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Plan to increase green cover

STAFF REPORTER

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Around 1,000 college students participate in rally



People's movement: Mayor G. Thenmozhi receives the first sapling from the founder of Isha Foundation, Jaggi Vasudev, on Sunday. — Photo: G. Moorthy

To increase the green cover of the city by planting one lakh saplings over a decade, Green Madurai Campaign was launched on Sunday by the Isha Foundation.

Mayor G. Thenmozhi received the first sapling from Jaggi Vasudev, founder of Isha Foundation. A total of 20,000 saplings were distributed to mark the launch of this urban project. The foundation aims to make this a people's movement where ownership of the saplings was taken up by the community.

A dedicated green volunteer corps is being established comprising at least eight members in each district who would be responsible for the sapling's upkeep. Similar campaigns were under way at Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad and New Delhi.

A green rally was organised in the city on Saturday from the Government library in Simmakkal to Tamukkam. Around 1,000 college students took part in the rally along with another 1,500 Isha volunteers to create awareness. The campaign was launched in Coimbatore in 2004 with the aim of planting 11.4 crore trees across the State.

So far, speakers on the function said, one crore saplings had been planted with foundation's environment work being recognised by the State and Central Governments.

Deputy Mayor P.M. Mannan, S. Kumaravel, Assistant Commissioner of Police, S. Rethinavelu, senior president of Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and K.P.T. Ganesan, Chairman, Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Committee, were among those who took part in the function. Jaggi Vasudev, founder of Isha Foundation, delivered a discourse after the launch function.