

Date:29/04/2008 URL:

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/04/29/stories/2008042951330200.htm>

[Back](#)

[Tamil Nadu](#)

Five villages aiming for total sanitation award

K.Manikandan

— Photo: K. Manikandan



***Clean village:* The women's sanitary complex in Sithalapakkam, which is also competing for the Nirmal Gram Puraskar Award.**

TAMBARAM: Five villages in the southern suburbs of Chennai are competing for the coveted Nirmal Gram Puraskar of the Central government. The award is in recognition of the efforts of rural local bodies to implement all the schemes under the Total Sanitation Campaign.

There are 25 village panchayats in St. Thomas Mount Panchayat Union (Mount Block) where the Total Sanitation Campaign of the Ministry of Rural Development and the State government is currently on.

And to encourage rural bodies, its administrators, ward members and residents to participate in improving levels of sanitation and hygiene, the Centre has been distributing the Nirmal Gram (beautiful villages) Puraskar awards annually.

And five among them — Sithalapakkam, Kaarapakkam, Vengaivaasal, Tiruvanchery and Mudichur village panchayats — were selected to compete for the award for 2007-08.

Officials of the District Rural Development Agency and the staff of Total Sanitation Campaign initiated awareness programmes among all sections in these rural local bodies on the importance of clean and green villages.

The parameters for eligibility included no open defecation, no dumping of garbage in public spaces and along roads. While collecting garbage including kitchen waste from households was not a problem, preventing open defecation was not easy.

To achieve this, residents were encouraged to build their own toilets attached to their houses or near them. Those who could not afford them were brought under the Individual House Hold Toilet scheme of TSC where government subsidies were extended. Apart from houses, panchayat union primary and middle schools, Integrated Child Development Service centres too needed to have well-maintained toilets. And it was mandatory for these villages to have functional women's sanitary complexes to be eligible for the award.

The Information Education Campaign included awareness rallies, distribution of pamphlets on disposing garbage, maintenance of toilets and drawing of eye-catching advertisements and slogans.

Officials said Indian Bank, Hand in Hand, an NGO and Titanium Tantulum, a corporate firm, helped implement some of the sanitation schemes in Tiruvanchery, Mudichur and Vengaivaasal village panchayats. An inspection by a team of officials is expected soon and the awards announced a little later. The award includes a cash prize between Rs. 2 lakh and Rs. 5 lakh and the sum would be used to implement additional sanitation schemes.

© Copyright 2000 - 2008 The Hindu