“Revival and Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies”

Sharabha Teertham

By

Vivekananda Kendra - Nardep

Type: Stepped Tank  
Location: On the way to Dhanushkodi – inside the forest  
Coordinates: Lat-9.25655, Long-79.31602  
Measurements: L5.48 m B 3.05m D 3.05m  
Water holding capacity: 50977 litres  
Water availability: Throughout the year  
Literary mention: Skandapuram  
Affiliated to: Ramanathaswamy Temple; HR&CE  
Deity: Lord Sharabeswara  
Survey no: 1044/2, Rameswaram Revenue village, Rameswaram Taluk  
Ritual cleansing: Cures Diseases and Removes the Sins  
Year of renovation: 2022  
Working period: 29 September 2022 to 22 October 2022  
Renovation work sponsored by: Vivekananda Kendra - NARDEP

Sharabha Teertham

Sharabha Teertham is a tank located in the forest area of Rameswaram Municipality, on the way to Dhanushkodi. Other water bodies namely Jatamukuta, Sarvaroga nivaran and Jatayu Teerthams are in the vicinity. Tharavai wetlands are approximately 1kms away from Sharabha Teertham.

It is located 6.4 KM from the west tower of Sri Ramanathasamy temple towards the South West direction.

Etymology

Śhara (शर) refers to “legendary animal with eight legs” (living in the forest), according to the Rāmāyaṇa chapter 2.29. Sharabha is a creature in Hindu mythology that is part of lion and part of bird. According to Sanskrit literature, Sharabha is an eight-legged beast, mightier than a lion and elephant and which can kill the lion. Sharabha, can clear a valley in one jump.

Shaiva scriptures narrate that god Shiva assumed the Avatar (incarnation) of Sharabha to pacify Narasimha. While as per Skanda Purana: The purpose of Shiva assuming the form of Sharabha was to ensure that the lion body of Vishnu was discarded and he got united with his original divine form.
**Architecture**

The entire construction of this water body is to suit cattle and wild animals. Thus, there is no gate so that the cattle can reach the water source without any difficulty. Only the steps have been constructed, even that are wide and almost like a ramp.

**Process of Renovation**

Near the Teertham there is a temple of double headed Munneswarar which is being worshipped as the ancestral god for several people in Rameswaram. One Mr.Kumar and his mother are regularly doing the pooja. Shri.Pakshi Sivarajan (literature scholar from Rameswaram who is also a volunteer of Green Rameswaram) says that it is Sharabeswarar temple and the water body is Sharabha.

When the renovation team visited the location, it was covered with thorny bushes. Water was stagnated in the area and wild animals used to quench their thirst in the water.

Following works were carried out:

i. Cleaning the surrounding area which was full of plates, paper, plastic bottles etc.
ii. Removing the thorny bushes
iii. Taking out loads of sand and dumping it away by way of tractor
iv. De-silting the area
v. Giving proper shape to the water body
vi. Constructing steps so that the devotees can enter the water body properly

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*Sharabha Teertham before the renovation*
Cleaning the surrounding area by Auto drivers.

Cleaning work is on ....... Forest workers also joined.
Thorny bushes being cleared by JCB

Water after de-silting
Construction of platform at the entry point

Steps under construction
Teertham is ready to welcome the pilgrims and the forest animals

Naga idols were supplied by the Agni Teertham purohit Sangam. While cleaning we could locate the Tortoise fingerlings and the same were transferred to the water body safely. Devotees of the nearby temple are happy with the work carried out by Vivekananda Kendra - Nardep, Kanyakumari and Green Rameswaram Trust.