

TAMIL NADU

Reliving memories of December 2015



STAFF REPORTER

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Event at Loyola College celebrates those involved in rescue and relief work

Recalling some of the worst days the city faced in December 2015 during the floods, the 'Spirit of volunteers,' an event held on Sunday at Loyola College, celebrated those involved in the rescue and relief work, including the armed forces and bureaucrats.

The event was organised by The New Face of Society, an online community which was originally called the Tamil Nadu Flood Support.

The page on Facebook, which currently has over 50,000 members, was initially created during the initial spell of heavy rains in November 2015.

"In December, we worked with the rescue teams and volunteers on the field by looking through posts online for rescue calls and needing relief material. Many people slowly joined us and we were able to work as a coordinated team," said Anand Vaidyanathan, founder of The New Face of Society.

He said that retired Army officers and bureaucrats had come forward to mentor them and that they would be working in a more coordinated and systematic manner in the future.

Lt. Eesan, who was involved in the rescue work in Chennai, spoke about the experiences his team had during rescue operations at Mudichur and other parts of Tambaram. "We had to swim or take boats across places that had been severely inundated to rescue people, many of whom were children and pregnant women. Volunteers who were on the field and distributing relief materials too immensely helped us by giving us food and water when we were stuck in areas rescuing people who were stranded," he said.

'Wall of humanity'

A number of photos, which were taken during rescue and relief efforts were kept on display as a 'Wall of humanity' and people present at the event signed them and left messages, thanking the armed forces, NDRE, police and volunteers who had come together.

The parents of two volunteers, Bharath and Imran who had died during rescue efforts were honoured .

Rajendra Ratnoo, Director of Technical Education, Jayaram Venkatesan from Arappor Iyakkam and Pradeep John, weather blogger who runs TN Weatherman, spoke to the volunteers commending their resilience.