

Awareness programmes, sapling distribution on World Environment Day

STAFF REPORTER

COIMBATORE: Awareness programmes on conserving nature and a series of saplings distribution drives marked World Environment Day here on Sunday. The theme for this year's observance is 'Go Wild for Life'.

Drive launched

Sulur Town Panchayat, Residents Awareness Association of Coimbatore (RAAC), Siruthuli and a few other NGOs jointly launched a massive tree plantation drive at the Northern Side of the small tank in Sulur on Sunday.

Sapling of an Indian Banyan tree was planted to launch the drive. RAAC secretary R. Raveendran said that the main drive will be on June 19, when 2,000 saplings of shady trees will be planted. "These saplings will be protected with fencing and supported by drip irrigation. Some organisations in Sulur have come forward to nurture the saplings till they grow into trees," he added.

Distributed

Nearly 1,000 saplings were distributed at Race Course Road to persons who had asked for one and to the public on Sunday morning.

Sapling distribution was jointly organised by Tree Trust, World Wildlife Fund and KPR IAS Academy. Tree Trust Founder M. Yoganathan said that 10,000 stickers bearing the words *Uyir Vaazha Oru Maram* (A tree



Public choosing saplings that were distributed to them free-of-cost at Race Course in Coimbatore on Sunday.

— PHOTO: S. SIVA SARAVANAN

for life) were distributed to the public to affix them on vehicles and houses.

The participants also took a pledge to conserve the environment, compensate tree that were felled and to preserve the existing trees and not to indulge in any activities that would cause harm to nature. "We have orga-

nised a massive sapling planting programme at nearly 4,000 schools across the State on Monday, following which the students there will be taking an oath to protect nature," Mr. Yoganathan added.

Posters

Environment Conserva-

tion Group (ECG), an NGO, and the Salem Division of Southern Railways organised a poster exhibition at the Coimbatore Junction on Sunday, to kick start their week-long observance. ECG founder R. Mohammed Saleem said that 40 posters were on display and will be changed every two days.

The posters were a mixture of paintings, info graphics and pictures on wildlife, covering a range of topics on water conservation, afforestation and on protecting wildlife. In line with this year's theme the posters also dwelt in great detail asking passers-by to take a firm stand against smuggling wildlife. Mr. Saleem said that a major share of captivated birds died before they reached the pet shops.

While the poster exhibition will go on till Saturday (June 11), the NGO will also organise a sapling plantation drive along with the railways at Salem and a seminar on waste management in railways at the Erode station on Monday.

Pledge

Employees of the Cordite Factory at Aruvankadu took a pledge on environment protection in Tamil, Hindi and English on Sunday. The General Manager of the factory M.K. Mohapatra also launched a sapling plantation drive on the factory premises and spoke on the importance of environment protection.