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## Amma canteen kitchen to run on biogas

COIMBATORE: Plans are afoot to transform the Amma Unaivagam at Saravanampatti into a zero-waste kitchen. A bio-methanisation unit will soon be set up here that will source all the vegetable waste and food leftover from the canteen (unaivagam) besides organic waste from hotels in the city and turn them into fuel to run the unaivagam kitchen.

Civil work to set up the biogas unit has already started. "The natural gas produced will be utilised at the canteen and if there is surplus it will be used for other purposes," said G Latha, commissioner, Coimbatore Municipal Corporation.

The corporation has opted for a one tonne capacity bio-methanisation unit at Saravanampatti. The total estimated cost of the project is Rs10 lakh. The corporation will ensure proper collection of food and organic waste from commercial vegetable stalls and other enterprises, diverting it to the unit to be used for natural gas generation. Pipelines will be laid from the bio-methanisation unit and connected to the unaivagam kitchen with valves attached to supply gas whenever required. LPG cylinder kit allotted at the canteen will be kept on standby mode for emergencies after the methanisation unit becomes operational.

According to corporation officials, on an average, a kitchen operating at an Amma Unaivagam consumes 27 to 29 LPG cylinders every month. The burden on LPG could be effectively curtailed once the biogas plant becomes functional, according to corporation officials. The corporation has sold more than 5 lakh idlis and 1.36 lakh plates of sambar rice and 1.17 lakh plates of curd rice at the 10 city budget canteens since June 2 this year. "The methanisation plant at Saravanampatti will be completed at the earliest," said S Sivarasu, deputy commissioner, CMC.

The municipal administration and water supply department from Chennai has already instructed the corporation to identify suitable locations for medium scale bio methanisation units in the city. The corporation has also proposed to set up a similar unit at the proposed wholesale vegetable market site near Kavundampalayam.