

Vasudhā Calling

A newsletter for enabling sustainable living

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Comprehensive Platform for Knowledge Sharing on Sustainable Living





From Privilege to Planet – Reflections on an Empathy-Centred Future¹

Dr. Parag Mankeekar

We live in an age where sustainability is often discussed in the language of technology—carbon credits, net-zero targets, ESG scores, and innovation pipelines. While these tools matter, I believe we are missing something fundamental. Sustainability, at its core, is not a technological problem. It is a human one.

When I speak across countries and communities, I often begin by questioning the idea of “green living” as it is popularly understood. In affluent societies, sustainability has become a lifestyle upgrade—electric cars, solar rooftops, organic food baskets. These choices are well intentioned, but they emerge from privilege. For billions of people across the world, sustainability is not a brand or a trend; it is a matter of survival. They reuse, repair, and conserve not because it is fashionable, but because waste is unaffordable.

This gap between the “green privileged” and the struggling majority cannot be bridged by technology alone. What we need is a shift in values—from lifestyle sustainability to empathetic sustainability.



Why is empathy so hard today? Neuroscience offers an uncomfortable answer. Much of modern life keeps our amygdala—the brain’s fear centre—constantly activated. Social media, competition, comparison, and scarcity narratives push us into a perpetual “me-first” mode. In this state, caring for distant others becomes difficult. Sustainability, however, demands that we move from fear to foresight, from the isolated “I” to the collective “We.” This requires activating the prefrontal cortex—the part of the brain responsible for reflection, ethics, and long-term thinking.

This insight led me to create *Real Lives*, a global simulation platform designed to cultivate empathy. In this experience, participants are born into lives not their own—perhaps as a refugee, a child labourer, or a young girl denied education. Faced with impossible choices, people begin to feel what statistics alone cannot convey. When you live a life that isn’t yours, “others” dissolve into shared humanity.

¹ Excerpts from Dr. Parag Mankeekar’s speech in a webinar organised by VK-NARDEP on 14 December 2025



Parag Mankeekar

Across the world, I have encountered what I call “lighthouses of humanity”—quiet innovations born of necessity. A man in Africa crafting footwear from discarded plastic bottles. Dark regions on a NASA night-time map revealing communities without electricity. A hospital in Chennai where husbands wear pregnancy suits to experience their wives’ physical burden. These are not grand technologies, but profound empathy interventions.

I have shared these ideas even at the highest policy levels, including in my interaction with India’s Prime Minister. My belief is simple: empathy must become central to education. India, rooted in *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, has a historic opportunity to lead the world by embedding empathy into learning—not merely producing skilled workers, but conscious global citizens.

I often recall Steve Jobs’ question: do we want to keep selling sugared water, or do we want to change the world? Sustainability without empathy is sugared water. If sustainability is the body of our future, empathy is its *prana*. Without the heart, no system—however advanced—can endure





Nature Proposes - Man Disposes

Dileep Kulkarni

In this series, we will look at the salient features of the nature's system one by one, and understand the follies of human system vis-a-vis that. It will provide us many insights for making changes to move towards sustainability.

9. LIMITS

In nature, there is a limit to everything. Basically, there is a limit to growth. Nothing grows beyond a specific limit. There has never been a human being who was 10 m tall, an elephant that weighed 10 tons, or a giraffe whose neck was 100 m long. All animals grow, but only up to a limit. The limits vary according to the species, but they are very much there.



Who controls the growth? Who has set the upper limits for growth? For believers, 'God' may be the answer. For others, we can say that there is a built-in programme in each and every organism that controls its growth. It is in-built in their genes. After a specific number of cell divisions, the division stops. The cumulative effect of such individual stoppages is the cessation of growth of the individual organism—be it its height, weight, size, etc. Whether 'things are like that', or 'God has made them like that', the fact remains the same. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of limiting growth is almost a miracle. There is a nice proverb: 'More amazing than the natural phenomenon of growth is the phenomenon of cessation of growth'.

The same is true of growth in numbers. The population of species remains within a certain range. There are internal checks and balances through which nature controls the population and maintains balance. Overgrowth of vegetation is controlled by herbivores; their overgrowth is, in turn, controlled by carnivores; and their overgrowth, in turn, gets controlled either because of starvation or through cannibalism. Thus, everything grows, albeit within specific limits.

Along with the above limits on size and numbers, there is a limit to speed also. All natural processes are necessarily very slow. Incidents like tsunamis, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions are just exceptions.

All organic entities have a built-in 'self-limiting' principle, and organic systems have a similar built-in mechanism that limits their growth.

Secondly, there is never 'only growth'. All growth is associated with reduction. Reduction is either followed by growth, or along with growth at one place, there is reduction at some other place simultaneously.

Homo sapiens, somehow, do not fit into this system of nature. For some strange, unknown reasons, they always want 'more'. They long and strive for infinite growth in longevity, consumption, production, and GDP. Nevertheless, until energies and technologies for such infinite growth were available, it was just a wish or daydreaming for them.

In 1750, with the invention of steam power, the limit of energy input got removed and transgressed, and there began the era of infinite growth in production, and hence in consumption. We call this the 'development age'. We are witnessing—rather, shaping—an era of 'infinite growth'. We now can produce too much, at too fast a rate. Due to success in achieving and maintaining such growth for two and a half centuries, we have come to believe that such linear—rather, exponential—and infinite growth is really possible. It is our mechanistic thinking that makes us believe in this fantasy. We have almost ceased to be *Homo sapiens*; we have become *Homo technicus*.

Nevertheless, the reality has not changed. We are not achieving phenomenal growth in isolation. We are very much a part—and will always remain so—of the larger, higher, and stronger system called nature. Our conceptual mechanical system will always be controlled and dominated by the organic system of nature. Economists may well intentionally neglect the reduction that always accompanies material growth, but that does not mean that reduction is not taking place. They may well 'externalize' all the costs of material growth, but actually these are the very mechanisms of nature that are controlling growth from within: resource crunch, energy shortages, huge pollution and waste, loss of biodiversity, increased stress, family breakdowns, social pathologies, increased international tensions and wars, outbreaks of pandemics, etc. As explained in the study *Limits to Growth*, if we try to extend one limit by using energies and technologies, there is a tightening of some other limits. Due to all these limits, 'development' actually gets limited, becomes non-sustainable, and ultimately leads to disaster. We ought to understand this ultimate organicity of nature.

Any growth that is unrestricted, unlimited, infinite, etc., is called 'cancerous'. Our conceptual macroeconomic growth is a similar one. It will severely disrupt the natural balance. That is not the problem; nature is very much capable of re-establishing it. The problem is that *Homo sapiens* will get wiped out in the process due to unfavourable living conditions. The cancer ends only by killing the host.

Why head towards such an ominous future when there are benign options? If we give more attention to inner, spiritual growth, the outer, material growth will automatically get restricted. The 'development' then will not only be real and holistic, but sustainable also.

It is high time that we reorient development from outer to inner. Therein lies the solution to all the problems that we are confronting today.



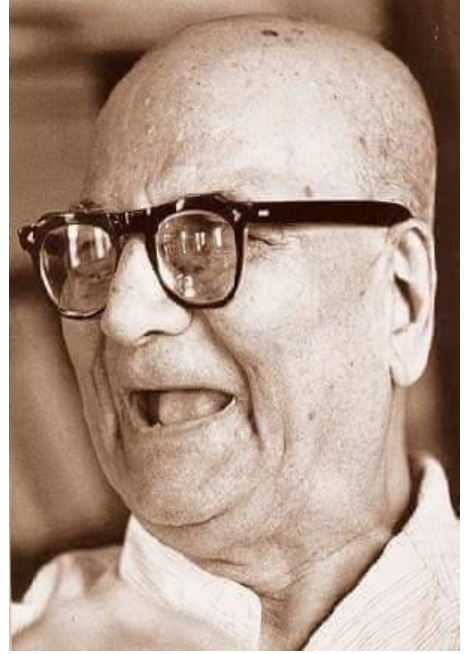
D.V. Gundappa - A Green Thinker and a Sàdhaka

Raghunandan Trikannad

Devanahalli Venkataramaniah Gundappa—popularly known as DVG (1887–1975)—was a man of letters, a multi-linguist, a reputed journalist, a renowned legislator, a great political philosopher, a poet-sage, and an honest and sincere well-wisher of society.

Being a versatile genius, he wrote more than fifty books comprising poetical works, dramas, children’s literature, biographies, short life sketches of notable persons, and works on spirituality and on leading a sane, harmonious life that simultaneously includes individual development, the societal growth of the nation, and the globe at large, with all its sentient as well as insentient beings.

DVG founded the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs for the promotion of arts. He never expected any return for his work, not even recognition. But recognized he was, and amply: he was awarded by the Sahitya Akademi and received a nomination for the Jnanpith. He was decorated with the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 1974. Yet, he remained untouched, whether in obscurity or in glory.



D.V. Gundappa

To find equality in disparity, harmony in oddities,
A gentle strand of reconciling strife,
To find joy in the melancholy of worldly existence—
This attitude of refined taste is verily Yoga.

—Mankutimma 241

This is the auto-suggestion Sri DVG gives in his epic *Manku Timmana Kagga*. The entire eighty-eight years of his life were governed by the *tapas* of observation, inquiry, understanding and, most of all, emulation. The wisdom gathered through his experiences permeated his writing. His sole purpose in writing was to spiritualize the self and public life.

The process and purpose of spiritualizing were all-encompassing: truth, ethics, morality, compassion, fairness, justice, independence, and purity of conscience at all levels and in all realms, private and public. Indeed, this lived idealism and unquestionable truthfulness innate in DVG’s journalism earned him respect from even his most dogged opponents in public life.

When news emerged that he was nominated for the Mysore Legislative Council, his opponents, too, joined the chorus of those who congratulated the Government for such a wise choice. The word “scandal” remains absent from the thousands of pages of DVG’s body of journalistic work.

A distinctive mark of these writings is their innate power to elevate the reader from the mundane and mediocre to the lofty and enduring. For instance, DVG adorns the rather dry subject of politics and policy with an originality that bestows a literary and spiritual quality upon it.

DVG contributed meaningfully as a journalist, statesman, and political philosopher; as a litterateur—dramatist, poet, writer, translator, and author; and as a philosopher: a commentator on the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, which he calls *Jivana Dharma Yoga* (Yoga of the Law of Life), and other spiritual lore. His approach, as always, was to make them easy to understand and practical for emulation. The *Kagga* has nine hundred and forty-five quatrains in all, each with a message for everyone.

Our country has seen very few persons who embodied all these facets as a unified whole, both within themselves and as reflected in their life and work. In this, it is not far-fetched to claim that DVG follows the path set by Maharshi Vidyananda, the iconic inspiration and spiritual founding father of the grand Vijayanagara Empire.

Of all his writings, his poetic epic *Manku Timmana Kagga* won the hearts of the common people of Karnataka. The lofty truths enshrined in our spiritual lore were placed before them on a platter for their consumption by making them highly readable and enjoyable for understanding and emulation.

He withdrew from public life in his fifty-sixth year to devote the rest of his life to contemplation and self-understanding. It does not in any way mean that he became a recluse; he was very much in touch with society.

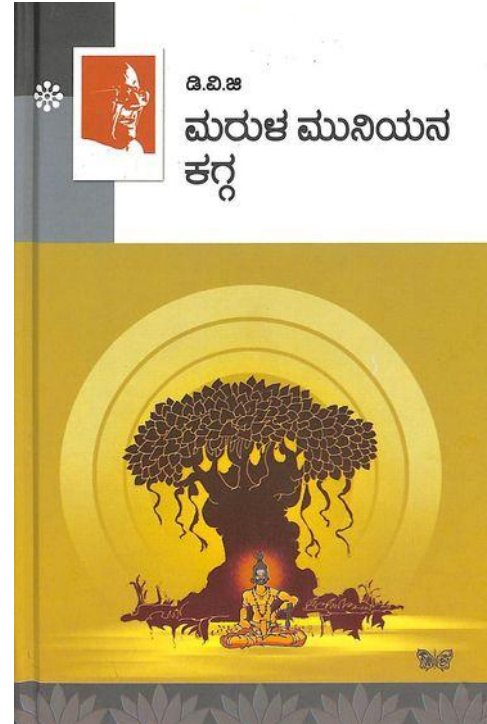
His subjects of observation were the common people: the vegetable vendor, the milkman, and those who help us daily through service. He was available for counsel—no letter or even postcard went unanswered, so careful and particular was his response. It is evident that he was deeply inspired by Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.

His magnum opus, the versified long poem *Mankuthimmana Kagga*, is the distilled essence of his vision of the triad of spirituality, literature, and public life. The *Kagga*—the essence of a purposeful life—is a narration of the life which he had lived. Although it appears moral in nature, it is akin to a long monologue in verse narrated by a person to himself. The *Kagga* is essentially a contemplative work and, therefore, non-prescriptive. Coincidentally, the *Kagga* was published in 1943, the same period during which DVG withdrew from active public life.

DVG uses images, allegories, and metaphors drawn from daily life and draws from the vast bounty of a rich collection of Indian proverbs, mythological lore, geographical elements, and day-to-day life for expounding difficult spiritual concepts. DVG moves with ease from one topic to another in small groups of verses.

The opening verses of this epic are questions about life, the world, and their relationship. “Is God a common name for that unknown principle we do not know?! Did men’s fear, greed, and anger create God?” He asks, “Why is there discord among men, when we have the same sky overhead, the same earth we tread, the same food we eat, the same water we drink, and the same air we breathe?”

Having lost sight of the right way to live, it appears we have only increased our pain and suffering without any solutions to our problems.” From this buzzing confusion of the world, DVG slowly starts arranging the riddle by introducing the illusion created by fear, greed, and anger. “Why is it



that we fail to see the beauty in the setting sun or the azure sky? We perceive and understand the world through the lens of our *Raga* (attraction) and *Dvesha* (aversion), and the related mental involvement and sensual indulgence.”

Noting the uniqueness of each individual being, he explains the cause to be our individual actions influenced by the three qualities of *Sattva* (balance), *Rajas* (activity), and *Tamas* (inertia/laziness) in different proportions.

The so-called lesser beings, like insects and animals, live naturally—eating, sleeping, and procreating—and finally die naturally. While man is different—he disturbs nature, and many a time his life is worse than that of animals. It is very important to feel the need to change, and this need helps him outgrow his limitations. DVG points out that man has both divine as well as demonic qualities, recognizing them within the self and accepting them first in oneself and then in others. “No mountain without a valley, and no light without darkness; no birth without death. Together are born virtues and vices. Can a wave rise unless it falls?”



The sustenance of the world is not by the sun and the earth alone; it is by the mutual cooperation of both. More so, existence is sustained by the harmony among all *Sthavaram* (non-living) and *Jangamam* (living) beings.

But how to realize this oneness? Human beings are endowed with the gift of intellect; they should be the caretakers. This art of caring for the world with all its beings is Dharma and has nothing to do with specific beliefs like Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, etc. It is like the hand caressing the injured leg, or an elder brother caring for his younger sister, or a pilgrim saving another from coming under a huge chariot's wheel, or becoming sympathetic to common suffering. The verses aim to show the interdependence of all existence:

Many a nameless plant is pregnant with juice and fragrance,
The sun ripens and releases them in time,
The blowing wind spreads them in every direction,
We inhale them as we breathe.

—*Mankutimma 69*

None on this planet can stay away from nature; one can achieve nothing without nature's help. Win her heart by good and noble deeds. The inner and the outer are one; past and present are one; earth and heaven are one; and the life force is one.

Existence is an organic whole, though there are myriads of elements and beings. Froth, wavelets, and big waves are all the sea in different forms; plants, insects, animals, and humans are all life in different forms; though the sense objects are many, the perceiver is one. Any harm to one affects existence. But most are bound by the narrow vision of "me" and "mine" and see not this great truth.

Life is all-inclusive, and if we try to divide it—for division is impossible as a stick cannot divide water—misery is inevitable. DVG gives various practical mental postures for achieving this

oneness so that we can understand without technical jargon. So much so, his *Kagga* is considered by many to be the "Gita for the common man."

"Being interested in the world without losing poise is a virtue; so also, be equanimous during intense activity. Nurturing humor during gains and losses—these are mandatory for a healthy life. Enjoying your activity with a mind in balance, without any strain to the inner being.

Spend your life in sport with *Maya*, but always in touch with the inner Being." For eliminating jealousy, he has a panacea: failing to earn a profit in business, a father rejoices in his son's profit; likewise, the wise celebrate the success of all.

What is the purpose of this life? Respect this life, respect the self; differentiate not by thinking that this world belongs to someone else. Striving to improve life in this world is the path of self-emancipation.

How should one be in this world? DVG asks, how do we live this paradox called life? When in *Samsara* (home), just as you remember Him when you visit a temple now and then, be like him who lives in the presence of God all the time and visits his home now and then.

Make two rooms in the temple of the mind: in the external room, play the roles of the world; enjoy alone in silence, in the peace of the inner room. This is one blessed *Sutra* of Yoga. Be a gentle blade of grass at the foot of the mountain and a jasmine flower at home; be strong like a rock when fate pours torrential rains of difficulties on you; be sweet like sugar and jaggery to the poor and weak; be one among all. Every quatrain ends with the address: *Mankutimma*.

There are a few translations of this great work in English and Hindi. But as always, they fall short of the beauty and flow of the original in Kannada. DVG's noble qualities lay in simple and frugal living, unceasing penance-like pursuit of letters, lively conduct, friendship, love for art such as music and poetry, reverence for scholarship, mirth and laughter, non-existent jealousy, unselfishness, and nationalistic thought. Another virtue was his immediate response to every letter or inquiry. These made DVG's character far loftier than all his published writings. His life was grounded in the leonine roar of Swami Vivekananda: "Be and Make."





Tea Matters

N. Krishnamoorti

Aadesh brought home a packet of international tea and asked his grandmother to prepare it. She did. She served him that tea—but for herself, she made another: crushed ginger, fresh milk, water, and firewood.

Aadesh noticed. “Paati, why don’t you drink this tea? The packet tea is good.”

She smiled. “When the evening cooled, I never went to shops. I stepped into the backyard, pulled out ginger from the soil, crushed it on a stone. Tea leaves came from the next street, milk from the cow behind the house. Firewood from fallen branches. Nothing travelled far.”



“The peel went back to the soil. Ash to the garden. Cow dung to the field. Nothing was waste. Everything returned.” She lifted his cup.

“Now look at your tea. The leaf comes from distant hills. Fertiliser from another country. Factories burn fuel. Plastic wraps it. Trucks burn diesel. Shops consume electricity. The wrapper disappears—but the damage doesn’t.”

“For one cup, the earth is pushed too hard.”

“Earlier, tea gave strength. Now it takes it—from soil, air, and water. We didn’t talk about climate change. We simply lived without disturbing nature.” She sipped her ginger tea.

“Nature works in circles, kanna. Your tea cuts the circle open. Mine closes it.”

Aadesh looked at his cup. It tasted the same—but it no longer felt light.





Everyone Is Provided For — Be Satisfied With Your Share

Madhan Kumar



Laurie Baker came to India not to build monuments, but to serve the poor. Seeking direction, he met Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji gave him a blunt truth: nature provides enough for every living being, but humans alone doubt this and hoard more than they need, depriving others of their rightful share.

Gandhiji pointed to Indian villages as proof. Traditional homes were built entirely from locally available materials—mud, thatch, wood. These houses were not primitive huts but intelligent shelters: cool in summer, warm in winter, economical, and self-sufficient. Nature, he said, provides for life even before it is born.

This belief is illustrated by an incident from the life of Samartha Ramadas. When he learned that God prepares milk for a child even before birth, Ramadas realised that divine provision is assured. From that moment, he stopped worrying about his own needs and focused fully on his work.

When Laurie Baker later worked in Kerala, he found the same wisdom alive—homes built with laterite, thatch, and local wood. These structures were affordable, climate-responsive, and harmonious with nature.

Nature supports life in every way: seasonal fruits appear before illnesses arise, animals breed in rhythm with the seasons, and natural habitats like bird nests and anthills display perfect efficiency. Only humans ignore this logic, relying on energy-intensive materials that damage both environment and economy.



The lesson is simple and uncompromising: live within nature's limits, use what is locally available, and take only what you need. Harmony with nature is not an ideal—it is common sense.





Green Warrior in Remembrance: Madhav Gadgil – A Life Dedicated to Nature and People

N. Karthikeyan

This issue of Vasudha Calling remembers Madhav Gadgil, one of India's most influential environmentalists, who passed away on 7th January 2026. His life and work continue to inspire generations committed to sustainability, ecological justice, and people-centred development.

Born in 1942, Madhav Gadgil was a renowned ecologist, thinker, teacher, and public intellectual. Trained in biology, he went on to shape the field of ecology in India by constantly questioning development paths that ignored nature and marginalised communities. For him, sustainability was not a slogan, but a way of living within ecological limits while ensuring social fairness.

One of his most important contributions was his strong advocacy of community-based conservation. Gadgil firmly believed that local and indigenous communities are not enemies

of forests, but their natural custodians. He argued that conservation efforts can succeed only when people who depend on nature are involved in decision-making and management. This approach closely aligns with sustainable lifestyles rooted in restraint, responsibility, and respect for nature.

Madhav Gadgil is best known as the Chairperson of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP), widely referred to as the *Gadgil Committee*. The panel studied the fragile Western Ghats—one of the world's richest biodiversity regions—and warned against unregulated mining, deforestation, and large infrastructure projects. It recommended classifying ecologically sensitive areas and promoting development that is locally appropriate and environmentally responsible. Though the report faced resistance, it remains a landmark document in India's environmental history.

He also played a major role in building ecological institutions in India. As one of the founders of the Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, he helped nurture a strong generation of ecologists and conservation scientists. Through his books, articles, and public lectures, he made complex environmental issues understandable to citizens and policymakers alike.

What set Madhav Gadgil apart was his moral courage. He spoke clearly about limits to growth, warned against blind consumerism, and consistently highlighted the ethical dimensions of development. He reminded society that economic progress without ecological balance is neither just nor sustainable.

As we remember Madhav Gadgil, we honour a life devoted to protecting nature while standing firmly with people. His ideas remain deeply relevant today. For the *Vasudha* community, his legacy is a guiding light—urging us to choose wisdom over excess, participation over exclusion, and harmony over exploitation.

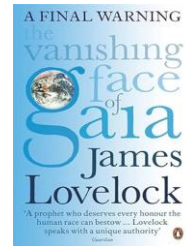




Book: The Vanishing Face of Gaia – A Final Warning Author: James Lovelock

Ajit Sharad Barje

'The Vanishing Face of Gaia: A Final Warning' by James Lovelock, though unpleasant to read, is an urgent dialogue about the future of our planet. Lovelock, the scientist who proposed the revolutionary hypothesis called "Gaia"—wherein he professes the idea that Earth functions like a living organism—warns in this book that the Earth's ability to maintain life as we know it is rapidly fading. This book is a serious wake-up call, showing how human actions are pushing the planet toward irreversible environmental damage.



Lovelock's central message is clear: human activity, especially the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and pollution, has damaged the Earth's natural systems beyond repair. These systems, which have helped regulate the climate and support life, are now under threat. Even if we stopped all harmful activities today, the planet would continue to face climate change and ecological breakdown for a long time. Lovelock warns that we are already too late to prevent a major collapse of ecosystems, and the future will be very different from the world we know today.

Lovelock's view on climate change is grim. Unlike many environmentalists who hold onto hope for technology or renewable energy to fix the problem, he argues that these solutions will not be enough. He believes that even if we find technological innovations like solar power or carbon capture, it is too little and too late. The damage human civilization has already done since the Industrial Revolution is irreversible, and no matter what we do, the climate will continue to change for centuries.

Lovelock predicts an "Anthropocene" where many species, including humans, may face extinction due to climate change and environmental destruction induced by human activities. He explains that Earth's systems, which once kept the planet in a state fit for human life, are now no longer doing so. The Earth, in his view, will continue to evolve and adapt, but it will be much less hospitable. The species that survive will be those better suited to extreme conditions. Lovelock suggests that humanity is too focused on growth and progress and has forgotten that we are just one part of a much bigger system. The planet will survive, but we may not.

He says that while the future is bleak, there may still be a way for humans to survive. However, it will require a massive change in how we live. We will have to accept that the Earth's systems are finite, and we cannot continue to exploit them as we have. This means changing our lifestyle, rethinking our relationship with the planet, and learning to live within the limits of what the Earth can sustain.

Ultimately, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia* is a book about facing harsh truths. Lovelock's message is clear: the Earth is changing, and we are partly responsible. We cannot fix the damage, but we can try to adapt to the new world that is coming.

In short, this book is a serious warning to readers. He urges us to understand the reality of our environmental crisis and act quickly, though the odds are not in our favor. The author may sound pessimistic when he says, "The Earth is no longer the friendly home we once knew, and the way forward may not include us, the human species"; however, he wishes to ring the alarm bell and asks us to face the truth.

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"Ajit is a freelance writer. He, along with his wife Manisha, runs Carvi Resource Library & Study Centre and Dnyanjagar Bookstore at Nashik, Maharashtra."



Training of Trainers on Sustainable Lifestyles: Nurturing a Community of Change-Makers

G. Vasudeo

Vivekananda Kendra – Natural Resources Development Project (VK-NARDEP) organised a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on “Sustainable Lifestyles” from 22 to 26 December 2025 at its Technology Resource Centre, Anjaneyapuram, Kanyakumari. The residential programme brought together 50 participants from six states, representing diverse backgrounds but united by a shared commitment to nature-aligned and responsible living.



Shri. Dileep Kulkarni interacting with the participants - Wonderful environment to learn to live in Tune with Nature

The programme was conceived against the backdrop of growing concerns around consumerism-driven lifestyles that disconnect individuals from nature, community, and inner wellbeing. Drawing inspiration from Indian knowledge traditions that emphasise harmony, restraint, and balance, the ToT aimed to build a pool of facilitators who could inspire others—especially youth—to adopt sustainable lifestyles in meaningful and practical ways.

The programme commenced on 22 December with the traditional lighting of the lamp and chanting of Vedic hymns, creating a contemplative learning atmosphere. Shri. Dileep Kulkarni, noted sustainable lifestyle practitioner and thinker from Pune, served as the Chief Resource Person. His sessions offered a holistic understanding of development, integrating Indian perspectives with contemporary global concerns. Participants engaged deeply with themes such as alternative development thinkers and movements, the Slow Movement, case studies from Bhutan and Cuba, and the evolving idea of *Green Sādhakas*—individuals committed to conscious living.

The programme also addressed the often-overlooked dimension of inner sustainability. Shri. T. Raghunandan facilitated reflective sessions that encouraged participants to examine personal values, lifestyle choices, and their alignment with sustainability principles. Dr. Sanjay Banerji joined virtually to contextualise sustainable lifestyles within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while Dr. Prakash Maithani delivered an engaging session on *Energy for Sustainable Living*, highlighting the link between energy choices and everyday practices.

Learning extended beyond the classroom through experiential and participatory methods. Night sessions conducted by Shri. Sukumar (Chennai) used innovative games, stretching exercises, and yogāsanas to reinforce learning while promoting physical wellbeing. Exposure visits to Sunrise Point, Vivekananda Rock Memorial, Gramodaya Park, and the Vasudha Digital Exhibition on Sustainable Living enriched participants' understanding by connecting concepts with lived realities.

The programme concluded on 26 December with a valedictory function graced by Dr. A. Anbu, IFS, District Forest Officer, Kanyakumari District. Notably, the closing session was entirely conducted by participants, reflecting the programme's emphasis on ownership and facilitation skills. Participants shared reflections on their learning journeys, expressing deep appreciation for the programme's content, methodology, and arrangements.



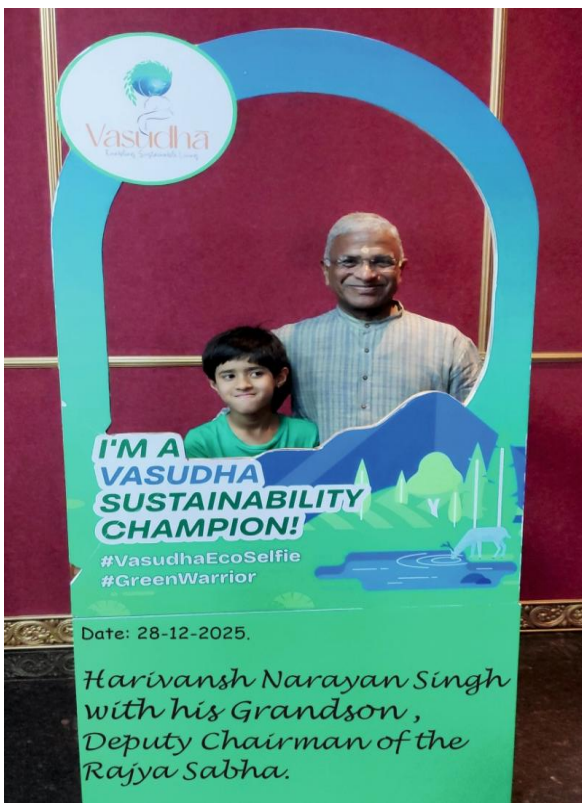
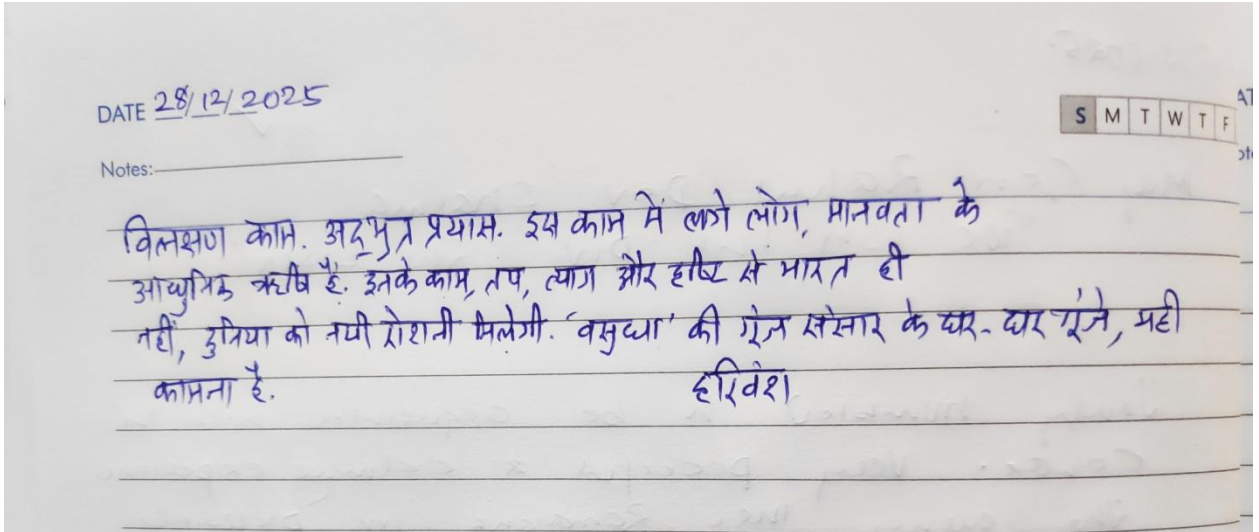
Dr.A.Anbu, District Forest Officer, Kanyakumari and Shri.Dileep Kulkarni giving the certificate to the youngest participant

Dr. Anbu distributed certificates and five sustainability-related booklets to each participant and encouraged them to act as ambassadors of sustainable living in their respective regions. The programme concluded with the chanting of the Shanti Mantra, marking the beginning of a collective journey toward simple, balanced, and harmonious living.



In the month of December 15,300 visitors attended the Vasudha exhibition.

Testimonials:



*Extraordinary work.
Incredible effort. The people
engaged in this work are
modern sages of humanity.
Through their work,
asceticism, sacrifice, and
wisdom, not just India but
the entire world will be
enlightened. It is my wish
that 'Vasudha' echo in every
home of the world.*

*Harivansh Narayan Singh
Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha*