

World Environment Day: When the youth join hands to free trees from pain

Members of 'Painless Trees' work towards taking out the nails, steel wires and other objects hammered into tree trunks to put up flexes, hoardings and other advertisement material, thus releasing them of the pain.

Mumbai



Mumbai - We all celebrate Environment Day with great zest, but fewer of us realize the need to save the most important part of our environment, our trees. How many of us wonder what actually a tree has to go through in its life when we hammer sharp nails, set up iron bars to put up hoardings and banners on tree trunks? Trees are sensitive to pain too, just like the rest of living creatures. By piercing tree trunks, not only do we cause trees pain but also make them weaken them, thus reducing

their life. A group of young volunteers is saving the environment in its own eccentric way. They have taken up the task of drawing out nails, iron rods, screws and other metal objects from tree trunks in different areas of the city.

Painless Trees

Embarking on this life-saving journey on April 1, 37-year-old man, Madhav Balkrishna Patil has started an initiative called Painless Trees that has come to save the lives of nearly 300 trees so far. They're a group of 30 people who strongly empathize with trees and believe their attempt lengthens the lifespan of these trees. They take out the nails, steel wires and other objects hammered into tree trunks to put up flexes, hoardings and other advertisement material, thus releasing them from the pain. A resident of Pune and an electrical engineer by profession, Patil was waiting at a bus stand when he first noticed a number of flexes, advertisement hoardings, parking boards and other objects being put up, on a number of trees. That's when the idea to start this campaign crossed his mind. They started out in Pune and over four weeks, they encountered over 30 trees and managed to remove five kg of nails, wires and other objects using their own equipment for the work. Their plan also includes melting all the metal and recycling it.

The campaign in Mumbai

On Sunday, they carried out a drive in Virar that also received participation by the locals. In this initiative, they have collected more than 400 nails, a box full of stapler pins, a bag full of iron objects like rods and brackets and two screwdrivers. Apart from Virar, they have worked with the trees at Shivaji Park, Dadar, and also a number of suburbs like Kalyan, Dombivli, and Ambernath.

Mumbai's Bath Pill and Jai Foundation are also participants of Painfree Tree campaign. The members of Guruma Care and Couriers, college students and local residents are in full support of the initiative. Banners, posters tightly framed into tree trunks get trapped there and over time, the nails hammered on the trees rust which causes serious damage to the tree trunks.

“Not only we remove the nails but also fill these cavities with wax,” says Tushar Warang, a member of Bath Pill.

Data collected from the civic body and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru shows Mumbai has more than 29.75 lakh trees for a population of nearly 1.8 crores. According to IISc, green cover for 33% of the population is ideal for maintaining good oxygen levels and healthy air. Going by this, Mumbai requires nearly 59 lakh trees