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Swedish experts to help run biogas powered buses

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Dec. 1: A team of Swedish experts are working on a pilot project in the city to treat sewage and generate biogas fuel to run cars and buses.

Biogas-powered trains, cars and buses have proved to be big success in Sweden and the experts want to replicate it in Chennai.

Chennai has five sewage treatment plants which treat around 486 million litres of sewage every day. The Chennai Metro Water Supply and Sewage Board (CMWSSB) is also planning to set up few more plants in Koyambedu and Kodangaiyur, in addition to the existing ones. This would take up the sewage treated to 600 MLD on a single day.

“From this sewage we can generate around 8,500 litres of biogas which is equal to 8,500 litres of diesel,” said Mr Sivraman Pandian, a Chennai based researcher from the

Linköping University of Sweden.

“The cost of generation of biogas fuel is 40 per cent less than diesel.”

Mr Sivraman added that the project would help save at least 40 per cent of the amount spent on fuel.

The Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA) and CMWSSB are also working to set up facilities for transforming sewage waste into biogas fuel to run cars and buses, with the help of this Sw-edish research team.

“The project is in the conceptual stage and the economics are being worked out,” said Mr Shiv Das Meena, CMD of CMWSSB.

Once the project is completed, 200 city buses can be run with biogas fuel every day.

“We are planning to hold talks with Ashok Leyland and Tata motors to design buses which can run on different kinds of fuel,” said Mr Sivaraman.

Experts say that the biogas fuel will produce no residues and vehicle maintenance cost could be reduced. The carbon emissions would also be less when compared to diesel.