

May, 2023

HARIT KHABAR

Monthly Newsletter featuring Environment Action by HCLFoundation



EARTH DAY 2023



Special coverage of Earth Day on page 4.
Also read about the GeCAN initiative on page 5

The El Nino Effect During this Monsoon

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) recently stated that there is a 70% probability of El Nino becoming effective during this monsoon. This phenomenon is a significant event that causes a variety of climatic changes around the world. But what is it exactly?

The term El Nino refers to a warming of the ocean surface, or above-average sea surface temperatures, in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. Along with the ocean temperatures, it also influences ocean currents and precipitation patterns. Consequently, the temperature changes cause agricultural failures and these in turn lead to economic and subsistence disasters. The climate-related phenomenon also causes draughts, floods and widespread health problems.

El Nino recurs irregularly, from two years to a decade, and no two events are exactly alike. El Nino events can disrupt normal weather patterns, and since 1950, twenty such events have been recorded and these all have had very serious climatic effects. Now, the threat of El Nino, combined with other climate-related crises, is becoming more and more serious.

THE EL NIÑO PHENOMENON

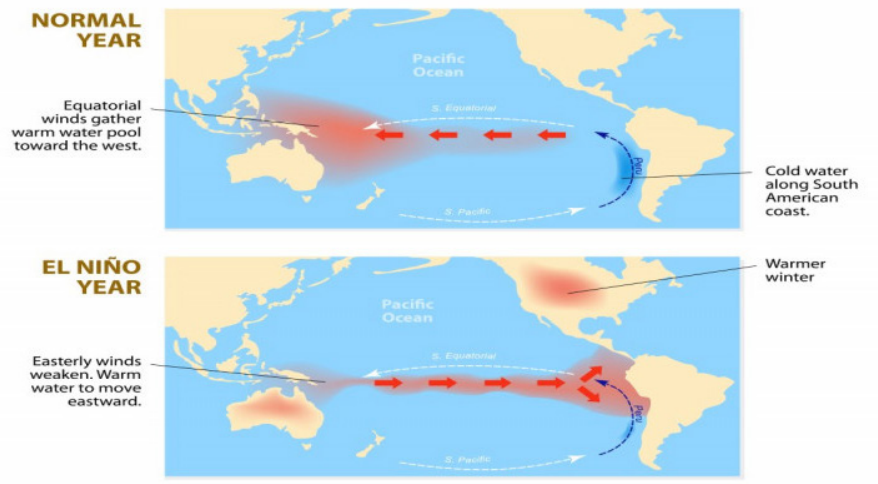


Image- wonderopolis.org

Last Eight Years the Hottest!

According to the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the past eight years have been the hottest on record internationally. The rising greenhouse gas emissions and the accumulated heat have contributed to such high temperatures. If this trend keeps going on, it will not take long for the global warming cap of 1.5°C set by the Paris Agreement to be breached. This has been despite the cooling effect of La Nina. La Nina refers to the periodic cooling of ocean surface temperatures in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific.



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Delhi Water Bodies Struggling to Survive

Delhi is also seeing a water bodies-related crisis. As per the water bodies census report by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, 216 out of a total of 893 of these bodies have been subjected to encroachment. As per 2011-12 survey centering Southwest Delhi, about 80% of the encroachment activities are credited to the government bodies themselves without much thought of alleviating the effects of its consequences. A mere 26.5% of the recorded water bodies are still being properly used.



Image- istock

Extreme Weather Killed Over 2700 in India in 2022

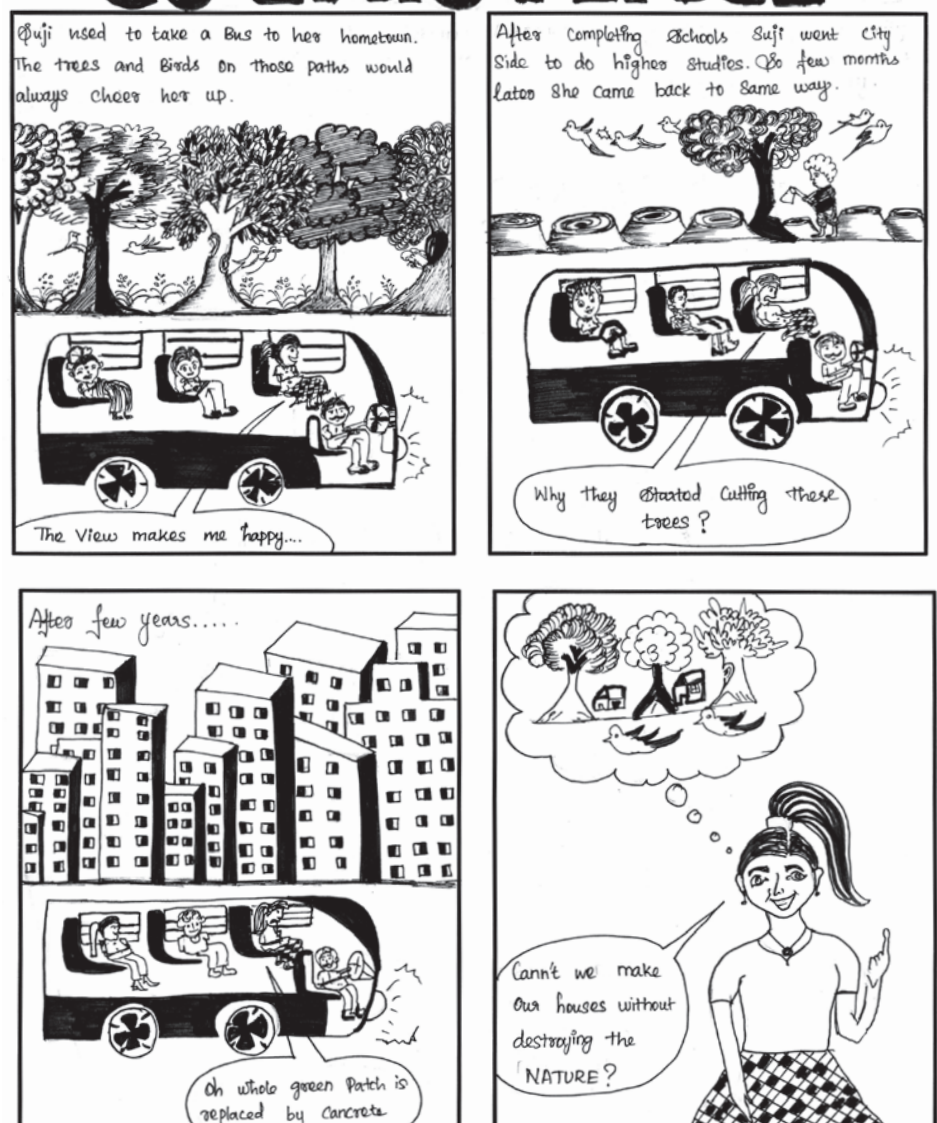
According to the 'Climate of India During 2022' report released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), India has lost over 2,700 human lives to extreme weather events in 2022. Of these, 1,580 deaths were reported due to lightning and thunderstorms, while



Image- istock

1,050 deaths were caused due to floods and heavy rains. The remaining reported deaths were due to heatwaves, dust storms and hailstorms, the data revealed. These rises in temperatures have already led to changes in the monsoons and accelerated glacial melt in the country. The report also revealed that Himachal Pradesh's mean surface temperatures reached 1.5 degrees Celsius higher than what it was 100 years ago.

CO-EXISTENCE



T. ARCHANA DEVI
Cancer Institute (WIA)

Harit Champion- Atish Wawre

Green Yatra



Atish Wawre is a Senior Project Manager at **Green Yatra** and a Civil Engineer by education. He has handled innumerable projects with regards to plantation, lake rejuvenation and a few sustainability projects. Recently, Atish successfully completed one year of plantation of Green Yatra's biggest Miyawaki forest at Jewel of Navi Mumbai at Nerul. A total of 1.30 lakh saplings with more than 50 native species have been planted under his guidance and they have grown to over 12 feet in just one year. These saplings will be helpful in increasing the oxygen level of the surrounding area and also help in decreasing the AQI Index level.

When asked why he chose to work with an environment conservation NGO, instead of the lucrative construction industry he replied - "While working at a construction company, I came across an article wherein I saw how the civil field was contributing to almost 32% of the overall pollution. I made the obvious choice that I should

contribute my knowledge towards environment conservation instead of degrading it."



Green Yatra is a leading environmental NGO in India working towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through tree plantation, urban biodiversity conservation, water bodies restoration, sustainable solutions, and environmental research and awareness. Founded in 2009, Green Yatra works across the country.

Harit Champion- Aritharan K

Thuvakkam

There is always a need to act. Aritharan, hailing from the small town of Cumbum, has always had the touch of nature with him. The deep understanding of the human-nature relationship was harnessed in his childhood. Being a first-hand learner of the environment, and his love for books had given him an extensive knowledge to better understand the environment.

The association with **Thuvakkam** enabled him to understand the threatening problems existing in the environment and the technical solution to tackle them. Aritharan joined Thuvakkam as a volunteer in 2017, later took up the responsibility of becoming a full time professional. He understood the need for technical knowledge in tackling the issues of deforestation, increased temperature and disturbed biodiversity in the ecosystem. Improving his expertise with learning and involvement, he became a member in the planning team of Greenery Initiatives in the organisation. He also strengthened his relations with the government officials, clients, volunteers and most importantly the target community.

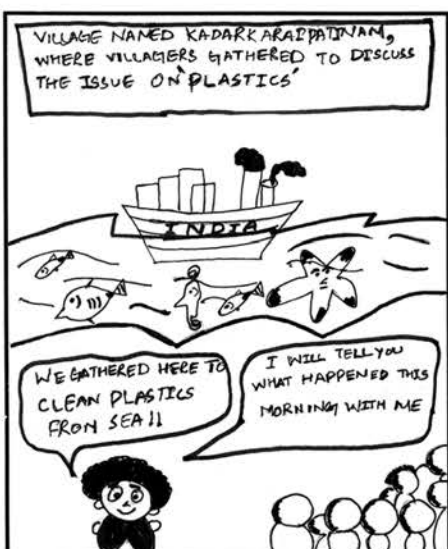


Under his administration, urban forests and native forests are being created, maintained and monitored in South India. Wetland restoration projects are also being initiated under his leadership and community wellness projects like agroforestry are being learnt and worked out by the team under his guidance. His focus on sustainability in Thuvakkam's greenery initiatives is one of the crucial reasons for the success of the creation and maintenance of 40+ urban forests in South India.

Thuvakkam is a non-Governmental organisation from Chennai, working in the domains of environment, education and humanity since 2014. With the 9+ years of operations, the organisation has strengthened its work in each domain, taking projects including urban forests and native forest creation, wetland restoration, agroforestry, pond creation, infrastructure development and more in the environment domain.

THE STORY OF SEA

By: Chayanika. L
Ms Chellamuthu Trust & Research Foundation



Invest in our planet



Image- istock

Every year, April 22 is celebrated as Earth Day to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It is a reminder for the world to take a day out of their life to pay attention to our ageing planet. It highlights the cruciality of the need for a clean environment as well as preserving the earth's natural resources. The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970 when a United States senator from Wisconsin organized a national demonstration to raise awareness about environmental issues. It now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EARTHDAY.ORG.

The theme of World Earth Day 2023 is "Invest in Our Planet", calling for businesses to shift towards sustainable practices.

This Earth Day, we would like to draw our reader's attention towards two crucial issues that have a huge potential to address the crises of climate change: Climate literacy and deforestation. These are also two of the six initiatives that are being promoted on Earth Day this year.

Investing in our planet: Climate literacy is the key to reversing climate change



educating about the environment but the road ahead is very long.

Climate literacy is something that needs to be nurtured within the new generation. Investing in climate education better prepares the next generation to face climate change. This will help ensure a future which is much brighter, much greener than our present. People will be better equipped to deal with the climate crisis. The government and other organisations have taken steps towards

A Climate Glossary for Tamilians



Image- Nayjevan Express

Tamil Nadu ended its April on a very green note. Keeping in mind the growing urgency surrounding the topic of climate change, the state government in alliance with Climate Trends and Tamil Nadu Governing Council launched a Tamil Glossary on climate change at the Carbon Neutral Coimbatore workshop. Siva V Meyyanathan, the state minister of Environment and Pollution Control, talked about the need for the grassroots level of climate education at the event. The glossary aims to spread the vernacular terminology related to environment and climate to support the development of more conscious rural and non-English speaking classes which mainly converse in Tamil.

A New Record on Earth Day!



Image- istock

Climate awareness is a topic that requires crucial attention and application. This is what Energy Swaraj Foundation decided to highlight through its Earth Day initiative. Coming together at KD Jadhav Indoor Hall in Delhi, private and public organisations as well as students set up more than 500 climate clocks, presenting a new Asian record for the most number of climate clocks displayed.

A climate clock is a countdown timer that indicates how much time we have left before global warming increases by 1.5 °C. According to these clocks, we have roughly six years and ninety-one days before global warming becomes an irreversible phenomenon.

Deforestation: India's Big Environmental Problem?



Image- istock

A report published by the UK-based energy comparison service provider Utility Bidder has placed India second in terms of large-scale deforestation. Right behind Brazil, the country experienced tree loss over an estimated 668,400 hectares in a span of just five years (2015-20), 284,000-hectare rise from the 1990-2000 period! This is the highest recorded statistics of deforestation in the last 30 years. The Deforestation Report has highlighted how Indonesia, which has been ranked third on the list, and Brazil have managed to work towards afforestation while India is still struggling.

Reducing CO2 emissions through community engagement

On the occasion of World Earth Day, BACHAT project (jointly run by HCL Foundation and Care India) organised an event at Saithali village, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, in which around 100



women members participated. The project is working towards reducing CO2 emissions, and to achieve the objective, awareness messages were given by the team to the community through several activities like drawing and a village level rally.

Preparing young minds to be climate literate



For promoting sustainability and climate education and action in schools through its flagship programme, Harit by HCL Foundation and **Centre for Environment Education (CEE)** launched the national-level 'Generation for Climate Action' (GenCAN) initiative, commemorating the Earth Day on 20th April 2023 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

The programme seeks to provide school children with the required knowledge and skills on climate change and take individual and collective actions towards carbon footprint reduction.



Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Vice President, Global CSR, HCLFoundation also addressed the audience.

The Generation for Climate Action (GenCAN) is a Leadership Challenge for schools. This is a sustainability and climate change education initiative to engage schools with their teachers and students to communicate, collaborate and cooperate in learning about climate change to develop their own action plan for reducing carbon footprint.

Over 300 students and teachers from government and private schools of New Delhi and Noida participated in the event and resource material including video, website, booklet, brochure and badge developed for the programme was also launched. A student panel discussion was conducted in which students shared their thoughts and reflections on climate change and shared the initiatives they have undertaken individually or in their respective schools.

One of the student panellists talked about the various initiatives his school has undertaken to raise awareness about waste segregation, compost, water harvesting and how the students actively take part in these activities. While another shared an inspiring programme in their school about discouraging people from plastic littering. All the student panellists were very well aware about the causes and consequences of climate change and their role in combating its drastic effects.

Objectives



GenCAN is a national level Climate Action initiative which aims at working with schools through teachers to prepare young minds to be climate literate and showcase climate action leadership taking local level actions and inspiring others in the society. Addressing the environmental crisis within the norms of schools will help the cultivation of a generation which is much more environmentally conscious. Its main objectives are:

1. Engage schools for taking positive action to respond to climate change.
2. Build capacity of teachers in educating students about climate change.
3. Encourage school's leadership towards reduction of carbon footprint of the school.

The challenge and how to join it?

Schools preparing young citizens are ideal for ensuring that students have the critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and leadership skills needed to promote climate action. Keeping this in mind, GenCAN is developed as an annual programme where schools are invited to engage a team of students and teachers who further involve the entire school in becoming a climate friendly school. The challenge works in the following four steps:



1. Build knowledge, attitudes and values on climate change science and concerns
2. Explore and discover your school's carbon footprint
3. Prepare School action plan and act for offsetting carbon footprint
4. Document and share your school's climate action journey

The GenCAN initiative is being promoted under the Harit by HCLFoundation programme. It is supposed to span a 10-month period with the classes 6-12 within its ambit. By the end of this period, it is expected that the schools involved with this initiative will be sensitized to climate change concerns and would infuse the values learned within the regular school practices.



Access the website here

Clean energy from waste

Clean energy refers to the energy produced through “green” ways. Its generation depends on the use of recyclable sources and involves processes free of the emission of greenhouse gases. A very useful derivative of this concept is the waste-to-energy route.

What is waste-to-energy?

Waste-to-energy is the term used for the process involving the generation of forms of energy (like electricity) through the treatment of waste material. The heat generated through the combustion of waste is used as energy. As per Waste Management: A Necessity, a 2020 government research paper, India produces about 65 million tonnes of waste annually.

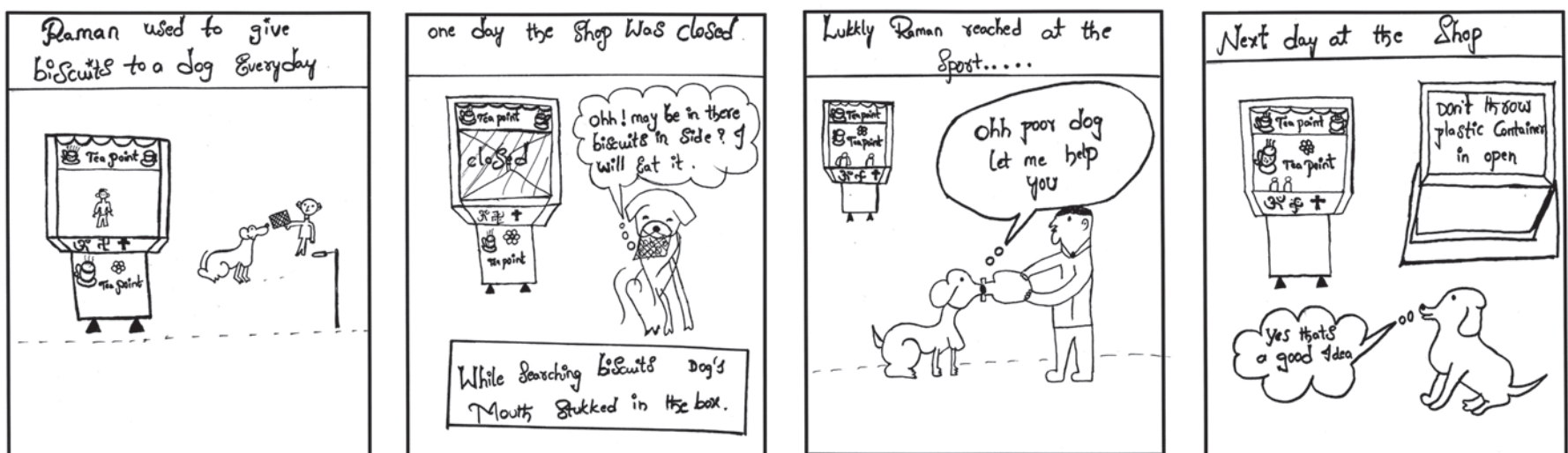
It then becomes important to tackle this exorbitant rate of waste generation. An astute approach to this problem would be to converge it with the increasingly alarming problems of energy depletion and greenhouse gases emission. Therefore, waste-to-energy has become an essential component of environmental behaviour.



Image- istock

Stuck!

JeManiSha



A solution to overflowing landfills?



Image- istock

Waste-to-energy is a great solution to countering the overflowing landfills. According to ASSOCHAM, India will need 88 sq. km of land for landfills in 2050. Converting this waste into fuel will take the pressure off of the land. It will also reduce the overproduction of methane gas which is consequent to the decomposition of waste. Recovery of resources like various metals is also an advantageous feature. This leftover material can be recycled.

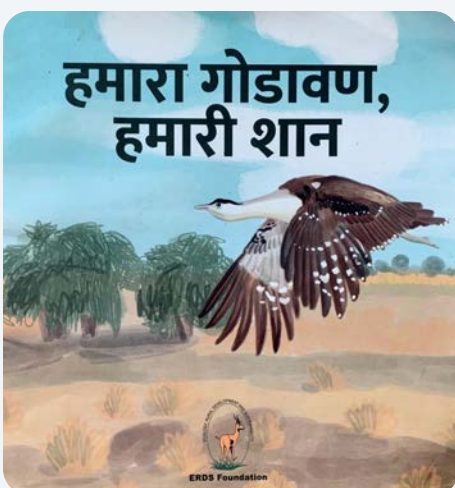
DMC to set up a waste-to-energy plant in Bawana

The Delhi Municipal Corporation has set for itself a mammoth task. The civic body is setting up a waste-to-energy plant in Bawana which will have the capacity of treating 3000 tonnes of waste per day. The project is estimated to cost around Rs 604 crores and become functional by April 2026.

The plant is also expected to consume an additional 20% waste when necessary. The Bawana waste-to-energy plant is the fifth one set up by the DMC. The other four are located in Ghazipur, Okhla, Narela and Tehkhand.

Book Review

Our Bustard is our pride



they met The Great Indian Bustard. The story is told graphically through beautiful artwork and with Jaisalmer's stunning landscape in the background. The Great Indian Bustard is the largest flying bird and stands on the brink of extinction.

The book Hamara Godavan, Hamari Shaan (The Great Indian Bustard is our Pride), published by Ecology, Rural Development and Sustainability Foundation draws the reader's attention towards the vulnerable condition of Rajasthan's national bird-The Great Indian Bustard. The book narrates the adventure of two 7th standard students Karim and Kishan, who went in search of The Great Indian Bustard after hearing about its extinction in a school workshop. Soon, other students and animals and birds also joined them until

Green Viral Video

The 'Crow Whisperer' of Bhopal



A man from Bhopal has gone viral for calling crows by imitating their calls. The 'crow whisperer of Bhopal' as he is popularly known can summon several crows by just cawing. The video of 'Akku Bhai' demonstrating his skills was shared on the micro-blogging site Twitter after which it immediately went viral.

The clip was shared by Twitter user @ben_ifs

HUMAN EGO VS ECOSYSTEM



Industrialization and development are human centric but hazardous for the rest of the species

Community Engagement for Sustainable Forests



About 35+ volunteers including the walkers and joggers were involved in the nature walk and forest clean-up drive at Buckingham canal stretch, on 8, April 2023. Thuvakkam and HCLFoundation under its program Harit by HCL Foundation has created

an urban forest at Buckingham canal stretch, along the canal bed from Kasturba Nagar. The 1 km green lush forest is engaged by much of the community, with the access of the cycle trail laid by the Greater Chennai Corporation. The volunteers were engaged in de-weeding and removing plastic wastes from the forest.

Keeping Animals Safe from Summer Heat



A team of volunteers from HCL Technologies visited Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre (WRRC) in Bengaluru to assist in shelter upgrades. They spent the whole day at the shelter, learning to weave the naturally available coconut palm fronds into mats. These mats were later used to cover animal enclosures to protect them from the harsh summer heat. A second team of volunteers from HCL Technology spent an entire day disinfecting animal enclosure and covering them with coconut leaf mats. These efforts were made to make sure our animals stay comfortable during the scorching summer months.

Keeping 'Cheruvu' clean and vibrating

HCL Foundation under HCL Harit- The Green Initiative in partnership with Environmentalist Foundation of India took up the huge task of removing invasive species along the raised boundaries of Konai Cheruvu (lake) in Vijayawada, Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh. This involved dredging and desilting that helped in increasing the water holding capacity. The silt removed was used for construction of the earthen bunds. The bunds help in protecting the surrounding areas in the advent of floods. All these helped in rejuvenation and conservation of the 'Cheruvu'.



Comics' Relief in the Scorching Heat at Sorkha

World Comics India organised a Grassroots Comics Exhibition at Harit Upvan Sorkha, Noida on 14th May, 2023 in which more than 30 children from around the Harit Upvan Sorkha participated. The exhibition contained comics on several important environmental issues like the role soil and insects play in maintaining biodiversity, human-animal conflict, peaceful coexistence, endangered species, disappearance of animals and birds sounds.



The exhibition ended with the distribution of participation certificates and the participants were also given a copy of their comic stories so that they can take it back to their homes and schools and educate others about the environmental issues.

Green Window Initiative for Environmental Education

Eco Roots Foundation, under its Green Window initiative, in collaboration with HCLFoundation, organised a series of workshops at Pansheel Balak Inter College, Noida. These workshops were attended by more than 140 students in which they learned new and interesting facts about the eco- system. They also enjoyed Harit buddy, Eco Gyan, environmental films and nest making sessions and games. Animal species, life of birds and butterflies, snakes etc were the most interesting topics where young minds came up with several queries and our experts gave answers to break the myths and share correct information.



Bring Back Sparrows

HCLTech employees visited AWCS's Bird Rehab & Awareness Centre in Hyderabad and built sparrow nest boxes for the initiative Bring Back Sparrows. House sparrows, once a common species among human habitats, are becoming a rare sight. Sparrow nests are in danger as high-rise buildings and modern concrete structures discourage nesting of birds. This is making house sparrows hard to find nesting sites in concrete structures. And, the solution lies in artificial nest boxes.



Creating a safer space for the wild residents of Richards Town



Avian and Reptile Rehabilitation Trust, with support from HCLFoundation, conducted a much-needed manjha clean-up drive at Richards Town in Bangalore on the request of the residents, who reached out to them after witnessing many wildlife falling prey to this lethal string in their neighbourhood. Braving the scorching summer heat, the team cleaned up discarded manjha from 29 trees in the area with the help of the community.

About the publication

HCLFoundation and World Comics India's collaborative initiative 'Harit Khabar' is a monthly newspaper that aims to educate people on environmental issues and challenges and raise community participation towards the cause of the environment. This publication has been launched to provide a platform to various partner organizations working in collaboration with the HCLFoundation's distinct flagship programme Harit - The Green Initiative to showcase their work and accomplishments and also to create a network between them. Through Harit Khabar we aim to stir meaningful debates on critical issues concerning our environment and ecosystem, accessibility to environmental education and public participation in decision-making processes in the country.

About HCLFoundation

HCLFoundation delivers the corporate social responsibility agenda of HCLTech in India through its flagship programmes and special initiatives. It is a not-for-profit organisation that strives to contribute towards national and international development goals, bringing about lasting positive impact in the lives of people, through long-term sustainable programmes.

About World Comics India

Advancing Grassroots Comics as an alternate tool of communication to local communities, World Comics India has been continuously working for the past 20 years. Many successful mass campaigns have also been organized using this medium of communication.

Issue – 19, Year – 2, May, 2023
(Private circulation only)

We are grateful to Harit partners for their significant contribution to this publication.

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