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## Solid waste management plants to come up in 19 gram panchayats

- Special Correspondent

*They will be set up at a cost of Rs. 3 crore.*

In a bid to improve cleanliness and sanitation in rural areas of Udupi district, as many as 19 gram panchayats will be getting solid waste management plants under the Swachh Bharat Mission at a cost of about Rs. 3 crore.

According to the information provided by the Zilla Panchayat here, the 19 Gram Panchayats (GPs) included 10 in Karkala taluk, five in Udupi taluk and four in Kundapur taluk. The Gram Panchayats are— Sanoor, Neere, Mundkur, Belman, Miyar, Varanga, Marne, Bailoor, Eedu, Mudar (Karkala taluk); Kokkarne, Yedthady, Perdoor, Kallianpur (Udupi taluk); Trasi, Basrur, Siddapura and Marvanthe (Kundapur taluk).

### **Based on land availability**

The 19 gram panchayats were chosen based on the availability of land for setting up the plant. In most gram panchayats, it is difficult to get government land to establish a plant because most people do not want these plants come close to their areas.

“We could find sites in these 19 gram panchayats. Roughly an acre of land is required for setting up a solid waste management plant. The area selected is cordoned off by a fence,” said Priyanka Mary Francis, Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Panchayat.

The garbage would be disposed of through bio-enzyme based compost method. The waste generated from houses would be collected by pickup trucks wherever possible. The amount being allotted to the Gram Panchayats for the construction of the plants varied from Rs. 13 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh depending on the population and the waste generated.

Consultants from the Swachh Bharat Mission were also visiting these Gram Panchayats and showing them videos on maintaining sanitation. The Zilla Panchayat also published a booklet titled “Swachh Makkala Dinachari” which focuses on sanitation and cleanliness and is being circulated in schools.

“Though Rs. 3.5 lakh provided for purchasing a pickup truck each for these 19 GPs to collect garbage has been held up by the Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department, we will make all efforts to convince the higher officials to provide this amount as the distance from one house to another was far in the GPs,” Ms. Francis said.

In houses located in inaccessible areas in these GPs, the Zilla Panchayat will be encouraging individuals to do pipe composting for solid waste management and soak pit for liquid waste management in their own gardens.

“Once the solid waste management plants become operational in these 19 GPs, it will naturally encourage the neighbouring Gram Panchayats,” Ms. Francis said.

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