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Call to stop mindless destruction of forests

'They are the nature's water tanks and oxygen banks'

Special Correspondent

UDHAGAMANDALAM: "Reverse the trend now or be prepared to face the catastrophic consequences." With this cautionary message a ten-day eco-awareness campaign organised by the C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre in association with the Forest Department concluded at Gudalur recently.

Exploitation

Pointing out that the damage caused to the unique rain forests in Gudalur and surroundings especially over the last two decades had almost reached the irreparable stage, participants feared that the mindless destruction of the forest wealth would affect posterity not only in Gudalur area but also many other parts of Tamil Nadu and neighbouring Karnataka and Kerala.

While appealing to the people

to extend a helping hand to the department in protecting what was left of the forest wealth of Gudalur, the Divisional Forest Officer, T.S.Dange, who presided over the concluding session said that those who felled trees to make quick money should ponder over the sufferings which would be caused to successive generations by their action.

Stringent action

Stating that the benefits obtained by human beings from the forests were innumerable, he said that stringent action was being taken against those who exploited them for personal gains.

The Director, Tribal Research Centre (TRC), Jakka Parthasarathy, who was the chief guest said that instead of focusing on the 'material comforts' which could be obtained by felling trees the people should give importance to the benefits obtained

through protection of forests.

Though forests played a major role in providing raw materials to many factories, one should not lose sight of the fact that they acted as 'water tanks and oxygen banks'.

Raw materials

The Field Officer, C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre, M.Kumaravelu said that during the campaign a number of programmes were conducted in the interior parts of Gudalur for the benefit of tribals and students.

The Joint Secretary, Tamil Nadu Green Movement, S.Jaya-chandran, Manager, Green Trust, Anandaraj and green campaigner, V.Sivadas, also spoke.

On the occasion, Dr.Parthasarathy gave away a cheque for rupees one lakh on behalf of the Forest Department to the family of a woman who was killed by a wild elephant.