

## Report

Pillai College of Education and Research, Panvel, in collaboration with YASHADA, Pune, organized a two - day National Level Seminar on Environmental Re-engineering Series 4: Water Cooperation on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.

The inaugural session had an august gathering of dignitaries from various institutions of the Mahatma Education Society and YASHADA. A brief overview of the seminar and its objectives was presented by Ms. Bhavna Dave. The purpose of the seminar was to enable everyone to rethink and redesign our thoughts, actions and concern for our environment, hence the title Environmental Re-engineering.

The Chief Guest for the day was Dr. Lata Menon, Deputy CEO, MES HOC, Rasayani Campus. A multifaceted personality and a strong pillar of MES; she appreciated the effort of PCER, Panvel in creating an environmental concern in the society by organizing series of seminars on Environmental Re-Engineering.

Emphasizing on the need of water sharing among nations, she cited many examples from national and international scenario on water issues. She quoted water as being a catalyst for peace.

The first session of the seminar was on the Sub theme: '*Water Footprint and Sustainable Lifestyle and Design*'. The session was divided into two parts- the first part was done through live screening by Ms. Pradnya Thakur, Director, Shashwat Eco Solution Foundation through *Skype*.

She presented a complete picture of the use of fresh water in different sectors, pollution of surface water, wastage of rainwater and depletion of ground water. Giving the concept of water footprint, she said it is a comprehensive indicator of fresh water resources appropriation for human civilization. Hence, in order to reduce our water footprint, it is essential to follow a healthier sustainable diet, consume less water intensive products, and reduce the scandalous food wastages.

The second part of the session was continued by Dr. Bharat Bhushan, Secretary and Dean (Academic) YASHADA. He extensively spoke about the various Indian rivers and its sources, and how human intervention is affecting the life supporting qualities of these rivers. Planting grass, reusing plastic and, in turn, protecting the environment, was his emphasis.

Dr. Maitrayee Bhattacharya, Development consultant with many NGOs, was the guest speaker on the Sub theme: *'Water Education in Classroom and in Society'*. She accentuated the role of water in human body.

Making the audience aware of the side effects of bottled water on health, wealth and environment, she urged everyone not to buy bottled water. She focused on water therapy; a simple method to cleanse the body and soul. Propagating the health mantra "EAT WATER & DRINK FOOD" she said it takes only 15 days to make or break a habit.

The session on Sub theme *'Innovative Strategies for Water Management'* was graced by two eminent speakers Mr. Janak Daftari and Dr. Amar Joshi.

Mr. Janak Daftari, convenor of an NGO – 'Jal Biradari' spoke about how we can raise the city's ground water table by maximizing the capture of naturally occurring gift from God – 'Rain'. He introduced the audience to 'Jal Sutra' which has been jointly formulated by IIT Alumni, Deputy Director of Maharashtra Nature Park & participants of Rain Water Harvesting seminars. He laid stress on the 2Rs; 'Reuse and Recycle'

Dr. Amar Joshi, a geologist threw light on the data for designing rain-water harvesting systems. He spoke about non-land-based systems which collect and store rainwater like roofs of houses, green houses, courtyards and similar impermeable surfaces. The session was supported by the examples cited by Mr. Daftari also.

The sessions were weaved with paper presentations, which were based on the various sub themes. The participants expressed their views and appreciated the efforts put in by PCER, Panvel, in taking up such issues of Global concern and bringing them to a platform for discussion.