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ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeos Opens a Digital Window on Fabulous Vijayanagara

Since we first wrote about this site in 2001, Archaeos completed two more years of mapping the renowned city of Vijayanagar in South India. In the 15th century, this Hindu "City of Victory" was possibly the largest city (650 sq. km.) in the world. It was ruthlessly destroyed 450 years ago by Muslim armies. The Archaeos Vijayanagar Mapping Project (www.archaeos.org/vmp) was conducted from 2001-2003. From fields of rubble, Archaeos has captured remarkable views of a civilization whose influence reached the far shores of Indonesia and Vietnam and changed the world. Archeos tried to answer some key archeological questions. How big was the city? What size were the complexes? What were they used for? The project result web site contains panoramas, photos, PDFs of archeological reports and videos. Be sure to go through each link. At the "Features" link, stop and click on every view to see closeups of carvings, walls, enclosures, tools, etc.

Only a limited area of the ruins has been designated for conservation. The Archaeos mapping project has proved that the extent of the city is much greater. "It is hoped that the work will aid in the preservation of the site as a whole, known as 'Group of Monuments at Hampi' on UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites. It covers zones not currently protected or designated for excavation and provides another perspective on more areas within this culturally rich and lively yet endangered site."

AGRICULTURE

Magical Neem

Neem is india's miracle tree *azadir-acta indica*. The Neem Foundation (www.neemfoundation.org) has become a veritable people's movement, with a high tech Web 2.0 site and a mission of "Greening India with neem." The site explains the tree's many uses and its history in India, its importance to ecosystems, natural medicine, animal health, organic farming, pest control and economic potential.

While sharing information on a magical plant that cures many ailments, prevents pregnancy and repels pests, the Neem Foundation also shows viewers how to get involved, using the neem tree as a focus for environmental activism.

The mission statement on the "Who Are We" page says it all: "Neem Foundation is a voluntary, independent, non-profit organization. More importantly, it is a people's movement--an initiative that involves ordinary citizens of the world, a forum for individuals and institutions who would like to make a difference. "It is a platform for people, who would like to see the world return to nature for answers; who would like to lend their might to fight poisoning of our soil, pollution of air and ground water, and desertification. The Neem Foundation strives to popularize simple, natural solutions and help people raise their voices until the authorities respond to stop the exploitation of the earth by commercial interests. It is the apex body of all neem movements around the world."

Don't walk, but fly to this site to find out what you can do. And plant a Neem tree today!