

The Green and Good Store

Promoting Responsible Consumerism

So you switch off your lights when you go out, do a carpool, walk to the shop nearby, close the tap while brushing and unplug your electronic devices when off. You have great reason to pat your self on the back and say, "Well done!" But have you ever wondered what more you could do to have a lifestyle that is sustainable in every sense? A lifestyle where everything that you did or owned has benefited the world in some way or the other and not exploited it?

If you have, then here's just what you have been looking for - a Green and Good store! No honestly, that's what it is called - The Green and Good Store. The products at this internet based store promote: (1) the Green cause - environmental sustainability, (2) the Good cause - support NGOs that deliver education, healthcare and livelihoods to the disadvantaged or are made by individuals in rural areas engaged in keeping some of the most ancient and threatened art forms alive.

The 'Green and Good Store' was started in September 2009 by **Aparna Bhatnagar** (PGP-ABM 2004). Three of her batch mates who are closely involved on a voluntary basis are Vinay Choletti (PGP-ABM 2004), Krishna Soujanya (PGP-ABM 2004) and Alok Pradhan (PGP-ABM 2004)

The thought behind the store is simple - to leverage the power of consumerism for social, economic and environmental change. After all, there is a good deal of wisdom behind the saying, "Customer is King." Every business that wants to survive has to keep its customers happy; that's undisputed rule number one of doing business. We may not realise it, but as customers, we are capable of exercising this enormous power for the betterment of our world. Every time you hand out your valuable money to the shopkeeper, you are agreeing to everything that went into making it happen. Responsible consumerism, which is gathering steam across the world as we speak, is all about asking: what went into it? Did it exploit the environment, were people paid fair wages, were their working conditions safe, did it threaten traditional rural livelihoods and traditional knowledge of communities? When more customers choose to give their money to products that make it a better world, producers are bound to pay attention to what customers want.

This kind of responsible consumerism, says the Green and Good Store, is a win-win solution for everyone! First, when you provide money in return for a responsible product made by members of an NGO, they get the much needed cash for their development programmes. Thus, you provide liquidity for the provisioning of



services that make our society a happier place for all of us. Second, you encourage the development of a market for such products, which makes their production economically viable. So effectively, you encourage people to manufacture products made from recycled paper recycled plastic or take up organic farming. You provide economic incentive for artisans to continue making traditional handicrafts and pass on their tradition, knowledge, methods and culture to the next generation. You help sustain rural livelihoods which prevents people from migrating to cities in desperation. Lastly, the biggest benefit you reap is that you also choose a healthier lifestyle for your self and your family, as many of these products are healthier for you and the environment.

The store's goal is to create a place where you can get socially and environmentally responsible alternatives for all your needs, at an affordable price and shop at your convenience while keeping your carbon footprint as low as possible. Being an online store, they do not consume energy for air conditioning, lighting etc like the regular malls. Also the packaging used by the store is biodegradable, making the products even more eco-friendly with a much lower carbon footprint. Go ahead, and check out www.greenandgoodstore.com