

Life's stream flows through shade of bambo bushes

The future of humanity rests very much on the fertility of the soil. Erosion depletes its fertility. Due to erosion the river and reservoir beds get silted. Recent reports indicate river floodings at heavily silted places of river beds. It is said that earthslips are also caused by erosion. Our ancestors applied their own methods of soil conservation. Along rivulets, streams and river banks they grew bamboo and reed to arrest erosion. Bamboo, reed, rush and Sevendara grass with their profusion of roots offer natural resistance to erosion. These prevent the quick movement of water mixed with soil when rain falls on the surface of the earth. The Bamboo enhances the environment. It is also a raw material for a number of cottage industries. By this means the rural community is able to derive an extra income. There is also a great demand for Bamboo in construction work.

A research programme to experiment the manufacture of furniture with bamboo wood as base has been inaugurated by the National Design Centre. It is learnt that the experiments carried out by the CISR to preserve the bamboo from insect attack has been successful.

The bamboo grows fast and matures in a short time of about one and a half or two years. The encouragement given to the cultivation of bamboo will lead to the preservation of large trees.

A media project intended to encourage the cultivation of bamboo which can be done with limited labour facilities and expense has been launched by the Environment and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry under the direction of Minister M. Vincent Perera. The first stage of the project will include the Kegalle, Kandy and Ratnapura Districts where earthslips are a common occurrence during rainy seasons.

This media project consists two components. One is the information and encouragement through the television, radio, the newspaper and other the activation provided through personal contact, meetings, seminars etc.

The active support of school students, district environment committees, voluntary associations will be sought in drawing the attention of the general public to the project.

Even poets have been enamoured by the beauty of the bamboo bush.

Among the bamboo bushes.

Do not bring
Flowers for me
To hide my face
Bring only sprays and twigs

Between the ranges
When the sun dips
Clad in the blue coat

I shall venture
To rest my body
Among the bamboo bushes
She so much loved.

