



Conference Report

National Seminar on Importance of Teaching of Environmental Awareness as a Part of Syllabi of Teacher Education

Swami Vivekananda College of Education, or SVCE, located in Goghat block of Hooghly district, West Bengal, India, at a tranquil rural agricultural belt (an area which also has the potential to develop as an agro-industrial zone), organized a One-Day National Seminar on “Importance of Teaching of Environmental Awareness as a Part of Syllabi of Teacher Education”, convened by the College Principal Dr Premananda Paul, held on 10th April 2019. About 500 participants, who included students, teachers, guests, dignitaries and resource persons, were present in the seminar. The college campus is adjacent to WB SH 2 (West Bengal State Highway 2) on the south side of the road which passes through the sub-divisional towns Arambagh in the east and Bishnupur (in Bankura district) in the west. It is situated at about 11 km west of Arambagh, 2 km east of Bengai Chowmatha, an important tetra-junction or crossing of roads on WB SH 2, and 3 km north of Goghat Railway Station. The newly established co-education college, which started admitting students in their B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. Courses since the academic session 2017-18, has created a big hope in the minds of the locals (as well as education-hungry distant people) as it fulfils their educational aspirations. The well-planned positive attitude of the management/organizers/founders of the college is reflected in the facts that they have arranged a set of reputed teachers to teach the students (some of the students are in jobs of school teachers as well), have already set up a workable library, a furnished seminar hall (which was also the venue of the present seminar) with sitting arrangement of 400 delegates and may be extended up to 500, sufficient number of classrooms, sanitation facilities for both men and women, a reasonably big green lawn/garden whose north side faces the main road and other three sides are surrounded by the college buildings.

Following a busy continued Registration Program, the Inaugural Session started at about 10:00 a.m. with the standard practice of Opening Song, Lighting the Lamp, Felicitation of Guests & Dignitaries and Resource Persons, Welcome Address, etc. The Technical Session started at 11:00 a.m. and continued up to about quarter to 05:00 p.m. A charming valedictory presented by College President Mr. Kousik Roy, that continued up to about quarter past 05:00 p.m. and which was indeed an attraction of the day, marked the end of the seminar. In the beginning and in between the programs there were refreshments which included a healthy morning tiffin, a handsome luncheon, and some intermittent tea/coffee servings.

Prof. Mohim Kumar Chatterjee of SVCE, who had already set the mood of the house by a select opening song with his team, also delivered an appealing welcome speech. Chief Guest at the national seminar, Prof. Paramartha Ghosh, Principal, AKPC College, Subhasnagar, Bengai, discussed about various aspects of environment, the causes of its deterioration and the present scenario, the precautions taken nationally and globally, and the necessity of compulsory environmental education. He also mentioned a list of dos and don'ts to be followed by all. Similar views were also expressed by the Guest of Honour, Prof. Chittaranjan Ghosh, Teacher in Charge, SRSV (Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Vidyamahapith), Kamarpukur. Each speaker emphasized the need for refreshing the teachers with the latest knowledge of environmental science, who in due course is likely to create an environment-conscious community that will shape and gift us as well a physically and socially more liveable or better environment. The Chief Guest, Prof. Paramartha Ghosh, also chaired some of the subsequent sessions. Prof. Tirthankar Mallick, Head of the

Department of Environmental Science, Netaji Mahavidyalaya, Kalipur, Arambagh, invited as a Resource Person, deliberated on highlighting air pollution, water pollution, scarcity of drinking water, stepped reduction in the use of pesticides in agriculture, disposal of e-waste, and some sustainable approaches for protecting the environment. He also provided some research data in support of his views. The technical sessions witnessed quite some speakers who covered a large number of topics related to environmental hazards and their remedies. However, I shall restrict myself within the confines of some representative lectures. It is also noteworthy that Prof. Falguni Chakraborty of SVCE along with some other teachers and students of SVCE, in association with College President and College Principal, were all involved in a healthy managerial coordination for smooth conduction of the seminar, and they indeed succeeded it.

Prof. Mohim Kumar Chatterjee, under the heading 'Degradation of Ethics, Values, Duties and Responsibilities', discussed, unlike other speakers, the core points of social environment, its pollution, need of value education and the mechanisms of its percolation to the society, and ultimately the methods of cleansing or rectifying the society. He visualized and explained the formation of a pyramidal structure of interaction and a sequential bidirectional flow of information between a teacher, his students, their guardians and families, and finally the society. Eventually, a healthy interplay between a global community and various governing and implementing authorities might induce a sentiment to protect our ecosystem, recover the previous damage, and abstain us from activities that may trigger a holocaust at a future time. His discussion was words of hope. In a search for people with civic sense and morality, he came across individuals whose daily activities and lifestyle are real-time examples of social display of value education. Prof. Dilip Manna of SVCE added a new dimension to the program. He focused on the adaptability crisis of animals in the changing climate and ecosystem. He pointed out that some species from animal kingdom, e.g., khoyra fish (*Chatoessus manminna*), green vine snake (*Ahaetulla nasuta*), shalikh (common Myna or Indian Myna, *Acridotheres tristis*), house

sparrow, are presently not found in our locality. They are some of the endangered species or are on the way to extinction. Prof Purnava Ghosh of SVCE was very precise in her description. She pointed out the environmental parameters or variables, reasons of their variation, basics of environment, and the need and role of environment awareness among the teachers and students. Prof. Subhasree Bhowmik of SVCE was able to percolate elegantly the thoughts of Tagore on environment into the minds of audience in right spirit. She also pointed out the importance and relevance of them in value education. Students' participation was also impressive. For example, Sri Abhiman Konar, in his talk, stressed on students' role to protect and conserve water, and Munshi Sahid Bulbul presented and explained quotes/poems from the writings of Dylan Thomas. I also wish to admit that Prof. Sandipan Pal, Head of the Environmental Science Department, AKPC College, although could not spend much time owing to an unavoidable busy official schedule, enriched the program in an effective manner.

The reporting author, Dr Swapan Kole, AKPC College, who was invited as a resource person, attended the seminar. In his deliberation, he contemplated on the theme "Environmental Hazards and their Global Remedial Thoughts and Measures". His deliberation would be briefed now. Giacomo Ciamician, an Italian chemist, emerged as the first green chemist in response to his insight into the then industrialization to the detriment of our environment in future. The concept of artificial photosynthesis was first anticipated by him in 1912 in his efforts to produce biofuels. Long before it, the greenhouse effect, namely the atmosphere keeps the Earth warmer than what it would have been in absence of atmosphere because of high transparency of atmosphere to the incoming visible light (the main component) of solar radiation compared to the infrared radiation emitted by Earth's surface, was first anticipated and formalized by the French mathematician and natural philosopher Jean Baptiste Joseph Fourier in 1824. In fact, it is just the gist or net effect of interactions of matter and radiation where higher opacity of outgoing radiation than to the incoming solar radiation to the atmosphere is the dominating factor. As

a consequence, he suspected that the growing human emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) may cause a change in climate. Also, the extinction of species or loss of biodiversity, ecological change, and loss of natural habitat of many species are long known ongoing processes in nature and were rightly guessed to be a consequence of climate change. Svante Arrhenius in 1896 attacked the problem of estimating the global warming as a function of atmospheric carbon dioxide level. The global recording of temperature with future improvements became a reality since around 1850. Mean global temperature during 1850-1890 was 13.7°C and around 1960 it became 13.9°C (five year mean). The United Nations (UN) took note of the developments and declared 5th June as the World environment Day (WED) in 1972, and this day is being celebrated each year since 1974. India was the International Host of 2018 WED with the theme “Beat Plastic Pollution”, a problem that is practically engulfing the entire planet. China will hold the International Event this year (2019) with the theme “Air Pollution”. Another serious challenge, namely the ozone depletion particularly over the antarctic atmosphere, was revealed in 1985. The United Nations took a decision in 1987 banning the emission of halogenated gases. As a benefit, ozone hole is now healing, although it might take well over 50 years for complete

recovery. On the contrary, the problem of global warming is becoming grimmer gradually. For last three decades, each decade is warmer than its previous decade, and these three decades are the top three hottest decades among the decades since 1850. The current warming rate is 0.15-0.20°C per decade and the present value of global warming is 0.9°C. UN had set a target and was motivating the nations to act accordingly to limit global warming within 2°C from the reference point 14°C (the global mean over the period 1951-1980). Now it appears that the limit 2°C is quite high and disastrous. In 2018, in an IPCC (UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) resolution, the target is set at 1.5°C. Scientists believe that the present man-made crisis can be abetted by appropriate human efforts. The success lies, along with other measures, in the development and implementation of use of clean energy like coal-free and, in general, carbon-free energy worldwide. Works are going on in this regard in different corners of the world, particularly in UK. In this seminar we observed an overwhelming response in favour of such measures and the urge to educate people accordingly.

(A few Photographs of the event are printed on back inside cover)

Swapan Kole
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News Review

100 Years over Atlantic Flight in open Cockpit

John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown struggled for 16 hours in open cockpit through ice rainstorm, snow and cloud across Atlantic and made history. With a remodelled bomber they had as the first in nonstop flight crossed the Atlantic. The adventure had started in Canadian New found land and where Alcock and Brown with their aviation petrol loaded two motor double Decker took off on the 14 June 1919. During the flight over about 3200 km height the electric generator went out of commission so that both of them had to abandon their setup on telephone, board communication apparatus and the

heating. During snowstorm Brown climbed in 2500 m flight height on the wing in order to relieve the air intake of the motor from ice with his knife. With the landing near the West Irish Coast City Clifden the bomber crashed while the chosen meadow for the landing turned out to be a marsh.

In the year 2005 two US –American repeated the flight with a similar Vickers Vimy. The landing came off smoothly the golf place instead of on marsh as before.

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