

Green scheme

Melbourne-based ex-Indian Navy officer hopes to eradicate hunger with soil-less cultivation

OUR CORRESPONDENT

CV PRAKASH, an ex-Indian Navy officer turned agri-businessmen based in Melbourne is taking to India a unique training course in Simplified Hydroponics or soil-less cultivation. Hydroponics technology dates back to the times of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. It is a technique of growing plants without soil.

HYDROPONICS WILL CHANGE THE FACE OF POVERTY AND HUNGER IN INDIA

This technique has been around in many developed nations for the past 50 years and has also found high end scientific research done by NASA and even nuclear submarines in the US Navy are said to have installed Hydroponic chambers that make fresh vegetables and herbs

for the men on board during long periods of deployment underwater.

"I wish we had something like that when I



served in the submarines of the Indian Navy", CV says.

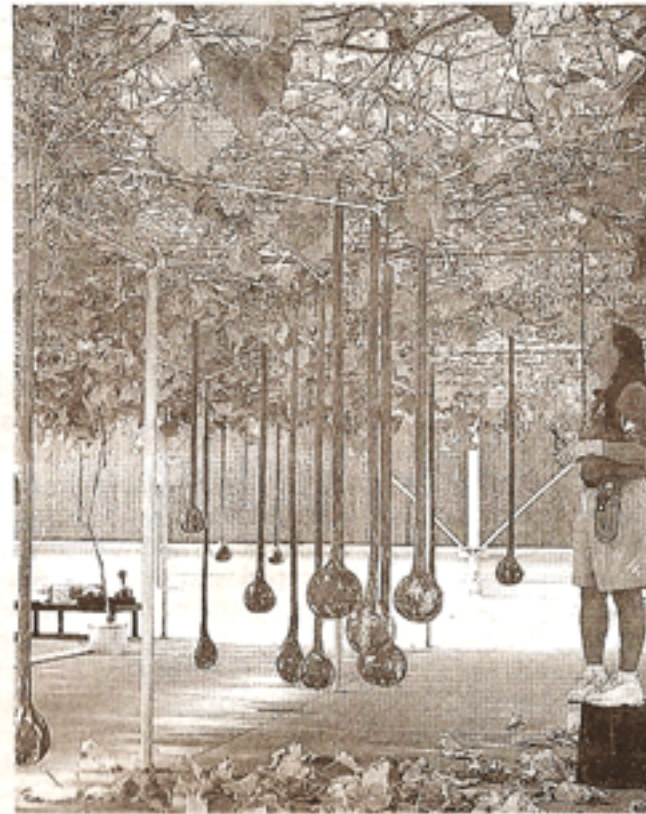
CV Prakash, the founder of Optimus Interweave, Australia, is passionate about bringing best of agricultural technologies from Australia and other parts of the developed world for the benefit of all Indians. He believes this will bring sustainability and livelihood to the people and improve nutrition and food security. His company has the distinction of having set up several Coco-Peat joint ventures between Australian and Indian companies.

Towards this mission, Optimus Interweave along with their business associates, The Institute of Simplified Hydroponics, USA, are now ready to launch their *Pet Bharo*, translated as the "Fill Your Stomach" project, under a new company to be formed in Bangalore called the Indian Institute of Simplified Hydroponics (IISH) in January 2009.

The project will be flagged off on November 17 at Bangalore. Anyone with an interest in growing fresh vegetables and herbs will be trained in batches of 25 each in a three-day theory-cum-practical training intensive. At the end of this training course every trainee will be qualified to set up their own micro-gardens ranging from 10-40 or more square metres and train others in this field. This system is also suitable for commercial growing when scaled up.

"This is a system that can be adopted in the developing and underdeveloped countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals set by the UN", Prakash says.

Ms Peggy Bradley, the Director of the ISH, USA will be conducting the training and



sharing her vast knowledge and experience during this training.

CV Prakash hopes that this simple, inexpensive system of Hydroponics will change the face of poverty and hunger in India in a few years from now and will trickle down even to urban areas where roof tops will become green fields.

Optimus Interweave, has plans to set up a permanent institute for this purpose at Bangalore in India to serve the needs of all those who need their expertise. It is intended by them to set up a world class institution in the field of Hydroponics.