

# Navy helicopters spread seedballs in Rameswaram reserve forest

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MADURAI: Indian Navy helicopters taking off from INS Parundu spread seedballs in the degraded forest areas of Rameswaram reserve forest on Pamban Island on Saturday.

As many as five lakh seedballs of native trees are going to be spread aurally in 3,700 hectares of degraded forest areas of Ramanathapuram district in the coming months.

The initiative is jointly taken up by the Tamil Nadu forest department, Indian Navy and Mata Amritanandamayi Mutt in alignment with the Mutt's Global Seedball Campaign to improve the green cover of Ramanathapuram district.

The forest department has prepared 10 lakh seedballs of native tree species. The department roped in NGOs to prepare these seedballs and they were given an instruction to use only these native tree species, said forest department officials.

Rear Admiral Ravikumar Dhingra, Flag Officer Commanding Tamil Nadu and Puducherry flagged off the helicopters taking off with seedballs at INS Parundu at Uchipuli.

The forest department has deployed field staff on the ground and forest areas to coordinate with the chopper

pilots. "We have selected Rameswaram reserve forest to start with. There are two reserve forests -- Rameswaram Reserve Forest and Pamban Reserve Forest on the island," said district forest officer S Hemalatha.