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Panchayats reap rich reward through waste management

The solid waste management scheme rolled out by the State government has started making impact in all the 11 town panchayats in Karur district.

The scheme, which aimed at helping local bodies generate income from garbage, besides ensuring clean environment, was started about 10 months back in town panchayats, including Pallapatti, Puliur, Marudhur, Punjai Pugalur, Aravakurichi, and Krishnarayapuram. The initial emphasis was on setting up infrastructure for processing and segregating solid waste into degradable and non-degradable waste. Considerable time was spent in creating awareness on the scheme among the residents.

After the first few months, the town panchayats have begun segregating waste, and now, almost all the 11 panchayats have been generating income by selling the products sourced from waste. Though a few town panchayats are lagging behind, a healthy competition has emerged among the panchayats to emerge as the best performer.

“A system has been established in town panchayats and it has come to stay. We see a considerable improvement in garbage collection and disposal,” S.Jayandhi, Collector, told *The Hindu* after inspecting some of the town panchayats recently.

Production of manure and vermicompost and production of biogas from food waste are among some of the projects being implemented by the town panchayats.

While most of them have got into the business of manure and vermicompost production and sales, the Puliur town panchayat has gone a step ahead by producing biogas from waste.

It has set up a unit to produce biogas by making use of the availability of high volume of poultry, aquatic and mutton waste. It is marketing the gas to the households. Similarly, it has also set up a duck rearing farm by using the food waste available in the area.

“Production of biogas is an important initiative. It shows that

we can fully utilise the food waste to produce fuel. The Puliur town panchayat has been asked to expand the project,” Ms.Jayandhi said.

She added that 26.38 tonnes of garbage has been collected and segregated since the implementation of the scheme in the 11 town panchayats. About 66,600 kilograms of manure had been produced. Of this, about 3,300 kg was sold to farmers at a cost of Rs.3 a kg.