



# help Foundation

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## HELP Foundations River Watch Program

**HELP Foundations** River Watch project envisages stringing together a coalition of Community Groups, Government Institutions, Local Administration and College Eco Clubs along the entire stretch of Ithikkara River toward HELP Foundations long term goal of Developing an Ecosystem approach for integrated management of land, water and living resources that provides sustainable delivery of ecosystem services in an equitable way in and around Ithikkara River (Kerala, India) leading to Ecosystem Based Management (EBM).

We have moved towards the school segment of the program where we conduct a 2 hour session for the students in helping them with the basic understanding of Rivers in General and Ithikkara River in particular. This is the first step in equipping them with the process of River Watch. These schools have been



*River Watch Team at St George UPS Chattannoor*



*River Watch Team at Panchayat UPS Mylakkadu*

nominated by the Panchayat and they are part of the river watch committees created in the Panchayat and are affiliated to Paravur Lake and Ithikkara River Protection Council.



## HELP Foundations River Watch Program

Contd.

*River Watch Team at various schools*



## HELP Foundations River Watch Program

Contd.

*River Watch Team at various schools*



## Mangrove Afforestation Contd (Haritha Theeram Project)

**Towards** protection, conservation & restoration of Paravur Lake our Mangrove Afforestation program has been getting stronger in association with Mayyanad Panchayat. We had initially planted over 1000 mangrove saplings in the first phase (2011-12). HELP Foundations Haritha Theeram in its second phase (2012-13) planted 250 saplings and in the third phase (early 2013-14) planted 350 saplings.



More recently in the month of December-2014, we have planted 2000 additional saplings raised in our own nursery along the banks of Paravur Lake in association with Mayyanad Panchayat. The mission of HELP Foundation is to promote healthy

coastal ecosystems through a partnership-based, people-focused, policy relevant and investment-orientated approach, which builds and applies knowledge, empowers communities and other stakeholders, enhances governance, secures livelihoods, and increases resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

## Social Accounting and Audit on HELP Foundation's social performance

### MVOA and stakeholders mapping completed

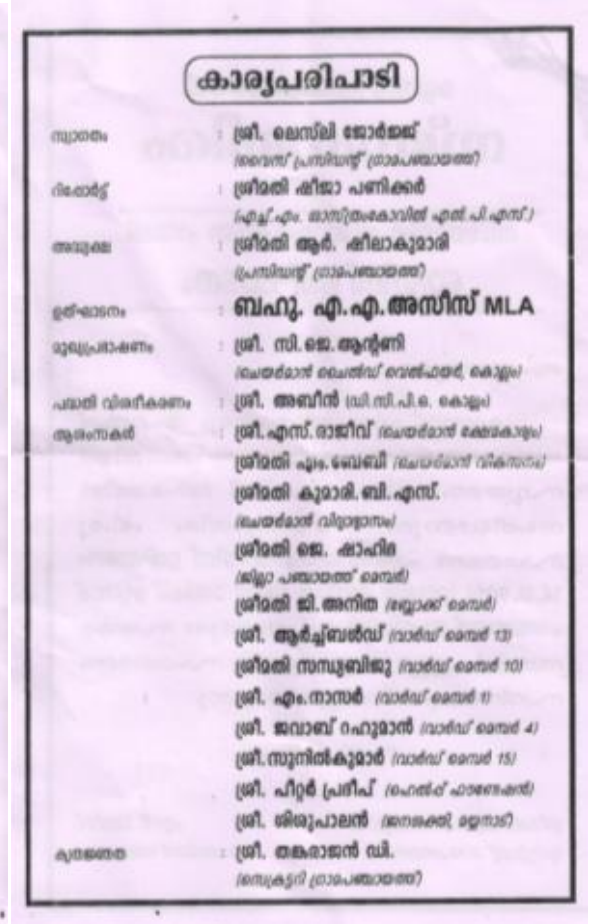
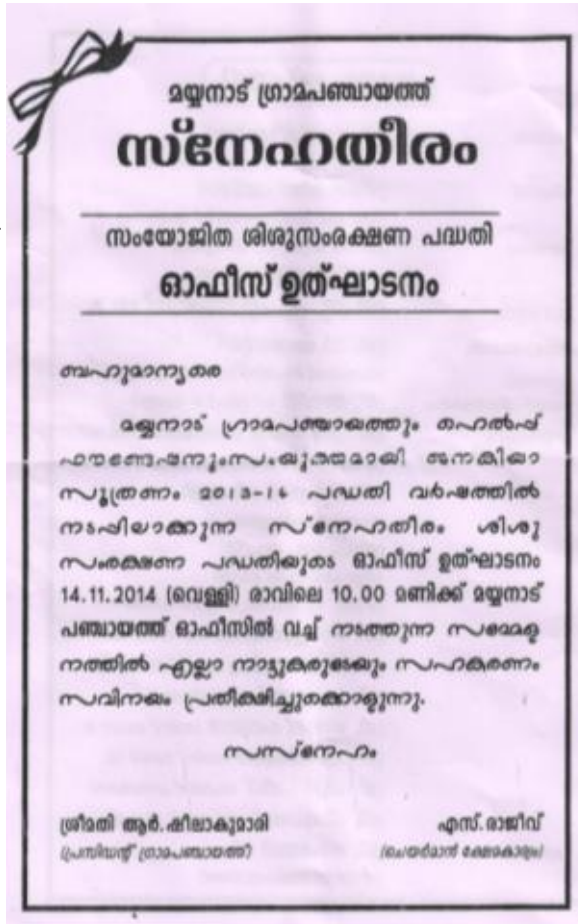
As part of the Social Accounting and Audit exercise 'Mission, Values, Objectives and Activities' framework is prepared by HELP Foundation team through the facilitation offered by SAN India. This crucial first step got successfully completed, whereby HELP Foundation was able to stamp on its purpose and values that were inseparably linked

to our ongoing activities. A stakeholder map got developed in the process stating who the organization affects or who has an interest in it.

The next step will be focused around identifying indicators and adopting suitable methods of data collection for the defined scope of audit agreed to cover for the past 2 years in operation.

## Temp Home for the Girl Child

Mayyand Panchayat and HELP Foundation together submitted a project proposal to the office of K.M.Abraham IAS. This was done based on the outcome of the Child Rights survey conducted in the Panchayat and on the advice of both Child Welfare Committee and District Child Protection Officer of Kollam. Also a building was identified by HELP Foundation and rental agreements are in place with Mayyanad Panchayat for the home. This was



possible through the good offices of Janasakthi another NGO based out of Kollam.

This is a first for Kerala where a Panchayat is joining hands with an NGO towards running a home for kids. We need models for people to emulate and more importantly assists Local Bodies to do step up to the challenges with governance.

## Start of Child Rights Survey

As part of HELP Foundations efforts to make Mayyanad Panchayat the first child friendly Panchayat in Kerala, we have been working together with Social Justice Department, Child Welfare Committee-Kollam, Juvenile Justice Chairman, Kollam and Mayyanad Panchayat Social Welfare Standing Committee.

Under directions from Child Protection Officer of the district, HELP Foundation worked with various institutions and the Juvenile Justice Chairman, Kollam to come up with a Survey

form comprising 50 questions so as to find out the issues children of Mayyanad Panchayat are facing.

This survey was completed through Anganwadi Workers and the Government employees in all wards of the Panchayat. In the second phase it's being carried out in all schools of Mayyanad Panchayat. The survey forms are being analyzed right now through a special purpose office created in the Panchayat. This office was inaugurated by the local MLA- A.A.Aziz on 14th of November. The survey report is expected anytime soon.

**Monthly Dialysis Count, as supported by HELP Foundation**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Total Monthly Dialysis Count</b>	July- 2013	10
December - 2014	53	June- 2013	18
November - 2014	42	May- 2013	18
October - 2014	44	April- 2013	18
September - 2014	40	March- 2013	18
August - 2014	53	February- 2013	16
July - 2014	40	January - 2013	7
June- 2014	32	December- 2012	22
May - 2014	45	November- 2012	19
April - 2014	40	October- 2012	18
March - 2014	32	September- 2012	16
February - 2014	49	August- 2012	17
January - 2014	20	July- 2012	23
December- 2013	25	June- 2012	14
November- 2013	23	May- 2012	11
October- 2013	17	April- 2012	9
September- 2014	10	March- 2012	6
August- 2013	10	<b>Total</b>	<b>835</b>

**Following is the Bank A/c details of HELP Foundation's DAYA Programme:**

Name of Bank : State Bank of Travancore

Account Name: **HUMAN EMPOWERMENT AND LIVELYHOOD PROMOTION FOUNDATION**

SB A/c No: 00000067199614110

IFSC Code : SBTR0000057

Branch : Mayyanad

District : Kollam

State : Kerala

Address : P.B.No.1, Kunnumpadam  
Buildings, Mayyanad P.O.,  
Kollam, Kerala, Pin-691303



“ഭൂമിയുടെ ബൃഹത്തായ ചരിത്രത്തിലേക്ക് മനുഷ്യനെന്ന ജീവി കടന്നുവന്നിട്ട് വളരെക്കുറച്ച് നാളുകളേ ആയിട്ടുള്ളൂ. ജീവിതം-ഖലയിലെ അവസാനത്തെക്കണ്ണിയാണവൻ. കോടാനുകോടി വർഷങ്ങളിലൂടെ പ്രകൃതി നെയ്തെടുത്ത ആ ശൃംഖലയിലെ ഓരോ സൂക്ഷ്മജീവിയും സസ്യവും പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടതാണ്. എന്നാൽ കഴിഞ്ഞ നൂറുവർഷത്തെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ജീവിതം അഞ്ഞൂറുകോടിവർഷത്തെ ജീവശൃംഖലയെ തകർത്തൊന്നിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇവിടെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ നൂറു വർഷത്തെ ജീവിതത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് പറയുമ്പോൾ അത് പരിസ്ഥിതി വിനാശത്തിന്റെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ ചരിത്രംകൂടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഇത്തരം ഒരു ദശാസന്ധിയിൽ നിന്നു കൊണ്ടാണ് ലോകത്താകമാനമുള്ള പരിസ്ഥിതിസംഘടനകൾ തണ്ണീർത്തടങ്ങളും നദികളും ജലാശയങ്ങളും സംരക്ഷിക്കണം എന്നു പറയുന്നത്. സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ജനാവകാശമാണ് എന്നു പറയുന്നതുപോലെ ശുദ്ധവായുവും കൂടിവെള്ളവും മനുഷ്യന്റെ ജനാവകാശമാണ്. ഈ ജനാവകാശം നിലനിൽക്കണമെങ്കിൽ ജലസമൃദ്ധമായ തണ്ണീർത്തടങ്ങൾ സംരക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. കാട് ഭൂമിയുടെ ശ്വാസകോശമാണെങ്കിൽ തണ്ണീർത്തടങ്ങൾ അതിന്റെ വൃക്കകളാണ്.”

ഹെൽപ് ഫൗണ്ടേഷന്റെ “ആവാസവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ പുനരുജ്ജീവനം” എന്ന വിഷയത്തിൽ നടത്തപ്പെട്ട ഒരു സിമ്പോസിയത്തിൽ മുഴങ്ങിക്കേട്ട വാക്കുകളാണിവ.

തികച്ചും യാദൃച്ഛികമാവാം ഹെൽപ് ഫൗണ്ടേഷന്റെ പ്രധാന പ്രവർത്തനമേഖലകൾക്കുള്ള ഈ പൊതുസ്വഭാവവും സദൃശ്യഭാവവും.

**ദയ: (DAYA- Dialysis At your Alms):** മാനവസേവനം എന്ന ഏറ്റവും മഹനീയമായ ധർമ്മം നിറവേറ്റുന്ന ഒരു ആതുരസേവന പദ്ധതിയാണ് ദയ എന്നു പേരിട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഡയാലിസിസ് സഹായ പദ്ധതി.

അറിയപ്പെടുന്ന മിക്കവാറും എല്ലാ വൃക്ക രോഗങ്ങൾക്കും ഫലപ്രദമായ ചികിത്സ ലഭ്യമാണ് എന്ന വസ്തുത നിലനിൽക്കെ കേവലം അറിവില്ലായ്മകൊണ്ട് രോഗത്തെവിളിച്ചു വരുത്തുകയും തക്കസമയത്ത് ചികിത്സതേടാതെ വൃക്കകളുടെ പ്രവർത്തനം പൂർണ്ണമായി നിലയ്ക്കുവരെ നീട്ടിക്കൊണ്ടുപോവുകയും ചികിത്സ അസാധ്യമായ അവസ്ഥയിൽ ചെന്നെത്തുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന ദുർഭാഗ്യകരമായ ഒരു അവസ്ഥ നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ ഒരു ദുരന്തമുഖമാണ്.

ഒരു ജീവിതശൈലി രോഗം എന്നതിനേക്കാൾ ജീവിത-ഭൗതിക സാഹചര്യങ്ങളാൽ ഉണ്ടാവുന്ന ഒരു

രോഗമെന്ന് വേണമെങ്കിൽ പറയാം. ഈ രോഗത്തെ ജന്മനാ ഉള്ള വൈകല്യമോ നാം കഴിക്കുന്ന ഭക്ഷണത്തിലൂടെയും വെള്ളത്തിലൂടെയും ശരീരത്തിലെത്തുന്ന രാസപദാർഥങ്ങളിലൂടെയോ വിഷപദാർഥങ്ങളിലൂടെയോ വൃക്കകൾക്കുണ്ടാവുന്ന തകരാറുകളോ, അമിതമായതോ, ഡോക്ടറുടെ നിർദ്ദേശമില്ലാതെയോ കഴിക്കുന്ന മരുന്നുകളോ വൃക്കരോഗങ്ങൾക്ക് കാരണമാകാം.

പ്രാരംഭഘട്ടത്തിൽ ചികിത്സിച്ചു ഭേദമാക്കാവുന്ന താണെങ്കിലും വൃക്കരോഗങ്ങൾ പലപ്പോഴും അവസാനഘട്ടംവരെ തിരിച്ചറിയുവാൻ കഴിയാറില്ല. അവസാനഘട്ടത്തിൽ വൃക്ക മാറ്റിവയ്ക്കാതെ മറ്റു പോംവഴികളില്ല. അതിനുകഴിയുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ രോഗിക്ക് ഡയാലിസിസ് ചെയ്യേണ്ടിവരുന്നു. മാറ്റിവയ്ക്കാനാവുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ ആഴ്ചയിൽ രണ്ടോ മൂന്നോ പ്രാവീശ്യം ഡയാലിസിസിന് വിധേയനാകേണ്ടിവരുന്ന ഒരു രോഗിയുടെ സാമ്പത്തിക അടിത്തറ നിശ്ശേഷം തകരുന്നു. മാസംതോറും 18,000/- രൂപവരെ ചെലവാകും. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ സാധാരണക്കാരുടെ അവസ്ഥ ആലോചിക്കാവുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ. ഈ ഒരു അവസ്ഥയിലാണ് ഹെൽപ്പ് ഫൗണ്ടേഷൻ നൽകിവരുന്ന ചികിത്സാസഹായത്തിന്റെ പ്രസക്തി. മാനവരാശിയെ അരക്ഷിതത്തിലാഴ്ത്തുന്ന ഈ വിപത്തിനെ നേരിടുവാനും പ്രതിരോധിക്കുവാനും അതിജീവിക്കുവാനുമുള്ള എല്ലാ മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളും തേടുവാനും സാധ്യമായതെന്തും ചെയ്യുവാനും ഉള്ള ഒരു എളിയ പരിശ്രമമാണ് ദയ എന്ന ഈ ഡയാലിസിസ് സഹായ പദ്ധതി.

ഒരു വൃക്ക രോഗിക്ക് എല്ലാമാസവും 2,000/- രൂപ മുതൽ 6,000/- രൂപ വരെയുള്ള സാമ്പത്തിക സഹായമണ് ഹെൽപ്പ് ഫൗണ്ടേഷൻ നൽകിവരുന്നത്. പലമേഖലകളിൽനിന്നും സന്മനസ്സുള്ളവരിൽനിന്ന് സമാഹരിച്ചാണ് മുടക്കം കൂടാതെ നാളിതുവരെ ഈ സഹായം നൽകി കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.

ഒരു അശനിപാതം പോലെ വന്നുപെട്ട ഈ രോഗത്തിനുമുന്നിൽ എല്ലാ പ്രതീക്ഷകളും അടഞ്ഞുപോയ ഒരു സമൂഹത്തിന് ഒരു ആശ്വാസമാണ്, ഒരു അനുഗ്രഹമാണ് നമ്മൾ അറിഞ്ഞുനൽകുന്ന ചെറുതെങ്കിലും വലുതായ ഈ സഹായം.

വാക്കുകൾ കൊണ്ടും പ്രവർത്തികൾ കൊണ്ടും ഈ പദ്ധതിയുടെ ഭാഗഭാക്കായ ഏവർക്കും നവവത്സരത്തിന്റെ എല്ലാ നന്മകളും സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ആശംസിച്ചുകൊണ്ട്

**ഹെൽപ് ഫൗണ്ടേഷനുവേണ്ടി**

**ടീ. ദയ**

## Biodiversity and Our Natural Ecosystems

Biodiversity throughout the world is declining, and more so in India, due to expanding human populations, increasing consumption, growing trade in natural products, misguided policies, and poor governance. The extent of this decline is not known. The Forest Survey of India monitors change in forest cover, and publishes a report on the state of forest cover every two years, but there are at least four problems with this type of monitoring.

First, the Forest Survey of India rules determining what is 'forest cover' are rather biased towards over-estimation. Open degraded forests are included under the term 'forest'.

Second, the monitoring process looks at change in forest cover and not in forest composition that can alter due to a variety of factors including the spread of exotic invasive species.

Third, ecosystems other than forest ecosystems such as deserts, grasslands, freshwater and marine ecosystems are not covered, because the mandate of the Forest Survey of India is restricted to areas classified as forests.

Fourth, even this limited monitoring does not identify causes of biodiversity change, and is thus unhelpful in making policy decisions to combat change.

In any case, even the figures provided by the Forest Survey of India indicate decline in dense forest cover over the last several years. Moreover, the figures show a substantial increase in open forest cover. Independent studies published in a variety of

journals indicate change in forest cover at a much higher level than the overall, average figures provided by the Forest Survey of India. Clearly, India needs a comprehensive programme to monitor its biodiversity, assess drivers of changes in biodiversity, and build local capacity to minimise loss and foster sustainable use of biodiversity. We should not wake up suddenly one day, as we have done in the past, to find that our tigers are disappearing, watersheds are being degraded, and the natural habitats are being lost at an alarming rate.

India may be the only large country with huge scientific capability to lack a serious programme to monitor the state of its ecosystems. Because the major drivers of habitat loss or change are rooted in political, economic and social factors, India needs to develop a monitoring programme that is focused not only on biodiversity, but also on interactions between nature and society, and how such interactions are changing over time.

We also have to get rid of the mistaken notion that complex natural ecosystems, once destroyed at one place can be easily created elsewhere. Such a notion is evident in government's compensatory afforestation programmes that implicitly assume first that natural ecosystems such as forests can often be created de novo. Policy makers need to distinguish between a stand of trees and a natural forest with diversity of species, and a myriad of ecological interactions and processes, evolved over millions of years

Source: The Hindu

## Newspaper Clippings

**GOING | EXTINCT** ■ A major feeder of Paravur Lake and perennial source of drinking water for many

# Ithikkara river on verge of 'imminent' death

SHAM MOHAMMED | DC  
KOLLAM, NOV 10

The Ithikkara river, which is the major feeder of Paravur lake and a perennial source of drinking water for numerous families in Kollam district, is facing a slow death. The Ithikkara river-Paravur lake ecosystem is heading towards permanent ecological degradation, says a study conducted by HELP Foundation, an NGO based here.

As part of the study, the team visited 12 panchayats along the catchment areas of the river to collect data that points to the reasons for the 'imminent' death of the river. The study cites large-scale deforestation in the catchment areas around the low hills of Karakunnu adjacent to Madathara on the foothills of Western Ghats apart from adverse changes in land-use patterns on its banks as major reasons for the decline of the river. The

study also points at illegal sand-mining which has virtually ruined the entire riverbanks mostly in the downstream panchayats where the river merges with Paravur lake.

"Mining sand and stones which has left behind deep ponds in the river has caused loss of its natural balance giving way to side effects, including erosion of the soil to the tune of acres. The water is meant to be distributed among nature's beings and check dams are constructed without following any environmental norms," said environmental activist S. Archibald.

Check dams are the main physical threats fragmenting and transforming rivers as they are only suitable for a limited drainage area and significantly reduce the hydraulic capacity of the channel and create turbulence which erodes the channel banks.

Encroachments into the



river can be seen throughout, especially the higher stretches of the river near to the catchment area. Mainly rubber trees have been planted into the river bed, apart from other vegetation. At certain places the course of the river has been altered. Much of the fresh water biodiversity is lost and this is very severe in the downstream panchayats due to saline intrusion.

The river has become non-

perennial and has dried up along the upstream. Illegal quarries are one of the factors in addition to the large-scale deforestation in the catchment area for this anomaly. Downstream the entire river bank is missing in large stretches and it resembles a medium-to-large pool in various places. This has led to dropping groundwater levels causing deterioration of riparian forests. In addition, arable land has

### FACTS

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been degraded and wells have fallen dry. Huge pits in the river bed caused by mechanised sand mining make it a dangerous place to

navigate, the study says.

"The causes of the destruction of the river point to the failure of our watershed-based schemes like IWMP and MGNREGA run by the panchayats and the government machinery. Panchayat representatives once again prove that they cannot ring in the administrative changes nor do they have the will or the ability to lead administration as mandated in the Panchayat Raj Act," said Mr Peter Pradeep, HELP Foundation.

The report stresses the need for strengthening the river basin apart from restoration of all major wetlands or paddy fields and flood plains and calls upon the authorities to work together with the revenue authorities in restoring the river banks and augment the floodplains or wetlands around it, leading the way for an ecosystem-based management (EBM).



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# help Foundation

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