



Water hyacinths cleared at Ezhikkara

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: The spread of water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) leads to stagnation and low oxygen levels in the water. It is increasingly posing threat to cage fish farming enterprises in the backwaters. To tackle this issue, the Ernakulam Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) functioning under the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has launched a campaign to make the cage fish farmers aware of the negative impact of water hyacinth on fish production and the method of removing them from the waterbodies. In line with the campaign and as part of Swachhta Pakhwada, a massive cleaning drive was conducted at Ezhikkara by engaging young fish farmers to remove the plants from an area of two acres.

Unlike the usual trend of decaying by October, this ti-



Fish farmers clear water hyacinth

me the aquatic plant is still seen rampant in the backwaters following extended monsoon and release of water from dams.

"The plant poses threat mostly to cage aquaculture as it considerably reduces water flow in fish cages installed in the backwaters and thereby the oxygen level is reduced in farms leading to fish kill," said KVK chief Shinoj Subramanian. "Water hyacinths also act as a breeding ground for parasites and other hazardous organisms that cause diseases to fish," he added.