

March 20, 2013

Lighting up lives

The students of Stella Maris recently hosted the grand finale of their Save The Electricity campaign at Elliot's beach

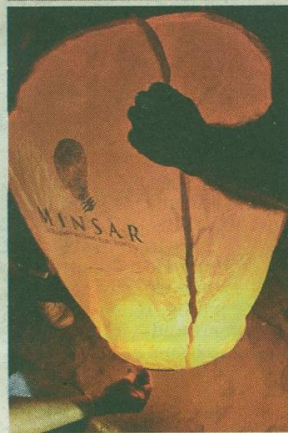
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✓ The setting was perfect, the students gathered by the hundreds and the timing couldn't have been better for the PR department at Stella Maris, who are spearheading a campaign called 'Minsar' — a pledge to save electricity. They recently set out to Elliot's beach in the city taking their awareness campaigns to the streets, not only showing their solidarity towards this effort, but also putting on a great show.

Cindana Manickavel, a final year student of the Public Relations department at Stella, says, "The goal of our campaign was to save electricity. We chose Besant Nagar Beach as the venue simply because it's the only place in Chennai that is most frequented by youngsters. At a smaller beach, one can easily gather a crowd — which we did by having a few activities, and interacting with the public."

From interactive sessions with the public, to having a few A-list athletes attending the drive, the Stella girls left



The students of the PR department of Stella Maris College hosted Minsar, a campaign to create awareness towards conserving energy, by lighting up lanterns at the beach

ORGANISERS SPEAK

■ Reaching out to people is tough. One needs to know how to talk to them and hold their attention. We used PR tools to aid us in the campaign, including catchy slogans, pictorial presentations and short documentaries. We've had our share of crisis management during the process of our campaign. —Ajitha Priyadarshini

■ For the campaign, we had visited a lot of places around the city to impart awareness. We wanted to create a specific mindset — that we don't have to wait around for anybody to help us with our electricity problems. We can stand up on our own to make a difference. We want people to not only stop wasting electricity, but also look at alternatives like solar energy. —Kirti Kunjumon

no stone unturned with this effort.

Cindana says that they deliberately stayed away from choosing a clichéd celebrity as their chief guest. "We scouted for some of the finest athletes in the country and to our surprise, many were from Chennai. For this event we had Vijay Sundar Prashanth the tennis player, Rajini Krishnan — India's No.1 biker and MB Balakrishnan, the National Swimmer who attended.

The highlight of their event at the beach was lighting the lanterns. "The crowd was eagerly awaiting their turn," says Cindana. "We chose lanterns because it represents the past in a symbolic manner. Over 50 sky lanterns were lit up that evening to symbolise our efforts — which was to create awareness among the people about how we can light up the world, and that every individual however small can make a world of a difference."