



UN

Volunteers

inspiration in action

Volunteering to make Orissa Green

23 July 2009, Bhubaneswar

The 'Green Orissa' campaign was launched in Orissa in July amidst boundless enthusiasm, hope and promise to make the state green through volunteering efforts. The campaign, launched in a Bhubaneswar-based government girl's high school, promotes tree plantation as a first step to meeting the challenges posed by climate change.



Mayor Jena plants a sapling at the Green Orissa campaign launch @ UNDP India 2009

The Mayor of Bhubaneswar city, Anant Narayan Jena, inaugurated the campaign by planting saplings in the school premises and encouraged the more than 300 students present to plant, protect and nurture trees. Guests, students, teachers and partner organisations followed suit to plant more saplings in the school compound.

'Green Orissa' is a platform for organisations and people concerned about global warming and climate change. Organizations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Bharat Integrated Social Welfare Agency (BISWA), Bakul Foundation and Centre for Youth & Social Development (CYSD) have come together to promote volunteerism and initiate action to make Orissa green.

The main objective of the campaign is to encourage and motivate people to volunteer to plant, nurture and protect trees all over the state of Orissa. Volunteering is already at the heart of this campaign. The logo for the 'Green Orissa' campaign has been designed by an online volunteer. Online volunteers are people who commit their time and skills over the internet freely and without financial consideration, for the benefit of the society. Campaign partners have already initiated activities in their respective organisations which includes the 'My Tree' campaign by Bakul Foundation and plantation through self-help-groups (SHGs) by BISWA. In addition, the Orissa state branch of the IRCS is starting the "Green and Clean School" drive and CYSD is all set to take the campaign across the state through its network of 150 organisations.



The 'Green Orissa' campaign also aims to create a new culture around the plantation of trees so that people plant, gift and share trees and also take care after planting.

Setting off this trend, guests at the campaign launch were welcomed with saplings instead of flower bouquets.

In the coming days, the campaign will create awareness about global warming, climate change and the benefits of planting trees through seminars, debates, workshops, publicity campaigns, and more. Efforts will be made to use the government networks to take forward the plantation drive and undertake training for volunteers.

In the future, 'Green Orissa' will also undertake pilot schemes and projects to demonstrate successful plantation drives in various sectors and areas among a range of partners. The campaign is expected to be strengthened with a growing community of green volunteers and partners.