

SECMOL unfolds its eco-secrets to the Army

The Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) is primarily involved in bringing reforms in formal school education in Ladakh. However, SECMOL is unique for the fact that its entire campus is built on the Green Building principle. Even in prime winter, SECMOL uses only solar panels made from UV resistant plastic sheets to heat the entire building, which is made of clay (clay is known to store heat), thus saving around Rs. 10,00,000/- annually through fuel cost. The SECMOL model can be easily replicated by the Indian Army, says Sonam, saving not only money, but also valuable natural resources, like kerosene and firewood commonly used by the Indian Army in Bukharies during winter. The Quarter Master General Lt. Gen. Vinayak Patankar, PVSM, UYSM, VSM, Bar visited SECMOL and discussed the details of the model with Mr. Sonum Wangchuk for use by the Indian Army, for their establishments in Ladakh.



Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, Director SECMOL discussing his work with Lt. Gen Vinayak Patankar, PVSM, UYSM, VSM, Bar



The Eco-battalions move on



Lt. Gen J.J. Singh PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC addressing the gathering at the BNHS

Lt. Gen. J.J. Singh GOC-in- C Western Command, the largest defence command in the world, kindly consented to visit Hornbill House on July 9, 2004 under the Green Governance initiative of the BNHS to discuss the role of the Indian Army for protection and conservation of wildlife and its habitat.

The BNHS-GGP believes that our planet's food and water security depends on the protection and wise use of our resources and biodiversity. India is the sixth richest nation of the world on the biodiversity scale. Protecting water sources and soils directly improves the quality of human life; environmental protection thus amounts to patriotism in action. Lt. Gen. J.J. Singh addressed the gathering on the importance and role of the Indian Army in protecting wildlife. He briefed the gathering on the role of the eco-battalions of the Army that executes ecological tasks, like use of renewable resources among others. In his presentation, the Lt. Gen. showed how the Army geared up for a mammoth effort in restoring the Harike Lake, which was threatened by the invading water hyacinth. He agreed the need for working in close quarters with the BNHS to prevent ecological damages and implementation of long term conservation action.

Col. Prakash Tiwari, Director, Environment (Policy) also made a presentation on the restoration and wildlife protection work carried out by the Army. He also gave an insight on the future plans of the Army for conserving the environment. The session concluded after an interactive session between the Chair and gathering, especially from the media.