



help Foundation

Quarterly Journal

Newsletter
newsletter

Vol: IV Issue: 4 March 2014

ISSN 2347 - 7628



Editorial Board

Prof. Peter Pradeep
Jesmis J Kavunthanam
Anna Mathews
Sanoj Herbert
Dr. Gracious James
Suneesh Kumar S
Prof. Stanislaus Noronha
Giles Fernandez

Managing Editors

Jesmis J. Kavunthanam
Prof. Peter Pradeep

Layout and Design

Jesmis J Kavunthanam

Photo Journalist

Mahesh S. Ambelil

Publisher

Jesmis J Kavunthanam
Managing Director,
HELP Foundation

*Comments and suggestions for future columns
are welcome and should be addressed to:*

The Chief Editor,
HELP Foundation,
Umayanalloor P.O.
Kollam-691589
Tel. +91-474-255-6414
Call Center : +91-9656-33-4444
help.foundation@rocketmail.com
www.helpfoundatin.in



Contents



MISSION GREEN

Mangrove Nursery

FOOD SECURITY

Paddy Harvesting

SOCIAL INTERVENTION

**Visit by UGC Staff Academy Trainees-
University of Kerala**

Opening up of the Estuary at Paravur Lake

**Slaughter House by Paravur Municipality on the edge of
the lake**

Working with the local Administration

MISSION HEALTH

**Project DAYA– Dialysis Assistance and Seminar
Notification**

DHWANI– FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK

IPCC Warning

NATURE PHOTO DIVISION– WILD LIFE

Nature Photo Feature

Mangrove Nursery



HELP Foundation's Mangrove Nursery being developed along the bank of Paravur Lake

While undertaking the planting of mangroves in Paravur, we found that the saplings were not surviving. It was puzzling and worrying, and the problem needed a proper analysis. Research and experiments revealed to us that growing the saplings in the local environment is key to its survival.

This made us set up HELP Foundation's Mangrove Nursery. With support from a few likeminded Social Forestry officials, we have realized our Nursery in the vicinity of the Paravur Lake. 2,000 saplings are being raised here and we hope this is the beginning of scaling HELPs ecosystem restoration activities to include more local bodies, educational institutions and community resources.



Bamboo splits piece together to place Mangrove seeds

Visit by UGC Staff Academy Trainees - University of Kerala



Mayyanad Panchayat President addressing UGC Staff Academy trainees at the spot of the erstwhile estuary, which is being held as a coconut plantation by an erstwhile seawall contractor

HELP Foundation was invited to talk in a refresher course on Environmental Sciences conducted by UGC Staff Academy, University of KERALA. The course was aimed at college or University teachers from various science streams (of course, with an interest in Environmental Sciences).

The talk was in the seminar hall of the Academic Staff College, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus. Prof Peter Pradeep of HELP Foundation conducted the session based on the work we have

conducted to date in Paravur Lake. They, in turn, requested a visit to the site to understand first-hand the work done towards ecosystem restoration of Paravur Lake.

Mayyanad Panchayat, who has been a silent partner in all our activities, agreed to host the team of academicians from University of Kerala. The entire Panchayat team, both elected and government officials, were present at the site along with HELP Foundation to host the University of Kerala team.



UGC Staff Academy trainees on the sand formation deposited through the unscientifically constructed spill way right at the middle of the lake

Paddy Harvesting

As a continuation of the effort to save the Wetland from the real estate mafia remote controlled by the local elected representatives, HELP Foundation took the initiative to form a coalition of NGOs under the banner, Haritha Spandam. The entire stretch of Umayanallor Ela, of 360 acres, was cultivated again for the first time in nearly 25 years. Padasekhra Samithi, which is the key ingredient of the coalition, is doing it in a fully automated or rather mechanized manner. Attended by several officials, including the district agricultural officer and the Panchayat President, and farmers, the harvesting activity was a treat to behold.

Harvest Machines as well as Woman Laborers took part in the harvesting activities in a festive atmosphere which spread a lot of cheer to all the people around. The Grampanchayat President went on record to comment that they would never support any such illegal paddy field reclamation activities in future. What a turnaround for an administration that was spearheading the conversion of paddy field through its elected representatives acting as brokers for the land mafia.



The Harvest Festival



The inaugural function of Paddy Harvesting in Umayanallor Ela

Opening up of the Estuary at Paravur Lake

HELP Foundation has been tracking the progress of the file through the government system so as to open up the estuary and we have been painstakingly overcoming the red tape and the delaying tactics of the administration at the behest of vested interests. It may be recalled that the Major Irrigation Department had redrawn the map to bring back the long gone estuary which incidentally is a coconut plantation owned by the erstwhile local seawall contractor.

Now that the Irrigation Department has done the needful and has brought back the erased estuary in the records as well as the maps of Paravur Municipality and Mayyanad Village recreated and nobody is any doubt as to whether an estuary existed or not but this has to be implemented. In December 2013, the file from Executive Engineer Kollam had reached Chief Executive Engineer's Office, Irrigation Thiruvananthapuram, where it was held up under various pretext till it finally moved ahead to V.J Kurien's (Secretary Water Resources Ministry) on

March 31, 2014. So in short it took more than three months to get to the Secretary's office from the Chief Engineer's Office. Now it looks like it has been ordered to go to CESS (Centre for Earth Science Studies) for another study. It took HELP Foundation three years to take Paravur Lake to this stage, now the process of opening up the estuary is into the fourth year, waiting for permission to implement it. Trust the lake will be around when the official permission comes around from the Government Officials.

All this delay after HELP Foundations studied the issue and published a report, Major Irrigation Kollam studied it and rectified all the illegalities and corrected all the revenue records, yet still we need permission to restore the environment flows, while the contractor has been enjoying a lush green coconut plantation at the spot of the estuary. While the Government machinery function in this way, we cannot restore normalcy while illegal acts get permanency. Sadly, it is the norm.

Project DAYA– Dialysis Assistance and Seminar Notification



With the high number of applications that we have been getting for financial assistance to continue dialysis, we have been of late focusing our efforts on creating awareness on renal disease management. It is the third largest killer after malignancy and heart disease. Millions suffer from some form of kidney disease and many of them, particularly in India cannot afford the

cost of treatment or care. Apart from detection, prevention and raising awareness on kidney ailments, the real focus should be to provide quality, affordable treatment to underprivileged people. Bringing down the number of dialysis is key to renal disease management and longevity. HELP Foundation is organizing a seminar jointly with YMCA for patients and the doctor community.

Slaughter House by Paravur Municipality on the edge of the lake

It has come to our notice the Paravur Municipality is building a slaughterhouse right on the edge of the lake. A high-rise wall has been constructed to fortify the slaughterhouse, protruding three feet into the lake and encroaching upon it.

To combat the ill effects of sand mining and rampant degradation of its banks and its effects on coastal livelihoods, HELP has adopted mangroves-based ecosystem restoration activities along the Paravur Lake and the Ithikkara River. But the new construction destroyed a few of our mangrove saplings, as well as trees and shrubs which served as breeding ground for fishes.

The violations performed by the Municipal Authorities are manifold.

1. The disposal of wastes and effluents from slaughterhouses etc are banned as per COASTAL REGULATION ZONE NOTIFICATION MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS.



2. Destruction of Mangrove Trees planted by HELP Foundation and destroying the foliage and trees which formed part of the breeding ground.

3. Illegal structural construction activities into the lake bed jeopardizing the fragile lake, thus affecting the ecosystem restoration activities being carried out there for the past three years.

Working with the local Administration

Given that States have generally devolved functions to the PRI institutions, they have done much less to devolve funds. Generally, the devolution of functionalities to the level needed for effectiveness have not really taken place with respect to local bodies. The PRIs also lack the capacity to design, implement and monitor program's. This is true not only for the Panchayats in rural areas, but also for the

urban local bodies as seen by the experience of utilization of JNNRUM funds.

HELP Foundation was invited and participated in the planning exercise in Mayyanad Panchayat with respect to the 12th 5 Year Plan. Given the fact that Wetland Conservation is one of our strengths we were included in the Fisheries Working Group to assist the Panchayat in its planning activities.

Dhwani

Editorial

IPCC Warning

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has given its starkest warning of the likely impact of climate change. The IPCC's March 31 report states that the evidence of global warming is now overwhelming, and warns that all countries and all social classes of people will be affected by changes which are likely to be "severe, pervasive and irreversible". Many terrestrial, freshwater, and marine species have shifted their geographic ranges, seasonal activities, migration patterns, abundances, and species interactions in response to ongoing climate change.

All animal species face an increased risk of extinction, and vegetation patterns are likely to change substantially, with low-latitude species appearing in higher latitudes and lower latitudes becoming more arid, even if rainfall patterns there are becoming less predictable. In many regions, changing precipitation or melting snow and ice are altering hydrological systems, affecting water resources in terms of quantity and quality. As temperatures rise more above 20th century levels, yields of major food crops will probably fall; the likely yield increase in colder climates as to those grown in warmer climates may not offset declining yields elsewhere.

Water resources, already under stress in Asia, are likely to come under even greater stress, and ocean

acidification caused by the absorption of rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide is likely to compound the problems. This is especially important in Kerala, as we have seen the current misplaced propaganda over conserving the Western Ghats, from where all our rivers originate. The increasing number of illegal quarries deep into the Western Ghats is another activity which enjoys political patronage across the board and needs to be checked immediately as it will be catastrophic for our river catchments.

Spreading aridity, or increasingly severe individual events like storms or droughts, not to mention the disappearance of land as sea levels rise, could well lead to large-scale migration, which in turn could cause resource-driven conflict between coastal and high range populations or even between crop farmers and animal farmers. Existing inequalities are likely to worsen, which will make it harder for people to climb out of poverty thus offsetting the efforts of the government to date. This calls for better governance and informed, visionary policy level changes to preserve the natural capital. Every act that has been passed for Protection of Natural Resources, be it Paddy Field and Wetland Conservation Act or the CRZ Act and all other Environment Acts passed by the Kerala Government, calls for strict enforcement and will on the part of the District Administration and Revenue Officials.

HELP Foundation's Wild Life Journal

Photo Journalist:

Mahesh Ambelil











help Foundation

Quarterly Journal
ISSN 2347-7628

March 2014
Vol: IV Issue: 4

Human Empowerment & Livelihood Promotion Foundation

Umayanalloor P.O.

Kollam -691589

Kerala

Phone: +91 474 255 6414

Call Center: +91 9656 33 4444

Email: help.foundation@rocketmail.com

<http://www.helpfoundation.in>