

Nature lovers mock forest dept with certificate

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Madurai: A group of nature enthusiasts, upset that the district forest office was not doing enough to stop cutting down trees, attempted to hand over a "mock certificate" to forest officials on Tuesday. However, the officials did not accept it and returned it to the enthusiasts.

J Gopinath, Sridhan Nedunchezian, Kubendran, Kalidas, Soosai, and Kaasi from the 'Mannin Marangal Pathukappu Iyakkam' (Trees Protection Movement) in Madurai reached the forest office in the morning and sought an audience with the forest officials. They had brought a nicely printed certificate, but the contents were tricky as it appreciated the department for traveling in the exact opposite direction of preserving the forest and wildlife.

Gopinath said that they were very pained after learning that the state highways department was going to cut down nearly 300 trees, including those with birds nesting along the Tenkal kanmoi in Thiruparankundram. They decided to seek the intervention of the forest department recently. "To our dismay, the department was cutting down a massive peepal tree on their campus. So, we decided to hand them over this certificate. We told the officials it was not to hurt them, but to express our disappointment and helplessness," said Gopinath.