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Plantation drives, street plays, competitions mark World Environment Day | Bhopal News - Times of India

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BHOPAL: Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya observed [World Environment Day](#) on Wednesday. The festivities began with a cycle rally which started from Deen Dayal Park and concluded at the Manav Sangrahalaya.

Fifty bicycle riders from the Green Planet Bicycle Riders' group, along with other riders from the city, participated. The motive behind the rally was to promote the usage of bicycles over vehicles and attain pollution-free sustainability.

This event was preceded by 'Kovil-Kadu', an ancient ritual of planting and worshipping sacred groves found in the villages of Tamil Nadu. Temples around the sacred groves are mostly dedicated to the snake god. This tradition has been continued in the sangrahalaya by the native communities of different states residing in [Bhopal](#). The sacred gardens has been established at the IGRMS precincts for the purpose of growing plants and flowers for the deities. The objective behind this practice is to plant more trees and respect Mother Nature in the process.

On the occasion of World Environment Day, a tribal and folk painting workshop is being held, which will continue for the next 10 days. Twenty-five artists from nine states -- Goa, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, [Madhya Pradesh](#), Telangana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal - are taking part in this workshop.

The festivities concluded with a lecture on "Lessons on Unplanned Urbanisation" by T.V. Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, with special focus on Bangalore and its climatic degradation. Ramachandra tried to explain the consequences and effects of unplanned modernisation and urbanisation without taking into account the tropical and natural conditions of India.

In his lecture, he referenced the Bhopal gas tragedy that took place in 1984 as an example of how one generation's crimes and negligence can have long-term impacts for future generations. He said, "The architects and developers are blatantly copying western designs for constructing infrastructure like buildings having glass on their surface, which increases the electricity consumption and wastage of resources by 10% in countries like India."

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

The lecture also included topics such as lowering of water levels, significance of cultivating pulses and the need for eco-equilibrium and sustainable development.

MoEF event at Regional Museum of Natural history

The Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change celebrated World Environment Day at the Regional Museum of Natural History. The theme for this year was 'Beat Air Pollution' and a number of competitions were held based on the theme. A workshop on air pollution was also conducted wherein a number of scientific lectures were conducted.

Delivering the lecture on air pollution, Anoop Chaturvedi of the Central Pollution Control Board-Bhopal, said, "We need to address air pollution from domestic, agricultural, industrial, vehicular and other mediums and major pollutants that add to the hazardous climate change the world is witnessing."

A short film - 'Hawa Aane De' - was screened at the beginning of the program. A discussion was also held on the need for more [plantation drives](#) that could improve the quality of life. Apart from this, a poster presentation competition for industrial authorities and professionals and drawing competition for junior and senior children groups were organized where students spoke

about the societal challenges due to increasing levels of air pollution.

Van Vihar

A public awareness program on air pollution was organized at the [Van Vihar National Park](#), Bhopal. Environment-friendly banners were set up at the entrance to spread the message among tourists and they tourists were asked to share the importance of environment and control of air pollution. For this occasion, the workers of Van Vihar planted several trees.

NGOs spread the message

Nayashis Samajik Samiti-Bhopal, a committee working on the subject of 'Water Pool', 'Tree Plantation' and 'Public Awareness' worked towards the construction of water pits on the dry lands of 'Khajuri Amravat' to increase the water level present in the soil. They created around 50 pits of 3 by 2 feet to collect the rainwater prior to the rainy season on their first day. The youth group working for the cause also worked towards tree plantation in the Colonies of BHEL Township. They have been working on tree plantation for the last three years. The water pit construction and tree plantation done by their youth group will continue till the month of July. Samvedna, a society for global concerns, celebrated World Environment Day at Bagmugaliya with the children from economically weaker sections of society. Over 30 children participated in the programme.

"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 about the importance of environment at a young age. 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 hot, 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 the rainy season."

The children were taught about the environment and the harmful consequences if we do not protect it, followed by a poetry/story recitation on the theme of environment. The children pledged to protect the environment.

Street play at Neelam Park: World Environment Day celebrations also took place at Neelam Park on Wednesday. Around 100 children from various slums of the city participated in an evening of activities for raising awareness about the environment, which culminated with paying homage to the trees chopped down in the name of developmental activities.

This celebration is a part of the 11-day campaign, 'Baccho Ki Vasundhara', focusing on active participation of the underprivileged youth for climate change. Teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18 staged [street plays](#), conducted rallies, and participated in graffiti ventures in order to raise awareness for climate change. These activities have been conducted at various places around the city like New Market, Boat Club, Board Office, Bittan Market etc.

Priya, one of the girls participating in a street play, said, "We witness direct consequences of environmental pollution which hampers our daily life. This concern has a worldwide relevance demanding urgent collective action by everyone."

The activities organised included a human chain, where the children joined hands and put forward their demands for a better, cleaner planet and encouraged people to plant at least one tree a year and take care of it. They also staged a street play, that was written and performed by the children. The play stressed on avoiding the usage of plastic and the hazardous impact of it on the environment.

An activity -- titled Green Hand -- was also conducted, where people stamped their hands with

green colour and made a pledge to inculcate any five environmentally responsible habits. Women from the slums of Ishwar Nagar, Kolar, Suraj Nagar, Akash Nagar etc made paper and cloth bags that were available at the celebration, offering a green alternative to single use plastic bags.

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. People like us only read about the impact of these issues in our books and newspapers. 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."