

#BeatAirPollution: Bhopalis spread green message | Bhopal News - Times of India

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Participants of IGRMS' bicycle rally on Wednesday. The rally aimed to promote the use of bicycle in Bhopal.

BHOPAL: Residents from all walks of life came together to commemorate [World Environment Day](#) on Wednesday.

This year's celebrations -held under the theme 'Beat Air Pollution' - called upon the people to improve the air quality in the city. Various programmes and activities were held across [Bhopal](#).

Cycle rally, sacred grove worship & lecture held at IGRMS:Celebration of World Environment Day at IGRMS began with a cycle rally. The rally aimed to promote the use of bicycles over vehicles for a pollution-free city.

This event was preceded by 'Kovil-Kadu' - an ancient ritual of planting and worshipping sacred groves found in Tamil Nadu villages. This tradition has been followed at the museum by the natives of different states living in Bhopal. A sacred grove has been established at the IGRMS precincts for the purpose of growing plants and flowers for the deities. This objective behind this ritual is to plant more trees.

The festivities concluded with a lecture - Lessons on Unplanned Urbanisation by TV Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. The speaker explained the consequences of unplanned modernisation without taking nature into account.

In his lecture, Ramachandra gave an example of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy - how future generations have to bear the brunt of a disaster that took place over three decades ago.. He said, "The architects and developers are blatantly copying western designs for construction - with infrastructure like glass on the surface of buildings." This is not a suitable design for a tropical country like India, he said.

He also addressed health problems caused by air pollution like asthma, impaired fertility, birth defects, among others that are deteriorating the quality of life.

CPCB & students celebrate the day together at Regional Museum: Central Pollution Control Board organised a programme at the Regional Museum of Natural History . A workshop and various competitions were held based on the theme - Beat Air Pollution.

Anoop Chaturvedi of the CPCB, Bhopal delivered a lecture on air pollution. A short film - 'Hawa Aane De' - was also screened at the beginning of the program.

Tree-plantation at Van Vihar: A public awareness program on air pollution was organised at [Van Vihar National Park](#). The staff at Van Vihar also planted trees in the park.

NGOs organise awareness drive:Nayashis Samajik Samiti-Bhopal, a local committee dug out water pits at 'Khajuri Amravat' so that the water can seep easily inside during rainy season. As many as 50 pits of 3 by 2 feet were dug out for rainwater collection.

Samvedna, A Society For Global Concerns, celebrated World Environment Day at Bagmugaliya with the children from economically weaker section of the society.

"The EWS children do not get a chance to participate in such events, which is why we celebrate it with them. It is important to educate children at a young age about the importance of environment. The EWS section directly relies on nature for their livelihood, which is why it is even more important to teach them how to take care of it," said Chitra

Srivastava, secretary Samvedna.

The children were taught how to take out seeds from pods of trees like Babool and Karanj and plant them to create saplings. "Since it is very hot now, it will take a lot of care for a sapling to grow in this season. We taught the children how to grow a sapling using the things they find around them and then plant it during rains."

Over 100 children from slums of the city participated in an awareness drive at Neelam Park. The celebration was a part of an 11-day campaign, 'Baccho Ki Vasundhara', focusing on active participation of the underprivileged youth for climate change. Teenagers between the age group of 15 to 18 staged street plays, held rallies, and participated in graffiti ventures in order to raise awareness for climate change.

Speaking to TOI, Snehlata, the organiser, said, "It is very important to pull the underprivileged children into the movement for climate change and environmental awareness. These children have to face direct consequences. If there is shortage of water, these children cannot go to their school or work as they have to stay at home and wait for water to be available. It is very important that they have a voice within this movement."

(Compiled by Aishwarya Shrivastav, Astha Gupta Chandra Prakash Pathak, Lavanya Rana, Ritik Khare)