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### Ahmedabad takes the green step ahead

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Various activities ranging from planting of saplings and bird watching to solar feast and cloth bag exhibition were held in the city to mark World Environment Day on Wednesday. All the exercises were aimed at sensitising people on the preservation of greenery and avoiding food wastage.

To spread awareness among people to minimise the use of plastic bags, a cloth bag exhibition was held at Vastrapur Lake. Organised by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) along with Sampada (centre for arts, craft and culture), it displayed various kinds of cloth bags like jholi, wallets, gaapchi, etc.

"We wanted to convey how these cloth bags with beautiful art on them can be used as an alternative for the plastic ones. We've displayed all kinds of bags like jholis which the saints used to carry in earlier days to small cloth wallets used by women," said Ghanshyam Gadhvi, the project director of Sampada.

He further stated that different kinds of bags were used for different purposes. "Women in south India use a small bag with a thread hanging on and place it near their waist for keeping tobacco pieces. Also, we are trying to create awareness about cloth book bag (gaapchi), which is particularly designed for books. In plastic bags, books cannot breathe and generate odour," added Gadhvi.

Centre for Environment Education (CEE), too, conducted a variety of games, exhibitions and competitions to spread awareness. In all, 23 activities and six competitions were organised in which 1,200 kids took part.

Speaking to dna, CEE co-coordinator Parthesh Pandya said: "We held some activities and competitions to raise awareness among kids. All these revolved around the theme of food and its wastage. Nearly 35 per cent of the food goes to waste daily in the city."

Not only this, a workshop for women was held where the chef showed recipes which can be prepared with left-over food items. To promote awareness, Sundervan also arranged a bird watching session for visitors. Even a stamp exhibition was held.

At Science City, 200 school students were informed on how food wastage could be curbed if everybody changes their lifestyle and food habits. The students also took oath not to waste food on plate. Similarly, a fest to promote the use of solar cookers and build awareness on solar-cooked food was held at Karnavati Club.

Of course, who could forget the planting of saplings. While the AMC planted canopy saplings at commerce six roads at Navrangpura and Sejpur, a similar exercise was carried out by Saath (an NGO) at Vatva.

Taking a step towards recycling waste, a pen pal exhibition was held at the Karnavati Club where products made of used pens were on display.

"Initially, the whole idea was to collect and recycle. With this, we have collected 500 kg of used pens in nine months from girls' municipal schools in the city. We had to come out with a sustainable model to utilise the strength of pen in a better manner. That is how we came up with these creative products. This is the first-of-its-kind exhibition on different utilities of pens to recycle it," said Wricha Johari, co-founder of the World Around You.

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