

'Yoga'kshemam

Corona, India is galloping towards 2nd Position. Curve is yet to flatten. 13M (1M) cases, 0.6M (25K) deaths. Virus is in mutation. Therapy is inching in. 'Vaccines' are in trials. Distance, Mask, Wash, Immunity Nutrition, WFA – still the mantra.

Economic crisis is deepening. Worst ever over the last 100 years. Non-farm services are deeply affected. Short value-chains become important. Life-nature-centric living-thinking-action is the philosophy, the way for us.

Amul just announced that they would enter edible oil business and launch 'Janmay' brand. Oilseeds of the milk cooperative villages would be taken for making oils and selling. Oilseeds supplement milk income to members. Milk cooperatives become milk-centric multi-commodity cooperatives. Dairying and Oilseeds mutually reinforce. Imports come down, if policy discourse is right. A reform in the making!

Apart from PVNR's, Verghese Kurien's Centenary Year starts on 26 November. While PVNR closely linked to my alma maters – Sarvaal Gurukulam, Residential Junior College Nagarjuna Sagar, NIT Warangal, VK is linked to many places where I worked; IRMA, NDDB, NTGCF. The learning from these remains the 'foundation' of our work now.

They are Bharat Ratnas. Viswa Ratnas. For Nurturing Learning. Policy Reform, Collectivization, and Social Agenda on Scale.

Mathew Cherian retires from HelpAge. Jagadeesh is retiring from Foundation for Ecological Services.

Let us listen to who made and are making a difference on scale. NaraNaaraayan Sevaks. Servants of Life. Masters. Lifeworkers, Development Leaders. Social Entrepreneurs. Mentors. Angel Investors. Let us relearn from them. Their Journeys. Their Methods, Tools, Practices, Processes. Their Whats, Hows and Whys. Leesa is putting up a mechanism for this. Heart-to-Heart. **Heart-to-Heart with Masters.**

Let us get ready. We listen live to some of them in the coming 2 years. Every Saturday/alternative Saturday. 1900-2030 hrs. Then we have them in the videos. Then we have them in the print. Then we meet them in forums.

We are 7.8 Billion. We are a long way away for stabilizing our numbers on this planet. More than 1% growth rate. We still spend less than a dollar a day on healthcare. 60 cents on Education. 25 cents on Defence. 50% of us access internet and 'electronic'. We are losing forests, lands.

10% of us are undernourished; 20% of us are overweight; 10% obese; 15,000 a day die hungry; 10% no access to safe drinking water.

We use only 15% energy from renewable sources. Sun is giving us 1000 times our energy needs. Water is there. Wind is there. Atoms are there.

India produces about 500,000 managers every year. 80% are mediocre. Not even 1% are considered as premier/standard

management schools. Most management schools still not transcended to offer leadership, entrepreneurship as part of the management. Further, development of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized is hardly their focus. The debate of 2-year, 1-year, part-time, online-hybrid – which is more appropriate is not resolved yet. The tendency is clearly towards a top class one-year programme, after a couple of years of work experience. We need generous generic servant development-social leaders to serve our people, their value-chains and businesses. They need to appreciate portfolio of integrated multiple disciplines. They need to appreciate emerging technologies. They need to cope with VUCA world. They need to respond to changes – climate, technology, social, cultural and economic. They need to transcend algorithmic skills and increase learning focus on higher order skills a la leadership, leadership toolkits, strategy, crises, conflicts, disruption, ICT, data analytics, dynamics, ethics, inclusion, social purpose, sustainability et al. They need to have learning touch with the schools life-long. They need to network. Also, the people who come into them are not the best. The challenge to attract the best remains unaddressed for many decades now.

Yes, all need not be academically qualified leaders. Most need to learn and become. Soon.

As we grow into leaders, it is possible that loneliness hits us. It is not mental always. It manifests as physical pain in the brain. This discomfort impacts work and increases costs. Burnout adds to this loneliness. Burnout is not exhaustion alone. Loneliness and exhaustion work on each other as in a vicious cycle. Of late, exhaustion is increased (50% talk about this). We are tired more but we continue to work. Loneliness is largely due to emotional exhaustion. Loneliness is a killer. Burnout and loneliness is across 'HR' whether overworked or not. Greater human connection is the key that leads to greater psychological wellbeing, in turn to well-doing. For this to happen – we need - caring, supportive, and forgiving relationships; compassion for workplace resilience; small groups and networks for advice and support, with mentoring and teamwork, group tasks; celebrating individual and collective successes. Our immunity increases. We live longer. We are less anxious and more happy.

All of us are leaders and we need Metaskills (meta-fishing skills) – the ability to know what knowledge, skills, tools, resources that are required (we do not have, or there is demand), find the sources to acquire them, acquire them and deploy them as needed. How do we learn metaskills? Metafishing skills? Can we devote 10,000 hours to practice metaskilling? Practice giving? Practice helping? Practice serving? Experience, feel multiple situations, possibilities. See right. Read right. Listen right. Be current. Network right. Have networks that feed. Pursue relentlessly. Do not give up easily. Metaskilling ability increases.

Government of India has announced in May 2020, the Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati (BPKP) and issued guidelines. BPKP is like a pre-cursor to the coming National Mission on Natural Farming. BPKP is towards zero-external input farming, relying on the principles of ZBNF. Preferred focus is on dry lands, rainfed areas

and tribal areas, small and marginal farm holders, and tenant farmers. Farmers are tracked and certified under PGS for buyers who need certification. BPKP's budget is modest, Rs.12,200 per ha. About 65% of this is for field cadres and capacity building. Value-chain related plans can be funded additionally.

Thus, BPKP, explorations and early efforts by the state governments to come into agro-ecology thinking, and small pilots as proofs of concept by civil society, and attempts to advocate for proof of applying the concept on scale, have given us a good starting point for coming together.

National Coalition for Natural Farming

We wished for National Coalition for Natural Farming on 28 June 2020. For learning, accelerating the practice and evolving policies around agro-ecology based multiple farming practices. Thanks a lot to Everyone, for the time, energy, support and inspiration. Now and in future. In less than two weeks, on 9 July 2020, it came into being, with an articulated purpose of building System-wide capacities for mainstreaming NF across India (and outside). Specifically, it wants to contribute – Ecosystem for NF in 5 years, 2 million Champion Farmers in 5 years and enabling 50 million small and marginal farmers and farm workers into NF in 10 years. Ambitious but needed. No alternative.

Forum for a distributed, plural and regenerative ecosystem. Public opinion and action. Champion farmers as resource persons. Institutions and partners in mobilizing and leveraging. Transformations transcending tipping point. Landless, marginal and small farm families and farm worker families. Women and men. Returned migrants. Nutrition security for the vulnerable.

The approach is to achieve exceed critical minimum and tipping point levels as quickly as possible, given the intensity of crises, and the availability of small window not more than 10-12 years. The discussion and decision of formal structures for the same will be taken in due course, if required.

Non-negotiables and Common Accepted Principles, Mandatory Minimum, Unto one's ability, Maximum Meaningful Programme based Vision derived from Ground drives the Coalition. Nationally. Locally. In the realm of NF Continuum. NF Principles. Farms to Landscape to Ecosystem and beyond. Human, Life, Soil, Planet Health. Moisture, Microbes, Matter. Planet boundaries. Future's Trusteeship. Nutrition, Livelihoods and Local Governance. Participation, Collectivization and Communitization. Saturation. Short local value-chains. Tracked Value-chains. End-to-end. Verified Source Areas. 1000 flowers with proof of concept application on scale. Customized local adaptations. Higher % of Consumer Rupee. Premiums? NF Brand(s). Partnership with Brands like AMUL.

Special focus remains on indigenous; tribal and subaltern communities; rainfed; forests; land and water; women; small and marginal; farm workers; IT professionals entering farming; returned migrants; farming entrepreneurs.

Special attention is also on discovering and evolving Science behind NF, with farmers as the scientists, with new learner risk-taking

scientists with higher inductive logic, with land to land; land to lab to land; farms as live labs.

Special drive is towards NF ecosystem. Policies. Incentives. Triggers. DBTs. No subsidies for chemicals and other anti-NF activities. No fertilizer subsidy. No electricity subsidy.

Realization includes de-addiction. Mindset changes. Behavioural. Catching the young. In homes. In schools. Work on school curriculum. Work on NF academics. In Farm colleges, Universities. NF Universities. NF Leadership Centres. Learning Centres. Resource Centres. Cultural Centres. Libraries. Literature in popular forms with least jargon. Books, Songs, Stories, case Studies, Videos, Films, Modules, Manuals, Case studies, caselets. Long Notes, short notes. Conversations. Methods. Toolkits. Writeshops. Apprentices. Peer-learning. Crosslearning. Redundancies. Diverse knowledge and learning systems and spaces.

Engaging matters. Farmers. Community leaders. Civil Society. Researchers. ICT. Governments. Engaging locally, appropriately. Local for local. Point for point. Strategic. Tactical. Meeting their needs. Using their creativity. Energies. Taking their gives and giving their takes. Telling what is possible. Reaching out to more and more. In less and less time. Resource Persons, Peers. Online, Off-line. Even in Corona times. Mentoring. Troubleshooting. Call Centres. Everyday. Planning, facilitating and tracking. Preparing for the next year, next season. Now.

Inspiring, mobilizing, and joining in the plans from the ground, in their own ways.

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its seven strands of work (engagement, operations) are:

1. Stakeholder Platforms, Forums, Movements. Social. Women SHGs, Women and Men Farmers, Consumers, Community institutions, PRIs, NGOs, Community+Support Combos, Researchers, Supporters, Governments. For Mobilization, Learning, Extension, Aggregation, Meeting the needs, Solidarity and Policy discourse.
2. Experience Base on Ground. Practices, Farms, Farm-situations, Integrated Farming, Landscapes, Geographies, Institutions, Men and women, Cadres, Practitioners, Value-chains, end-to-end. Verified Source Areas.
3. Capacity at Scale. Architecture. Mechanisms. Practitioner-Peer-Champions. Online, Offline, In situ.
4. Learning and Communication - ICT Platform(s). Tracking. Database(s). Data Analytics. Learners. Policy Groups. Donors. Producer-Consumers. Buyers-sellers. Groups.
5. Research, Innovation and Documentation. Synthesis. Impact Assessment and Dissemination. Shrinking the black box(es) of biological, life and other processes.
6. Education. NF Professionals, Facilitators, Entrepreneurs, Managers. Children. All stakeholders. Formal and non-formal. Lateral and self-learning. Learning Material of various levels.

Resource Pool of Practitioners-facilitators. Support various activities at various levels.

The key team to anchor the NCNF is Core Support Team, mostly senior volunteers committed to scale Natural Farming and committed considerable time, say 10-20% of work time – at least 10 hrs a week or 50 hrs a month or 500 hrs a year. The areas of support include: mobilizing collective commitment of coalition for scaling, enrolling key stakeholders, policy discourse at various levels, brining variety of knowledge, human, financial and other resources, planning and guidance at various levels and on various activities, governance at field, and higher levels, seeking advice from Advisers and Advisers' Groups, facilitating various teams around work/ operational strands, and taking work from volunteers, resource persons, paid part-timers and full-timers, community and support groups/organizations, and secretariat.

The Core Support Team supports in taking forward and realizing the vision and direction of the Steering Committee. A small secretariat is under development. Amit Chandra Foundation is chipping in initially.

A small (5-7 member) Steering Committee has taken charge of setting and steering vision, strategy, architecture, membership, partnerships, direction, governance and oversight. Its portfolio includes: vision, strategic direction and guidance, planning results, enrolling variety of member-stakeholders and partners, engaging with governments, donors, civil society and federal community institutions, raising resources, and taking the work from the teams, resource persons, volunteers directly or through core team leadership/secretariat.

Steering Committee works closely with Committed to NF Friends from Philanthropy, Donors, CSRs, Governments, International Organizations/Groups, Regional/National Networks, and Strategic Generic Leadership Advisers and Advisers around the key strands of Coalition's work. Core Team Leadership, Work (Strand) Teams and Secretariat service them.

Steering Committee may have inclusive-diversity-variety. More youth. Include community institutions, CSOs, Techies et al. But with passion. Size cannot be big. May have a Convener/Chair for holding it together. A rotating Chair, Convener are possibilities.

As we go along, members' forums may emerge. Practitioners, and other stakeholders to be part of the members' forums. Geographic and thematic Chapters, sub-chapters and communities of practice to emerge all across. Focus Groups emerge working on different critical issues of interest.

Initial Steering Committee, for a year, came into being unanimously – Vijay Kumar, Vijayanand, Mihi Shah, Abhijit Sen, Kavita and Jagadeesh. The Agenda before them -

Long-term:

Vision, Approach, Results, Concept, Framework Comprehensive;

Non-negotiables, Meaningful Maximum, Common

Minimum Mandate

Coalition architecture bottom-up;

Members -farmers, cadres, support individuals;

Member organizations - community organisations, support organisations, networks, etc.;

Operational work strand teams – field, geographic and thematic teams; Governance Systems;

Formalization;

Augmenting - Knowledge, Experience, Field-Models-Research Base; and

Augmenting - Pool(s) of Resource Persons, Volunteers, HR, Funds

Short-term:

Come into being, come to full life, physically, electronically; core group/team, website et al;

Teams around Operational/Work Strands and Secretariat;

Engaging with ready governments and initiating work with them;

Enrolling ready Community and Support Organizations and working with them;

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Training for CSO, Government teams, cadres and farmers;

Pilots; and

Raising knowledge, material, human and financial resources for Work strands

Let there be a more robust comprehensive but live dynamic coalition framework note in the next 100 days. A la NRLM Framework for Implementation. This will be a living document. With soul. Consciousness. For life in the margins and life getting into margins.

Let us hurry up now. Let us take NF Platform and NF Coalition forward. **No excuses now.**

The way ahead is Life-centric. Nature-centric. Living, Farming, Nutrition. 7L. Leading, Learning, Loving. Happiness is in living. Living simple. Living in Panchabhuta. Being is life. Living is life. Flowing is life. Touching lives is life. Silence, solitude, reflection, meditation take us there. Generalist KSTR - Knowledge, Skills, Tools, Resources - take us there. Lok takes us there. Core takes us there. Depth takes us there. Breadth takes us there. Bird takes us there. Worm takes us there. Integration takes us there. Leadership, generous generalist servant integrator leadership, takes us there.

Let us be N-leaders with N-portfolio. Let us build and mentor N-leaders. Let us invest in N and N takes care of us. Let us give a better N to the future and future cares us.

Join us in the world of yoga – now - sahayoga for 7L.7R, Krsna confirms he is waiting in N for us.