

AKASH GANGA TRUST - RAIN CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2007-2008
(April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008)

1. VISITORS TO THE CENTRE

1. Three undergraduate students belonging to the Environment & Water Resource Engineering department, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras visited the centre on April 2.
2. Fifteen undergraduate (II year) students belonging to the Department of Architecture, Hindustan College of Engineering visited the centre on April 5.
3. Two persons from FAKT, Germany visited the centre on April 20 and learnt about RWH in general and the activities of the centre in particular.
4. Ten school students, who were the winners of the quiz contest organized by Dept. of Environment, Government of Tamil Nadu jointly with Eureka Forbes visited the centre on May 9.
5. Mr. Edo Passerella from Milan, a reporter for National Geographic Adventure visited the centre and spent three days – May 6 to 9 to gather video-journalistic information about the current situation of water resources. He was shown the traditional water bodies in both rural and urban areas. (See enclosed photograph)
6. John Adams, Director, Regional Environment Office for South Asia, U.S. Embassy Kathmandu and his colleague Jaipal Shreshta visited the centre on May 25 and spent almost an hour trying to learn about the successes of RWH in Chennai. (See enclosed photograph)
7. Tomas Munita from Chile, a photographer by profession and working for “Against all odds productions” and “Blue Planet Run” spent a full day in Chennai on June 6 and took photographs of the centre besides RWH projects implemented both at the macro and micro levels.
8. Two Professors belonging to the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, Bloomington, U.S.A. visited the Centre on June 30 to explore the possibility of bringing the undergraduate students for a three week programme to learn about RWH.
9. Ms. Vijay Venkataraman working for the School of Science Journalism, Boston University, U.S.A. visited the centre on July 2.
10. Two undergraduate students from Spain visited the centre on July 5.

11. Three students belonging to the Department of Media Sciences, Anna University visited the centre on July 22.
12. Dave Bockmann and his wife (a cultural anthropologist) from Tokyo visited the centre on July 30 and had a detailed discussion regarding ecosanitation.
13. Professor Rajagopal of the Dept. of Geography, The University of Iowa, U.S.A., visited the centre on August 17 to learn about the activities of the centre. He is bringing a group of undergrad students on December 30 to the centre.
14. A student from the Asian College of Journalism visited the centre on August 29 to learn about RWH and its impact in Chennai as part of her project work.
15. Two students from the School of Architecture & Planning, Anna University visited the centre on September 13.
16. Mr. Dorian Spaak of the Auroville Earth Institute, Auroville visited the centre on October 13 to learn about RWH and also to consult with us on the Ecovillage Project that he is involved in along with Mata Amirthanandamayi Math.
17. Mr. Darren Hart of the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA), Switzerland visited the centre on October 18. (See enclosed photograph)
18. A student doing her Master's in Architecture in IIT Kharagpur and working on her project titled "Water Centred Urban Planning" visited the centre on November 13 and discussed the Chennai water scenario.
19. Fourteen students from class VI of Navadisha Montessori School visited the centre on November 29.
20. A Ph.D. student from Syracuse University, U.S.A. visited the centre on December 12 to discuss about revival of traditional water bodies in rural areas under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS).
21. Shri Mahinda Amaraveera, Hon'ble Minister for Water Supply, Government of Srilanka visited the centre along with a group of Senior officials on December 27. The Director also participated in a dinner meeting organized by the Srilankan Dy. High Commissioner in Chennai and discussed various aspects of RWH with the Minister on December 26.
22. Two French nationals (disciples of Mata Amirthanandamayi) visited the Centre on January 24, 2008 and took a video film.
23. A student from IIT Madras visited the Centre on February 8, 2008 to do a project on the Effects of RWH.

24. Two students from Sastha Engineering College visited the Centre on February 16, 2008 to do a project on RWH.
25. Leo Prakash (a volunteer with FAKT) from Germany visited the Centre on February 22, 2008. On February 24 he was taken to Kovalam to show him the composting toilets constructed using funds (partially) from FAKT.

2. PARTICIPATION IN SEMINARS, CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS...

1. On Rainwater Harvesting in a workshop for plumbers organized by BWSSB in Bangalore on June 21. As a follow up measure thirty plumbers from Bangalore along with a C.E. and PRO, BWSSB visited the centre and learnt about its activities.
2. On “Rainwater Harvesting Techniques” in the one-day seminar organized by CII on July 6. (See enclosed photograph)
3. On RWH in the 40th Annual Conference of the Association of Geography Teachers of India held during July 20, 21. The teachers also visited the Rain Centre.
4. On RWH for the Ecoclub students of AMM Matriculation Higher Secondary School on August 17.
5. On the “Techniques in RWH in Industry” in the two-day conference TN AQUA 2007 (emerging trends in effective water and wastewater management in Industry) organized by CII on October 5,6. (See enclosed photograph)
6. Presided over the valedictory function and made a presentation on Rainwater Harvesting in the Training Workshop for School Students organized by the Centre for Water Resources, Anna University on October 25.
7. On the “Need to Maintain RWH Structures” in a workshop organized by CMWSSB for the residents of Chennai on October 31. (See enclosed photograph)
8. On “The Need, relevance and Importance of Rainwater Harvesting” to a group of fifteen students enrolled for a Diploma Course in Dakshinchitra on November 2.
9. On “Rainwater Harvesting” in **Water Summit 2007**, a two-day seminar organized by CII Hyderabad and held at the CII-Sohrabji Godrej Green Business Centre, Hyderabad on 27&28 November 2007.
10. On “The Need, relevance and Importance of Rainwater Harvesting” in a briefing session for a group of 28 NRIs from the US, organized by Ram Krishnan on December 15. On December 22, when they returned back from a tour of Tamil

Nadu, eight of them were taken to various sites in Chennai city where RWH had been implemented. (See photographs enclosed)

11. On “Salient features of Rainwater Research in Tamil Nadu” to a group of 20 undergraduate students from The University of Iowa, U.S.A. on December 30. (See photographs enclosed)
12. On “The Need, Relevance and Importance of Rainwater Harvesting in Industries” in a one-day “Seminar on Industrial Water Conservation: Reuse, Recycle and Zero Discharge in Industries” organized by CII-Coimbatore on February 20, 2008. (See photograph enclosed)
13. On “Rainwater Harvesting and its Impacts” to a group of ten International Students attending a Post-Graduate Certificate Course on “Technology and Sustainable Development” organized jointly by The Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras and EPFL, Switzerland on March 12, 2008. (See photographs enclosed)

3. MEDIA REPORTS

1. An article titled “Water Security through Conjunctive use” written by Indukanth and the Director appeared in the Open Page section of The Hindu dated May 6.
2. Suggestions made by the Rain Centre on the Need to Maintain RWH structures appeared in The Hindu dated August 2.
3. The visit of the 30-member team from Bangalore consisting of BWSSB officials and plumbers to the Rain Centre was reported in The Hindu dated August 3.
4. An article written by the Director on the importance of RWH was published in “Dina Malar” a leading Tamil daily dated September 16.
5. The views of the centre on the need to harvest the urban runoff appeared in an article published in The New Indian Express dated September 18.
6. The views expressed by the Director in a seminar organized by CII appeared in Deccan Chronicle dated October 6.
7. The comments made by the Director on RWH were mentioned in the article “**Thirsty India metropolis finds an answer in the rain – Chennai has devised ways to capture and reuse rainwater to help solve its shortage**”, which appeared in The Christian Science Monitor dated March 20, 2008 (published from Boston, U.S.A).

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0320/p15s01-wosc.html>

4. RWH IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

1. The Cancer Institute premises in Adyar was visited on July 11 for suggesting a suitable RWH system for them. A detailed report was submitted to the management for implementing the system. A Rotary club has come forward to fund a portion of the cost of implementation.
2. Kumararani Meena Muthiah School premises in Gandhi Nagar was visited on August 7 for suggesting suitable recharge structures in a few places to solve their problem of flooding during rainy days.
3. The factory premises of Shasun Chemicals and Drugs in Pondicherry was visited on August 21 for exploring the possibility of harvesting the rainwater falling within the premises. They were keen on making the factory a zero-discharge premise. Around fifteen recharge wells were recommended by us to inject the entire runoff water into the soil.
4. The 66 acre YMCA premises was visited on September 4 and subsequently on October 11 for suggesting suitable RWH systems to harvest the large quantity of rainwater, which was running off into a nearby river and getting wasted.
5. Children Garden School at Karapakkam village was visited on September 19 to advise the school authorities on rainwater harvesting as a flood mitigation measure. They were unable to keep the school open on days when it rains heavily.
6. The Ambattur Godown premises of Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC) was visited on October 10 to recommend RWH measures to be implemented.
7. The factory premises of Fine Automotive & Industrial Radiators (P) Ltd. at Pondicherry was inspected on October 17 to advise the management on suitable RWH systems to be put up within the premises.
8. The office premises of Standard Chartered Bank in the heart of the city was inspected on October 19 for advising the management on RWH implementation. Several suggestions were made to harvest both the rooftop water as well as the driveway runoff for both collection in a sump and recharge purposes.
9. Visited the Naval Training Academy, INS Mandovi in Goa during February 29 to March 3, 2008 for advising them on RWH implementation within their 250 acre premises.
10. The New Horizon college of Engineering in Kadubisanahalli, Bangalore was visited on March 4, 2008 for exploring the possibility of harvesting the rainwater falling within the ten acre premises.

11. The office premises of Velankanni Systems Ltd., Bangalore was visited on March 27, 2008 for exploring the possibility of harvesting the rainwater falling within their premises.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. The Director was included as a member of the task force on water formed by CII – Southern Region, July 18.
2. The Director appeared in Jaya TV on July 23.
3. On the invitation of the Chairman, Central Groundwater Board, I attended the Groundwater Congress in New Delhi held on September 11.
4. Attended a Meeting organized by the Rotary Club of Vellore on September 16.
5. Organised a meeting in Kovalam, a coastal town, about 35 Kms. from Chennai for a group of women from the Dalit Settlement on the Need , Relevance and Importance of Composting Toilets. Five such toilets are being constructed in this settlement in five houses, who have contributed 20% of the cost of the toilet. A brochure in tamil on Ecosanitation is under preparation to be used in future campaigns.
6. Participated in a live programme on “The Importance of RWH” with listeners in FM Rainbow channel belonging to All India Radio on November 13.
7. Put up a stall in an exhibition organized by the Department of Tourism, Govt. of Tamil Nadu during December 21 to 26.
8. Put up a stall in an exhibition “ROTAFEST” organized by the Rotary Club Dist. 3230 during January 12 to 13, 2008.
9. The poster “Catch Rain – It’s free” submitted by the Centre won the third prize of the Geneva 2007 Raindrops Award! organized by IRHA, Switzerland and won a cash prize of Swiss Francs 200 (January 22, 2008)
10. Put up another stall in the Chennai Science Festival organized by Science City, Govt. of Tamil Nadu during February 6 to 10, 2008. (See photograph enclosed)
11. Gave a lecture on “RWH and Ecosanitation” to the staff members and volunteers of Anitra Trust (Deenabandhu Foundation) on February 25, 2008.
12. Gave a lecture on “Rural RWH” for a group of people living in a nearby village on March 23, 2008, was organized by the Rotary Club in connection with the World Water Day.

13. A paper written by the Director and Dr. Parasuraman of M.S.Swaminathan Res. Foundation titled “RWH and its Management” has appeared in the book “Food and Water Security” Edited by Prof. U.Asathnarayana and published by Taylor and Francis (U.K. 2008).

14. **Conjunctive use of Aquifers:** We, at the Centre are presently involved in creating awareness among the residents of Chennai about the need to conjunctively use the shallow and deep aquifers. The shallow aquifer, which is the one that gets replenished during monsoon every year, has been completely ignored in the last few years when people have started tapping the deep aquifer. We have been writing in the neighbourhood newspapers advising the residents to tap the shallow aquifer immediately after monsoon till it gets exhausted and switch over to the deep aquifer.