



MANGALA VANAM SACRED GROVE, RAMESWARAM

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC) in collaboration with the District Administration, Ramanathapuram has taken up the task of creating a sacred grove on seven acres of land belonging to the Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowment Department, Government of Tamil Nadu at Mangala Theertham in Thangachi Madam village, Rameswaram, under the aegis of the District Collector.

The identified land was first cleared of thorny bushes, weeds, *prosopis* using a JCB. A well of 20 ft. deep was dug at the site. In order to regularly water the site, CPREEC has placed water tanks (1,000 litre capacity) at 10 places to store the water which are inter-connected with a PVC pipeline across the site. The District Administration has constructed a shed to house the motor which draws water from the well for watering the site.

After the site was cleared and leveled, pitting was carried out. Salt tolerant species were selected for planting. CPREEC has formed a Navagraha vanam, Rasi vanam, Nakshatra vanam, a herbal garden and planted several tree species. The number of saplings planted at the site is given below:

S. No.	Details	No. of saplings
1.	Navagraha vanam	9
2.	Rasi vanam	12
3.	Nakshatra vanam	27
4.	Herbal garden	54
5.	Tree species	1,175
	Total	1,277

CPREEC has appointed a caretaker at the site who takes care of watering the site. She regularly removes the weeds and applies farmyard manure to the planted saplings. Our staff member periodically visits the site and carries out casualty replacement of saplings.

The District Administration has named the site MANGALA VANAM and has completely fenced the grove. It has also created pathways within the Mangala Vanam for visitors to go around the sacred grove.

CPREEC has erected information boards on navagraha vanam, rasi vanam, nakshatra vanam and medicinal plants at the site for each plant, stating the common name, botanical name, medicinal uses, etc. in English, Tamil and Hindi for the visiting public.

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Clearing the bushes



Well at Mangala Vanam



Laying of pipes for watering



Planting of saplings



Collector's visit to Mangala Vanam



Information boards for each plant