

Second Meeting of the Sea Team

Saturday, the 28th of November was a fine sunny day after a spell of rain during the second Monsoon. It was on that day that the **Sea Team** of the elite KAP Young Scientist aspirants had its second meeting. The venue was at the ATSVS *Siddha* Medical College and Hospital in *Munchirai*, near *Marthandam*. The **River Team** also had its meeting at the same venue.

The meeting started at 9.30 AM first in the auditorium where both the teams gathered and were addressed in general by our respected KAP Organizer Sri Velaian Sir and the **Sea Team** Scientist Sri Murugan Sir. They were joined soon on the dais by Prof T. James Wilson Sir,



the consultant of the **Sea Team**, and Capt. P. Bennet Singh Sir and Sri Joe Prakash Sir, the consultant and the coordinator of the **River Team** respectively.

The meeting was formally set in motion by the welcome speech by the **Sea Team** leader Rjumohan. Then our respected Organizer Sri Velaian Sir took over the proceedings with his

usual captivating speech, full of inspirational verses. Though residents of Kanyakumari District, most of us were in fact ignorant of the significance of the place where we gathered. He told us about the legendary and historical significance of *Munchirai* and the *Thirumalai Mahadevar* temple nearby, famous as the first temple of *Shivalaya* run, situated on a small mountain on the bank of *Thamraparni* river. He also described the scenic beauty of the place, full of greenery and mountains and ancient caves and temples. **Nature** appears stainlessly alive here, and it is our duty to conserve her so always. However, unscrupulous attempts in the name of urbanization and modernization have been eroding the sanctity of **Nature** with the result that our dear **Planet Earth** is now facing threats of ever-increasing global warming that, if left unchecked, might spell an irretrievable doom. So we should be on the doom watch. We should fight against the evil forces bent upon blackening and blacking out our dear **Planet Earth**. In this mission everyone of every team must be duty-conscious and that commitment is higher especially for the coordinators, guide teachers and leaders of the teams. He exhorted us to get motivated to rise up, and to take individual initiative and lead; he quoted an interesting yet invaluable proverb: “**It is better to be the head of an ant than the tail of an elephant.**” That sums up the greatness of being in the lead.



The line of inspiration continued with the thought-provoking speech by our scientist Sri Murugan Sir. His focus was on the sustainability of life on our dear Planet Earth. In addition to conserving the Nature green and alive, the light of life can be sustained only in a society free of stress and strife. He mentioned three characteristics that a society needs: tolerance, patience and love. Without

this trio, the social life becomes a battle field, destined to doom. He also advised us to develop self-confidence in us, without which it is impossible to be in the lead.



After his speech both the teams were taken outside by the coordinating resource persons.





The **Sea Team** was led to the serenity of the **Nature** outside the campus on the top of a mountain. There each of the team members presented the findings on the scientific projects assigned to her/him. All the presentations and discussions that followed immensely contributed to our store of knowledge and wisdom. It was really a

fruitful experience and we are all thankful to KAP and its organizers for giving us this opportunity to share and enhance our knowledge. But that was not the single opportunity open to us that day by the KAP; more were in store!

After the discussion started the 'expedition-exploration' ! That was the first of its kind in our life. We started climbing down the big mountain. To me mountaineering had been something I had only watched on the TV; and here with the reality, I got thrilled. To my joy, I found it was so with all of the Team mates and of course with our Guide Teachers too! Down at the mountain foot, we gazed back to the top that appeared to carry the glazing sun on its head!



Then we marched towards the *Thamraparni* river that still flows, patting the riverside vegetation and giggling in the memory of the olden days. There both our scientist and consultant told us about check dams, lotus cultivation and its disadvantages as well as soil erosion. After that we went to a small mountain which had once been a huge one housing an ancient cave associated with some Hindu mythology; we heard with dismay that the big

mountain had been blasted off with dynamite and that process had completely destroyed the cave, erasing a part of our own history.

We travelled back from there and reached the main road from where we were able to see the *Mankad* Bridge. Our respected Organiser kindly offered us a lot of sweet bananas. From there we started a long walk back to the Medical College Campus. At the entrance, we gathered in a circle and summarised and shared our learning experiences of that great day. It was followed by the vote of thanks delivered by S.S. Deepika. And that marked the end of our second team meeting. We left for our home, elated and excited at our first exploration and highly appreciative of and grateful to KAP and its Organisers for making it possible!



Prepared by

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