 3 daughters and 2 sons. He had 2 acres of agriculture land. Besides doing agriculture in his own land he used to work as a labourer in others fields to earn additional income. He also learnt stove repairing work on which he used to get some more income. He was earning sufficient money for his family to lead a happy life. He made his elder daughter's marriage as best as he can.

As the family was leading a happy life with the income they got from three sources, a friend of Daniel came from Hyderabad to visit him. His friend was doing real estate business. He used to buy and sell lands in and around Hyderabad and was earning a good income. By seeing his friend's lavish lifestyle Daniel also thought of doing real estate business. He dreamt of buying lands in Hyderabad, building houses, giving them for rent and earning more and more money. He thought that if he starts doing real estate business, one day he will become a millionaire.

Without second thought, Daniel sold his 2 acres of fertile land for investing in the real estate business. He came to Hyderabad with his friend and bought some land in Nandamurinagar, Shamirpet mandal, Rangareddy district. After some days he constructed a hut in the purchased land and he shifted his family from Rajapet to Shamirpet.

However, he purchased land but he did not find any money to construct houses.

After few years, as he was searching for money to construct house, suddenly government issued notices to that area dwellers to vacate the lands claiming that they are the government lands. This shocked Daniel. He didn't know that those lands belong to government. He bought it from a person who is doing real estate business. The residents in that area ignored the governments notice. But one day the government officials came to their area and demolished all the huts and other constructions. Daniel also lost his house and land.

Daniel lost his secure livelihood at village and also he lost his land of dreams. Daniel's family is in very bad condition. Benjamin, his friend seeing the plight of Daniel's family, gave one of his huts to live. Now Daniel's family is living in that house. He started gas stove repairing work in the city which is familiar to him, but it is not giving him enough remuneration. Previously he used to have three livelihoods which gave him good income. But now it became very difficult for his family to live in the city with that little income. So his wife also started working in near by houses as servant maid. The condition of the family now is in a bad shape compared to their previous life. Daniel became the victim of his own haste. ■

## 'Yoga'kshemam

Happy Ugadi – Sree Virodhi Nama Samvatsara New Year!

India is in the thick of election process. It appears that there is no political party/entity/alliance that can get absolute majority on its own. Regional parties are asserting. Post-poll alliances and patches are in the offing! Most parties have released their manifestos and announced their candidates. Only BJP talked about new states – Telangana and Darjeeling. All opinion polls talk hung Lok Sabha. Campaigns asking people to vote have gained momentum. We hear lot of cash is being seized. AP Assembly Elections are no different, with multi-cornered contests, heading for a hung Assembly!

Satyam's bids are in process. We may see its new owner on 13 April 2009. Meanwhile, CBI arrests three more officers of Satyam for helping Rajus.

The month that was spent broadly on – sustainable and/or community-managed elder care; understanding electioneering; analyzing election manifestos of various parties; and being in the flows of the universe.

My next yogic practice, after I got initiated into 36-hour fasting a week, and occasional 36-hour jaagaran, is 24-hour silence a week. I am aware that it will take much longer, may be a year to reach there and remain there. Then, as you can guess, it will be a 3-hour thought silence a week.

Some life tips, gathered during the month, to make our life happier and more blissful include:

- ♦ Love for love's sake, just as you breathe to live;
- ♦ Be aware that world is in our minds, nothing is impossible and you have the power;
- ♦ Learn to see and feel the life actually as it is – beautiful, passionate, vibrant, strong;
- ♦ Be Yourself, by being free, by listening to your soul;
- ♦ Remember you are the master and uphold your ideals, if they are nearer to the truth;
- ♦ Open to learning and learn, think, say and do; and
- ♦ Appreciate and support Integrity in all its forms.

**Then, the life guarantees lasting happiness, fulfillment and joy!**

If there are rules – the rules to reward the good, honest and constructive, and the rules to punish the bad and the destructive, and if these rules are implemented efficiently, fairly and promptly, then the common person on the road/street tends to move towards being good, honest and constructive, else s/he does not 'see' the incentive. On the other hand, if the reverse happens –when the good, honest and constructive are harassed and the bad and destructive are rewarded, the common person tends to move towards being bad and destructive. We now seem to be in the latter context. Can't we reverse this? Can't we begin to reverse this? Can we begin to see fairness in the wages people get? Can we begin to see the fair returns on investments? Can

we begin to see the producers and service providers realizing fair share of the consumer rupee? Can we begin to see the growth including every interested individual despite their poverty?

The general elections, we hope, endorse the leadership that evolves and nurtures the processes to build and adhere to ethical norms and values that are based on integrity, love, inclusion, oneness, giving and sharing, freedom with equity, shared prosperity and resource sustainability, in every sphere of consequence. Simply put, based on 'life', love of life - its youth, vibrancy, diversity and whole. It ensures peace, joy and the bliss for all of us.

I am sure we will know how to identify such persons and choose them to lead us. You can't mistake them. Their eyes tell us. Their talk reveals them. Their silence shows them. Their gestures point them to us. They display the behavioral competencies for such progression. As we allow them to take leadership, we are playing our part in the life for lasting joy for all. **Let us vote right leadership.**

You need to identify opportunities and abilities to influence, mentor and nurture such leadership, in however small way it may be. It is to 'lose' yourself in the raas of the souls, into the 'whole' and into sum total of all souls!

Can we do this? **Yes, if we pursue Atma Yoga. If we play to the tunes of raas of the souls in the universe. If you flow with the natural but gentle and subtle flows of the universe.** The focus is on the play,

the flow. And the focus is on teaching the play, the flow. Obviously, this is not easy. It requires practice and discipline. This 'atma' yoga calls for seeking yoga in actions, thoughts and words, feelings and spirit, in the context of this play and flow.

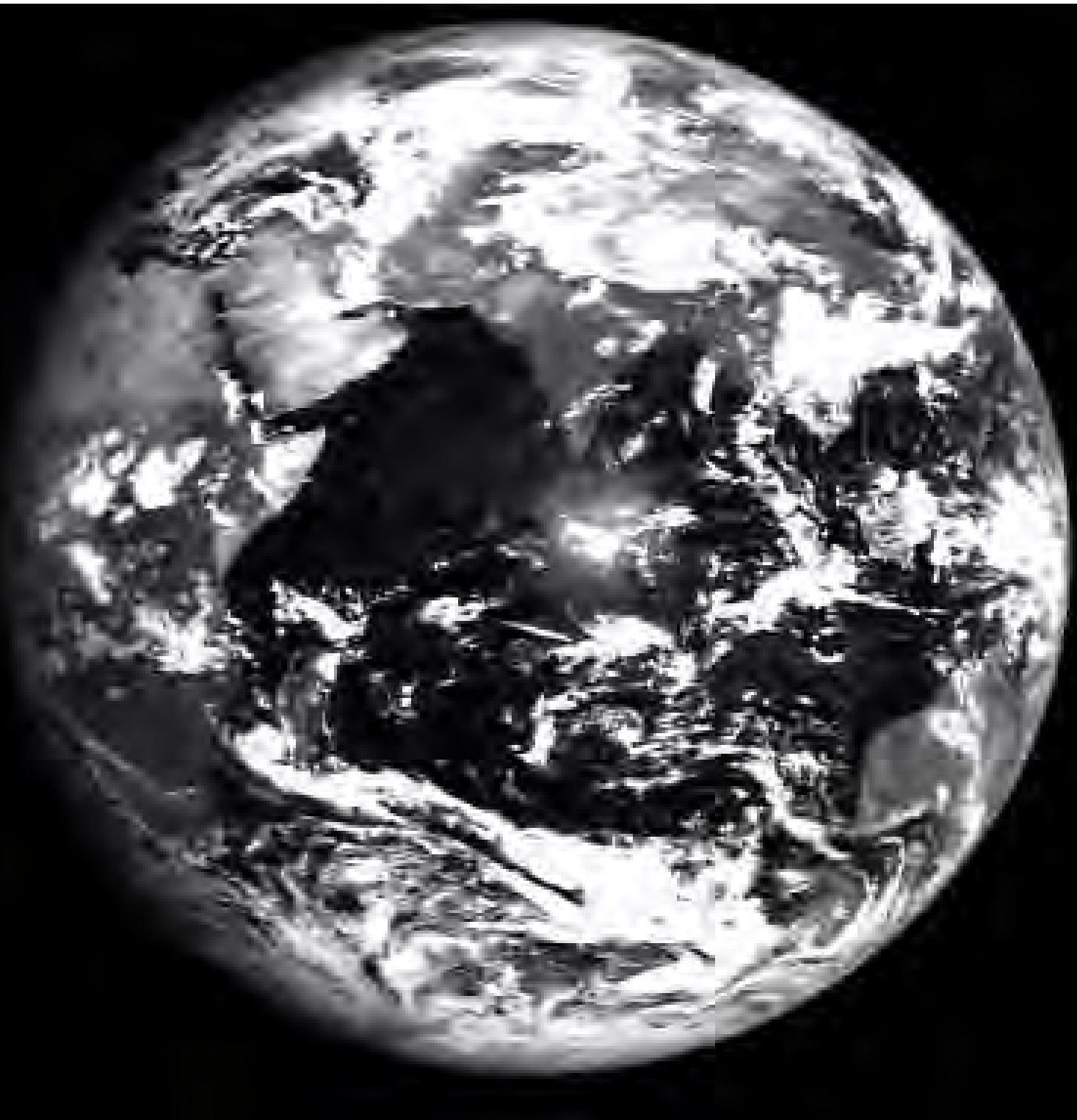
**Krishna guarantees bliss to the atma yogi. He expects the atma yogi to keep her/his mind serene, peaceful, and calm without guilt, without vindictiveness. He claims that by constant practice and cleansing of all faults through multiple stages of instruction and learning, one could control restless mind. He desires yogi transcends 'meditation' (tapas), seeking knowledge (jnanam), and execution (karma); identifies with the universe; respects and deals with all persons with the same attitude. S/he is not lost to the universe and vice-versa. Thus, s/he flows with the purpose of the universe with highest faith.**

**We need to expand in atma yoga with faith in our mentors/ co-practitioners and our new generation leadership.**

Join us in the world of yoga – becoming a part of the universal flows in all dimensions of our being – like Sivasakthi, Radhakrishna, Naranarayana, Prakritipurusha. You will not regret it. ■

**G Muralidhar**

# Ring Around The Indian Ocean



*A snapshot from Chandrayaan*