

## ***Thirteenth Annual Mobile Biodiversity Festival to be flagged off on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2012***

We are happy to introduce you to the annual mobile biodiversity festival organised by the farmers and farmer's groups leading the work of the Deccan Development Society ([www.ddsindia.com](http://www.ddsindia.com) and [www.milletindia.org](http://www.milletindia.org)), a non-profit organisation engaged for over two and half decades in the practice and promotion of ecological agriculture and the preservation of biological diversity.

We have been regularly collaborating with the state and central governments in several projects, especially to bring about positive policy debate. The Deccan Development Society was a key constituent of the national Technical and Policy Core Group for the Ministry of Environment & Forests in the massive carried out all over India in the years 2001-2003. The festival was first initiated in 2001 as part of DDS's engagement with the Government of India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan process. We are also a Member of the AP Biodiversity Board.

Each year, the DDS Biodiversity festival acts as a solidarity, advocacy and awareness generation exercise for the biodiverse farmers of Medak District in Andhra Pradesh, where DDS has been working for the last few decades. The festival encapsulates brilliantly decorated bullock carts and people carrying the message of the importance of retaining, reviving and rejuvenating agro-biodiversity both of crop and livestock. Over the years, this festival has generated an unprecedented energy and has served multiple objectives and seen the most vibrant discussions amongst farmers about the status of food and farming in the country today. The festival has also seen several national and international visitors who have come to participate, share similar concerns and stand in solidarity with the farmers of Medak. Folk performances, video shows, meetings, folk music has become part of the village milieu in the area and has also been observed and written about, nationally as well as internationally.

In 2012, our Thirteenth Biodiversity Festival celebrations will be flagged off on 14th January from Rechintal Village and will culminate on 13 February, 2012 at DDS's Green School, Machnoor.

Farmers from different countries i.e West Africa, Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Canada & Bangladesh will join us this year in the festival and bring in their diversity to this festival.