

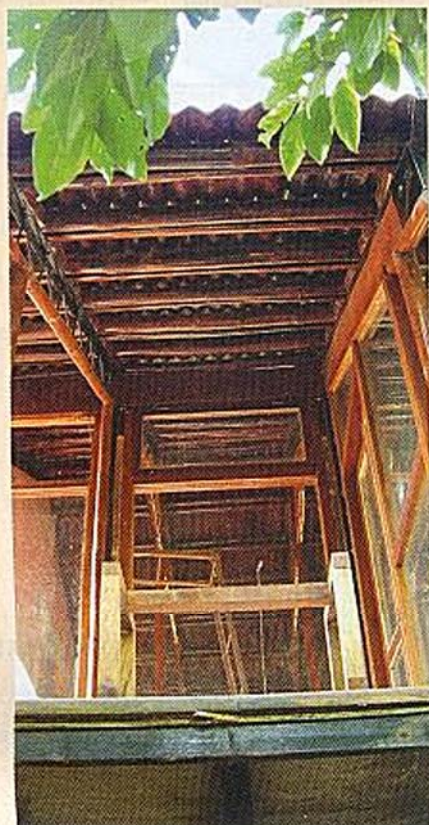
'KALYANI' in Limca book of Records 2009

202 development

Bamboo homes for Rs 1.25 lakh

Wonder Grass, a company promoting the use of treated bamboo and honing its business skills at the NS Raghavan Centre for Entrepreneurship Learning (NSRCEL) at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, has recently won the award for socially conscious business from the Business in Development (BID) Network.

Wonder Grass, started by Vaibhav Kaley, a graduate of the Centre for Environment Planning and Technology, seeks to mainstream the use of bamboo in the constructing business. It designs and manufactures bamboo products, creates a supply chain to source material and then markets them. The specially treated bamboos can be used for terrace apartments, porches, sit-out green houses and resorts. Ready-to-assemble bamboo kits can be used for temporary housing in disaster-struck areas. Currently these homes are made of GI sheets and casuarina poles and are hot and unattractive. Bamboo shelters are cooler and can be recycled and used several times over.



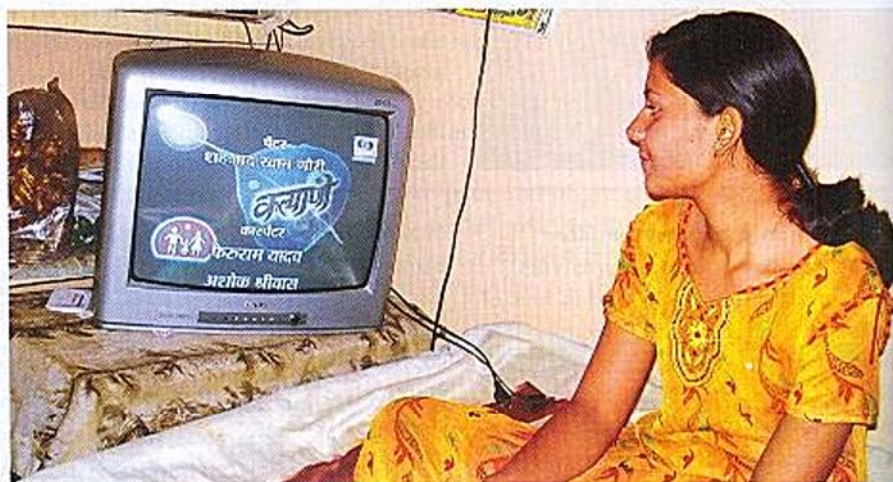
limca book of records 2009

TV triggers off health awareness

One of India's most successful health programmes running on six years on Doordarshan, Kalyani, has triggered off a movement for health in the rural hinterland of nine states of the country with poor development indicators.

In 2001, the Development Communication Division (DCD) of Doordarshan was set up to highlight development-oriented issues of government departments. The Ministry of Health, first to come on board, wanted programmes made on tuberculosis, water-borne and tobacco-related diseases, malaria, iodine deficiency disorders, leprosy, blindness, cancer and HIV and AIDS. Food safety and reproductive health issues were subsequently added.

Usha Bhasin, director of DCD conceptualised the programmes that were entertaining as well as informative. She used TV and film personalities and traditional story tellers giving out health messages. There were quiz competitions, phone-in discussions with doctors and real life stories of people. Mumbai's top singers and composers were engaged. States which broadcast the Kalyani programmes are Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Assam



Kalyani Clubs' long term objective was to give a platform to women who wanted to participate in the process of development. To date there are 2,500 Kalyani Clubs with a membership of over 55,000.

In some villages, Kalyani messages are written on dustbins. For the first time rural people are donating blood and ensuring that fresh needles are used to collect it. In Orissa where over 1,000 people have signed up for donating eyes after their death, almost half of them are women and members of the Kalyani Clubs.

Kalyani has won several national and international awards including the prestigious Rose d'Or award from UNAIDS. More importantly, it has been able to generate revenue, a vital component for its continuance. The advertising tariff component for Kalyani is at par with advertising rates for news bulletins. A 30-minute programme has 10 minutes of advertisements.

Wonder Grass, has been used in an eco-resort in Coorg, for a sun screen for a school in Ahmedabad and for an extension of a farm house in Hosur. Vaibhav's dream is to produce 400 square feet bamboo houses, each at a nominal cost of Rs.1,25,000. Forty-five per cent of the world's bamboo is grown in India and it is an excellent engineering material, says Vaibhav.

The bamboo required by the fledgling, green company is bought from farmers who grow it in their plantations. The company has a processing unit in Nagpur and units for assorting and treating the bamboo in Nagpur and Kerala. The IIM, Bangalore is helping the young entrepreneurs with their business plans.