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Cleaning up beaches on Coastal Clean Up Day

Madurai Bureau

Hundreds of volunteers join the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard personnel in this endeavour



Navy personal and students cleaning at Thondi beach on Saturday. Photo: L. Balachandar

Hundreds of volunteers joined the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard personnel in cleaning up the beach along the Ramanathapuram coast on Saturday to mark the Coastal Clean Up Day, a worldwide event to clean beaches and coasts to make the sea shore environment-friendly.

About 1000 people, including school children, NCC cadets, National Service Scheme volunteers and Scouts, joined the personnel attached to the Indian Coast Guard Station, Mandapam, in cleaning the Agnitheertham Beach at Rameswaram; Ariyaman Beach, Uchipuli and the fishermen jetty at Mandapam. The event was inaugurated by Commandant H. H. More, Station Commander, Coast Guard Station.

The exercise, according to Coast Guard personnel, focussed on educating and empowering local people to become part of the marine debris management. It involved data collection, especially to record specific types of marine debris. The collected data would be used to find long-lasting solutions to make beaches clean.

The volunteers cleaned up three km of sea shore from 7.30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and collected 40 tonnes of marine litter, which included clothes, fishing lines, waste nets, bottles, food wrappers, ropes, plastic bags and medical waste.

The collected garbage was deposited at the municipal dump yard.

The Indian Navy's coastal clean up exercise was inaugurated by Commander Aniruddha Sohoni, Office in-charge, Naval Detachment, and Area Commander, South, at Thondi. About 150 volunteers, including students of Wilhelm High School, Thondi, participated in the exercise.

Tuticorin

Indian Coast Guard, Tuticorin Station launched an awareness campaign to promote the importance of clean seas and preserving the coast under the initiative of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP).

Indian Coast Guard personnel coordinated the International Coastal Cleanup Day here on Saturday.

The programme, which was presided over by Commandant S.E.D. Anand Kumar, supported by various governmental and non-governmental organisations, evoked a good response.

The cleanup was initiated with the active participation of volunteer groups comprising of the serving staff members and family members of Coast Guard, Municipal Corporation, NCC cadets of Tuticorin, VOC Port Trust employees, Central Industrial Security Force personnel, Home Guards, Marine police, students from St Mary's College, V.O. Chidambaram College, Kamaraj College, VOC Port Trust School and Vikasa School, Mr.Kumar said.

The cleanup activity was carried out along the coast from VOC Port Trust administrative building and continued up to the south of VOC Port Trust guest house. C Veerabahu, Principal, VOC College, Tuticorin flagged off the event. Around 500 participants took part in the event. The participants removed the waste and non bio-degradable materials littered along the coast which in turn motivated the local populace towards maintaining a clean environment.

The main aim of the event that is being organised by the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard is to create awareness among the people and also to rope them in their endeavour to remove debris from the beaches. It is hoped that this venture would spread awareness among the local citizens about clean coastal environment for the years to come.

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