

Law may have made environmental education imperative for students but nothing can beat a personal experience of the bounty of Mother Nature, and, in trichy, what could be better than a trekking trip for developing environmental awareness among the students thus solving the very purpose of Environmental education. Mr. S Rajendra Babu, Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, NIT trichy, currently taking up environmental education for the first year batch got the vision of taking his students on a trekking trip to the Thala malai hills situated about 70 kilometers from the NIT(REC) campus. The idea was readily accepted by a bunch of enthusiastic first years eager to go for the trip. Under the guidance of The Science and Adventure Group, Trichy, 50 fervent students well equipped and dressed like professional trekkers, along with asst. professor Mr.S Rajendra Babu and lecturers Mr. P Manickavachagam and Mrs. G.Sangeetha, left the campus premises for The Thala malai in the dawn of 25th October, 2009.



The excitement couldn't let the students remain silent that sang and cheered throughout the bus journey until they finally arrived at the foot of the magnificent Thala malai by 7:30am. The beauty of the hill spell bounded everyone and the students high on adrenaline quickly finished their breakfast and started off with the trek after a short prayer to the almighty to keep them safe during the trek.

No sooner than the trek began, the cameras were out and the lovers of nature, the 'archi' group couldn't help but click their cameras at almost every 5 seconds. The divinity of nature's splendor filled everyone with joy and the excitement graph continued to go up. The path was crooked and highly uneven surrounded by trees and thorny bushes but nothing could stop the young unwavering, untiring lot who took up the challenge to test their physical strength. The species rich environment couldn't let the cameras turn off and at times students posed among themselves to capture those memorable moments in the camera, thanks to the modern technology.



The tough journey had its tiring effects compelling the group to take rest at regular intervals but giving up was not an option for even the weakest among the passionate lot. Taking tang

and energy drinks the students and



lecturers continued to move under the proper guidance of the members of the Science and adventure group. The trekking got tougher as the hill became steeper and the students now began to feel the pain of trekking in their muscles but high adrenaline rush gave them all the strength they needed to continue with their endeavor.



The trip became more thrilling and adventurous as the slope increased and the scene to be had from the hill was absolutely worth the effort. The zealous trekkers continued to trek carefully while the sun was in a hide and seek mode behind the clouds and after a long effort of about four and a half hours the students finally reached the sacred temple at the top by about 12 O' clock.

Taking a long rest their and enjoying the beauty of nature the students had their special high energy lunch which also attracted the attention of a few monkeys around that began to dance begging for the food. Perhaps, that too worked in keeping the adrenaline high. The students were totally amazed at their effort and were unwilling to go back but as per the orders the whole group had to begin its journey down the hill at about 1:30pm. However, this time there was an extra dimension added to the journey.





The astounding beauty of nature instilled in the students a love for it as the students preserved their lunch plastic bags in order to keep bits of plastic and paper that they picked up down the way making the place cleaner. Mr. Rajendra Babu's idea really worked as a whole lot of environment sensitive students walked behind him cleaning the environment even though the exhaustion made it difficult for them.

Climbing up definitely is tough but

none of the students had thought that going down could be even tougher. Nonetheless, the pace was better this time and going back through the same path which now appeared very different the whole group managed to get down the hill within two hours. By about 4:30pm everyone was back on the hill foot. There was a big sigh of relief among the students and an even bigger one when the teachers announced that the classes next day had been cancelled. The students cheered for their teacher's cause that was something they genuinely needed as most of them had developed cramps in their leg muscles by then. All the plastics bags full of trash that the lovers of nature had collected were gathered together on the ground and burnt. With this act of goodness to nature everybody got back to the bus. The heads all stuck to the windows trying to get one last glimpse of the magnificent Thalla malai as the driver drove the bus packed with an exhausted lot back to the NITT campus.

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