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## **Plan to make Tirunelveli plastic-free**

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*Waste below 20 microns to be sent to cement plant*

*Local body to give one rupee for every kg brought*

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TIRUNELVELI: If Collector M. Jayaraman's innovative plan goes well with the officials, public, rag pickers and waste plastic traders, the Tirunelveli Corporation area will be liberated from the hazards of synthetic materials.

Mr. Jayaraman has formulated a scheme for buying plastic waste of 40 microns and below. According to him, polythene bags, plastic cups etc., were lying in large quantities in the extension areas of all four zones of the Corporation, streets, public and private places and irrigation channels.

Besides chocking the irrigation and drainage channels and causing health hazards, these non-degradable plastic waste also prevents the percolation of rainwater into the earth as it forms an impermeable layer beneath the top soil. Whenever these plastic wastes, being

dumped along with other refuse, are burnt, they emit carcinogenic gases like dioxin, he says.

To check this menace, the district administration, along with the local body, has made an arrangement to send the polythene bags and other waste below 20 microns to India Cements' manufacturing unit here, where the waste is burnt along with coal in the kiln. As the success of this arrangement is closely associated with the segregation of plastic waste at source, Mr. Jayaraman has introduced this programme.

Plastic waste below 40 microns may be collected by anybody and taken to the unit offices of Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai, Thatchanallur and Melapalayam zones on Tuesdays and Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

"Every kg of plastic waste brought to the unit offices at Pettai (Tirunelveli zone), Maharaja Nagar (Palayamkottai zone), Perumalpuram (Melapalayam zone) and Thatchanallur (Thatchanallur zone) will fetch one rupee," Mr. Jayaraman said.