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Suresh Gandhi

Contact

Executive Editor
Shrishti Eco-Research Institute, B-106, Devgiri,
Opp. P. L. Deshpande Garden, Near Ganesh
Mala, Pune - 411 030. India. Phone: 91-20-
65702809 / 24321773 /Telefax: 91-20-66206539

Website: www.sericotech.com

Email: seri_news@yahoo.co.in

Point for discussion this month

Rains, havoc in the cities and droughts in rural areas

(For private circulation only)

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Dear Readers,

Rains are reaching interior areas of India. Parched lands are getting drenched in showers. The pools and ponds occupy low line areas in the cities and rural areas for the period of monsoon only. The photograph shows such rainfed water body near Songir Fort Dist. Dhule. But the local Gram Panchayat is not using water from this shallow lake. They have sought water from some other source at distance which is being pumped in hundreds of years old stepped well.

This is what always happens. We overlook easily available plentiful resources and opt for imported things. In short, we don't respect our own resources. Water engineers are working for the creation of water reserves since from ancient times. Only, the fine details of technique changes over a period of time and subsequently their impacts on surrounding. For our golden future, we need to revive the ancient system of ponds and maintain them for our next generations. Rains will be always there to recharge our ponds.

In modern India, after the independence, masterpieces are developed by engineers and scientists but the progress has paralleled wasteful drains in every sector of national life. Is there any engineer or mastermind who can give the citizens real fruits of development with environment quality? Let him be social engineers also. But we request maintain our lakes and rivers clean and pollution-free.

Thanking you,

Chief Editor

Environmentally Wise Citizens' Own Platform: Paryavaran Sansad – Green Parliament

Pune First Paryavaran Sansad – Environment Parliament - was organized on World Environment Day – 5th June 2007. It was jointly organized by Indian Environment Association (IEA) – Pune Chapter, UV Foundation – Pune, Indian Association of Aquatic Biologists (IAAB) – Pune Chapter and All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG) – Pune Center.

The resolutions of congratulations of Prof. Perry McCarty (for Water Prize 2007), Sandeep Joshi and Jagdish Kulkarni (for International Award for film on water), Dr. V. S. Ghole (ex- Chairman IEA), Dr. A. D. Patwardhan (present Chairman IEA) were passed initially.



The session started with the discussion on the traffic and noise issues of cities. Shri. Ajay Vaishampain, social activist, talked about the river pollution with reference to Mutha river pollution due to discharges from the Pune city. Prerana Agarwal and Vinaya Faktare spoke about the role of biotechnology in water pollution control. Col. (retd.) S. G. Dalvi explained the importance of rainwater harvesting in city water management and expressed the lack of attention by urban local bodies. Mr. Sharma of Environment Management Centre spoke about the toxic pollution and dioxin.

The Paryavaran Sansad session concluded at 5.30 with remarks from Dr. V. S. Ghole, Chairman. He stated that enlightened

citizens should take initiative and join hands to environment quality. Veteran Environmental Expert Er. S. K. Gajendragadkar was present and guided the members on various issues. Dr. Yashwant Sontakke participated in discussion. Chief Executive officer of Shrishti Eco-Research Mrs. Sayali Joshi was also present.



Amit Naregalkar, Prashant Dhotekar, Priya Kapole, Sudarshan Sangale, and Swamini Pandit took efforts to make first Paryavaran Sansad successful. AIILSG gave their hall for the programme.

-Priya Kapole

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Newsdigest

Building road to Everest

China is building a metal road to Mount Everest base camp will go up to a height of over 17,000 ft. This is an attempt of China to astonish the world at the time of Olympics. The total length of the road will be 108 km with whopping investment of \$ 19.7 million. Though environmentalists, glaciologists are stating such interventions dangerous for the fragile ecology of Himalayas, Chinese government is well determined to complete the project in 4 months only.

This will be a successful saga of government will, determination, strength, imagination and thrust. At the same time, we Indians are denied opportunity to organize international game festival in next decade because of Yamuna pollution only emanating from our Capital city Delhi. Our governments, water engineers, pollution control authorities can put their strength together towards the common goal of depolluting our precious rivers and not to be humiliated internationally on the issues of pollution. We

all citizens are ready to contribute to environmental causes and assist the government systems for our present and future.

Dal Lake remains polluted despite of investment of crores of rupees

It's disappointing news that there hasn't been remarkable improvement in conservation and restoration of world renowned Dal Lake despite of government's fiscal grants to the tune of Rs. 235.70 crores. This has been quoted in the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) report.

The total area of the lake has shrunk to 11.98 sq. km from 24 sq. km in 1962. The water body is wheezing in the constant inflow of excreta and garbage from nearby hotels and encroachments. Again here every legal tool and technology with whooping amounts are available for pollution control authorities and engineering, government agencies to depollute the Dal Lake. Let them be well determined to restore the lake within short period of time. In this winter, A World Lake Conference is being organized at Jaipur. It would be interesting note the observations of world's scientists about our lakes.

Generous Donor for Chernobyl Victims

Maria Sharapova, a well known tennis player has started her own charitable organization to help victims of Chernobyl disaster. She says, her mother was pregnant when the disaster occurred. Their family was compelled to leave Belarus to go to Siberia because of Chernobyl and the radiation hazard afterwards. The hazards had haunted the humanity for more than 20 years.

She has recently become goodwill ambassador for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

There is good news; the surrounding region of Chernobyl is being crowded by wildlife. The area was evacuated after the accident due to fear of high levels of radiation. Even after the two decades, due to fear of radiation, no resident is ready to return to home. Hence, now wildlife has taken over the region.

- Sandeep Joshi

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NewsAnalysis

✦ Drying of Shivalinga at Amarnath Caves

There is surprising news that the Shivalinga - snow epitome of Lord Mahadev (Hindu Diety) has been melted this year before the Shravan (Hindu month). It's a great disappointment for the Hindu pilgrims. The experts are saying that it's happening because of climate change. Last year also, this naturally formed Shivalinga in Amarnath caves was melted; but to avoid the disappointment of pilgrims artificial white Shivalinga was kept there. Thanks to Climate Change, Green House Effect and increased temperature of mother earth. All earthly processes are changing.

✦ Eco-Club of India

Got to know that Law Officer of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board Mr. Devle has taken initiative to form Eco-Club of India. Some Regional Officer and Consultant are made vice presidents of ECI. It's a good initiative by MPCB officers and consultants who work for the betterment of environment.

It's needed because there has to be harmony between the policing agency, consultants, industries and the citizens so that the government officials can interact with the masses at large and can give an account their valuable and voluminous work.

It is imperative that the regional officers are taking out some time from their routine hectic work and enjoying non-conventional work. It would be definitely helpful not only for awareness purpose but also useful to control the ever increasing pollution despite of MPCB's careful vigilance and policing.

Another initiative is needed through ECI is that the adamant polluters are to be booked for their heinous act, normally who get escaped on certain grounds. If that happens, then it will definitely add to MPCB's CV.

- Amit Naregalkar

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Announcements

1. Workshop on “Potential of Ecotechnology in Water Supply and Sanitation”

Indian Environment Association (Pune Chapter) has organized this workshop in association with Institution of Engineers – Pune Chapter, Department of Environmental Sciences (University of Pune), Jaldindi Pratishthan, Indian Water Works Association and Shrishti Eco-Research Institute.

On the path of modern globalization, changes are taking place in natural processes, consumption of resources & discharge of wastes in the city environment. These wastes from the urbanized areas are changing the vital life supporting processes downstream of the point of discharge. There is a need cost-effective solution such as emerging technologies utilizing natural processes in comparison with mechanized systems to treat the pollution.

Objectives of the workshop are -

1. To evaluate the suitably applicable & affordable technologies (SAAT) for the treatment of raw water; & wastewaters discharged from the point & non point sources.
2. To create awareness about the regional water management & technological issues & necessities of River basin Management
3. To encourage less energy intensive & cost effective technologies
4. To explore the possibilities of public participation in water supply & sanitation issues

There will be following technical sessions in the conference -

1. Overview of technologies for water & wastewater Treatment – Eco-technologies & conventional systems
2. Applications of eco -technologies for water treatment, wastewater management
3. Schemes for the treatment of pollution from the non-point sources using eco-technology
4. Interactive session

Who can attend?

Environment engineers & Professionals,

Consultants, government officials, teachers, students

Registration

For Engineers, Professionals,

Officials & Teachers Rs. 300/-

For Students Rs. 100/-

D. D. to be drawn in favour of Shrishti Eco-Research Institute payable at Pune

Important Dates

Last date for Registration: Aug. 2, 2007

Programme Date : Aug. 11, 2007

2. SERI's Pollution Clinic announces a Free Scheme of the assessment of ETP reports, designs and evaluation of present status of ETP / STP / C-ETP starting from May 1, 2007. The scheme is free for first 200 registrations only.

The only requirement is to give all the details of existing facility or planned pollution control facility and register as early as possible.

The brief study report will be inclusive of with cost – effective suggestions with environment management guidelines to achieve the norms set by pollution control authority.

For more details, please contact –
Amit Naregalkar, Project Executive,
SERI
Phones: 020 – 65702809 / 24321773 /
6620 6539

3. SERI's website is www.seriecotech.com. Some articles are posted on website. Earlier issues of SERInews are also available on website.

Contact:

For Pollution Clinic: Mr. Amit Naregalkar

For Green Arch: Mrs. Sayali Joshi

For Microbial cultures in Waste Treatment
In – Charge, Microbial Culture Division, Shrishti
Eco-Research Institute, B-106, Devgiri, Opp. P. L.
Deshpande Garden, Near Ganesh Mala, Sinhagad
Road, Pune – 411 030. Phone: 020 – 65702809