

Students are her army

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HYDERABAD: Madhulika Choudhary is synonymous with Nekkampur Lake in Manikonda Municipality. Every Hyderabadi knows how she revived the lake and brought the floating gardens to the city. However, not many know how this Eco Warrior who bagged the Earth Care Award from the Ministry of Environment in November, has inspired scores of school students to join hands in her mission to save the earth.

The Eco Warrior Madhulika with school children | Express "Children and clouds saved the lake and my work," she says. At one point of time in 2017, soon after the monsoons stopped and she had no funds to water the plants in the abandoned lake, she got students in the neighbourhood to come along with their water bottles to water the plants. "I know it sounds like a drop in the ocean, but like every drop that makes the ocean, these students are an essential part of my work," she says. Apparently, at that point of time, students would walk all the way from their schools in the neighbourhood, pour the water to the plants, giggle a bit at the way they were doing it and go back. "Every day, I used to send a word to the school management and depending on their class and exam schedule, one or two schools and a few hundred students would make it to the lake and pour water. It was an amazing sight to see the young ones diligently and lovingly take part in saving the 25-acre lake." Madhulika is the founder of Dhurvansh, an NGO which works for the environment and her organisation has been instrumental in saving the lake which is opposite Taramati Baradari. "It took 15 days, 8 trucks daily to clear the 20-year-old garbage to be cleared. She says that the government can easily keep the weed away in the lakes, using their idea of floating gardens, but it is just biding time as a permanent solution to the weeds would mean no more budgets and kickbacks for middlemen and contractors who come to clean it periodically. Today, the lake is home to 178 birds which visit the lake between November to February, peacocks, cobras, a family of mongoose, 40 types of insects and spiders, lots of species are here. The Singapore-returned 37-year-old says it works best to involve children right from the time they are toddlers. First published by [New Indian Express](#) on 28 Nov. 2019 Contact

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