

AKASH GANGA TRUST - RAIN CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2003-2004
(April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004)

1. SCREENING OF VIDEOFILMS ON RWH AT THE RAIN CENTRE

A function to inaugurate the weekly screening of video films on Rainwater Harvesting was organized on 14th April, 2003. Cine actress Mrs. Khushboo was the chief guest. Others who attended the function and spoke were Mr. Benjamin Cherian, Governor Nominee, Rotary club Dist. 3230, Mr. Bhoopal, Chief Engineer, Corporation of Chennai.

2. AWARENESS MEETING ON RWH

A public meeting on “Rainwater Harvesting – Role of stakeholders” was organized at the Rain Centre on May 24, 2003. Mr. Vincent D’Souza, Editor, Mylapore Times spoke on the role of the media in promoting and popularizing RWH, Mr. R. Jeyakumar, a builder by profession and a Rotarian spoke on the role of builders as well as the Rotary movement in creating awareness about RWH among the society. Mr. R. Ramani and Mr. K. Venkataraman, keen rainwater harvesters spoke on the role of the resident as individuals and as a community in promoting RWH. This was reported in the The Hindu dated May 25, 2003.

3. FIRST ANNIVERSARY FUNCTION

First Anniversary function of the inauguration of the Rain Centre was organised on 21st August 2003. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, Chairperson, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai and Vice-Chairman, State Planning Commission presided and Mr. L.N. Vijayaraghavan, I.A.S., Secretary, Municipal Administration & Water Supply dept. Govt. of Tamilnadu was the Chief Guest. Other dignitaries who attended the function include Mr. K. Dheenadayalan, I.A.S., Chennai Metrowater Board, Mr. Karuthaiah Pandian, I.A.S., Managing Director, Tamilnadu Water Supply and Drainage Board. Mr. Benjamin Cherian, Governor Nominee, Rotary club Dist. 3230 presented a cheque for Rs. One Lakh to Akash Ganga Trust.

4. SURVEY TO ASCERTAIN THE RWH SYSTEMS PUT UP BY THE RESIDENTS

Immediately after the last date for implementing RWH within houses and flat complexes, namely August 31, 2003, our trust thought it necessary to carry out a survey in a small and well defined area of Chennai to assess the impact of the ordinance in respect of the nature of the RWH structures put up by the residents, their adequacy and efficiency. The impact of RWH on the quality and yield of water from the groundwater sources was deliberately not covered in the survey since the city experienced hardly 50% of the average northeast monsoon rainfall. The scope of the survey included the following:

- a) Whether structures were installed to merely comply with the minimal requirements of the law or for a larger objective?
- b) Were residents aware of the true potential of RWH and the benefits that would accrue to them from it?
- c) Were the structures designed, taking into account the rooftop and driveway areas, maximum intensity of rainfall per hour, nature of the soil etc., to exploit the full potential of RWH?
- d) Were residents aware of the periodic maintenance effort needed to get the full benefits of the structures?
- e) Were the structures easy/convenient to maintain?
- f) Was RWH implemented in a cost-effective manner?

The survey revealed the fact that only 50% of the premises had implemented RWH correctly. The RWH systems were evaluated against a standard set by the Rain Centre.

5. HECTIC ACTIVITY DURING JULY AND AUGUST 2003

The Govt. of Tamil Nadu promulgated an ordinance on July 21, 2003, advancing the due date for providing RWH structure, from October 10 to August 31, 2003. They were also told that failure to provide RWH structure would result in the disconnection of water supply. This was given wide publicity both in the print and visual media. As a result of this, activity at our rain center increased many fold. On an average 30 people visited the center every day during this period and it also received as many telephone calls requesting advice and help for implementing RWH in their respective premises. The 15 plumbers trained by the center were sent to different localities of Chennai to attend to these calls. Each one of them earned a few lakhs of rupees by working day and night during these 40 days.

6. PUBLICITY IN THE PRINT MEDIA

1. The Hindu dated 15.04.2003, 19.04.2003 and 17.05.2003 published reports on the film show inauguration by Cine actress Mrs. Khushboo.
2. Mylapore Times dated 24.05.2003 had announced about the NEAC meeting that was organized at the Rain Centre
3. The Hindu dated 25.05.2003 published a report about the NEAC meeting
4. The Hindu dated 5.06.2003 carried a report on World Environment Day wherein details were furnished about the centre and its activities
5. Food and Nutrition World, a Monthly magazine from Bombay in its July, 2003 issue carried an article about the Centre.
6. A series of three articles on RWH was published by both Mylapore Times and Adyar Times in their issues dated 12.7.2003, 19.7.2003 and 26.7.2003

7. PARTICIPATION IN EXHIBITIONS

The Rain Centre participated in the following exhibitions and displayed posters on the importance of water and rainwater harvesting.

1. In Brakes India factory premises in connection with World Environment day 5.6.2003
2. In Rane Engine Valves factory premises in connection with World Environment Day 6.6.2003 followed by an audiovisual presentation on RWH
3. At Dakshin Chithra followed by a presentation in connection with the *Aadiperukku* festival 20.7.2003
4. In "PROP WORLD" an exhibition organised by the Rotary club of Madras for the Building Industry at Rajah Muthaiah Hall, Egmore for the second successive year 2-5.10.2003
5. In "Science Expo" organised by the school, Chettinad Vidyashram, 7-9. 11.2003
6. In "ENVIRO 2003" an exhibition organised by Jaigopal Garodia school, Mehtha Nagar, Perambur 28-30.11.2003

8. VISITORS TO THE RAIN CENTRE

1. Two Professors from St.Agnes College, Mangalore on 4.04.2003
2. Mr.Niranjan Sheelavat, Secretary, SANKALPA, NGO from Bidar, Karnataka on 5.04.2003
3. Thirteen members from a women self help group was brought to the centre by Centre for Women Development & Research, Chennai, a NGO on 15.4.2003 and 26.06.2003
4. Mr.N.Vasanthakumar from the Centre for Social Initiative and Management, Chennai, a NGO on 15.04.2003
5. Eight Scientists from Central Ground Water Board, Ministry of Water Resources, (Government of India) Chennai on 25.04.2003
6. Members from Montfort Community Development Society (M.C.D.S.), a NGO on 30.05.2003
7. Mr.Anil Malik, Head, Central Region, Infrastructure Dev.&Fin. Co. (IDFC), Lucknow, on 19.06.2003
8. Shri Karmarkar, Managing Director, State Bank of Hyderabad on 26.06.2003
9. Twenty students from Olcott Memorial school on 26.07.2003
10. Seventy children from AMM Higher Sec. School on 6.08.2003
11. Twenty five NSS Programme officers (visit organised by Madras School of Social Work) on 6.08.2003
12. A group of executives and engineers from Mangalthirth Builders on 13.8.2003
13. Thirty NSS teachers from various schools in Tamilnadu on 17.09.2003 (Visit organized by Madras School of Social work)
14. A group of Twenty students from Annai Inst.of Technology and another group of students from Dept.of Statistics,Loyola College on 20.09.2003
15. Fifteen NSS college lecturers from various colleges in Tamilnadu on 12.11.2003 (Visit organized by Madras School of Social work)
16. Three persons from the University of Nairobi, Kenya on 21.11.2003
17. Thirtyfive persons belonging to various NGOs visited the centre as part of the Road Show organised by DHAN Foundation, Madurai on 27.11.2003
18. Four persons from Sweden on 20.1.2004

19. Twenty five children from Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Senior Sec. School on 29.01.2004.
20. Fifteen B.Arch. students from Hindustan college of Engineering, Padur on 20.02.2004
21. A group of Journalists from Far east countries on 24.02.2004 (Visit organized by KRG Rainwater Harvesting Foundation)
22. Two students from Denmark on 28.02.2004 to learn about RWH
23. Ninety farmers from Karnataka on 22.03.2004 (Visit organized by Development Promotion Group - a NGO in Karnataka)

9. PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS HELD WITHIN CHENNAI AND OUTSIDE

1. Made a presentation in a one-day seminar organised by Hosur Industries Association and held at Hindustan Motors auditorium, Hosur on 18.7.2003
2. Made a presentation in the National Workshop on Rainwater Harvesting organised by P.E.S. College of Engineering, Mandya, Karnataka on 13-14 .10. 2003
3. Made a presentation in the National Seminar on Water Harvesting organised by Bureau of Indian Standards at Hyderabad on 19 .11. 2003
4. Made a presentation in “Jal Sangrah Shibir”, a two day workshop on Water Management organised by IIT Bombay Alumni Association and held at IIT Bombay on 6-7 .12. 2003.
5. Made a presentation in a two-day seminar organized by CART at the Admin. Trg. Inst., Mysore for about 65 Municipal Engineers from all over Karnataka state on 2.1.2004
6. Gave a talk in a seminar on “Traditional Water Harvesting” organized by CPR Environmental Education Centre for NGOs on 27.1.2004
7. Made a presentation in the National Workshop on Control and Mitigation of excess Fluoride in Drinking water organized jointly by the Govt. of Rajasthan and UNICEF at Jaipur during 5-7.2.2004
8. Participated as a discussant in the one-day seminar on “Water Security: Issues concerning India” organized by Consumer and Civic Action Group in Chennai on 15.3.2004 being the World Consumer Rights Day.