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Drive yet to take off, students' survey shows

By Our Staff Reporter

CHENNAI, JAN. 30. City school students have found out in a month what the local bodies took a long while to understand: ignorance of issues, lack of time and shortage of space in the households were among the factors affecting the source segregation of garbage at home.

Several residents were yet to understand the dynamics of source segregation of garbage and many were unaware of its necessity, the students' survey revealed.

The Chennai Corporation recently launched a city-wide drive to persuade people to segregate domestic waste in terms of bio-degradability and re-cycleability to facilitate scientific disposal of garbage.

Blame it on inadequate publicity or lack of responsibility among people, source segregation of garbage was still to catch up in a large scale, the students pointed out at a presentation at Bala Vidya Mandir, Adyar, today.

As part of Exnora International's `Student Exnora Programme,' students of seven schools, who presented their findings, went door-to-door in their localities asking the residents if they were segregating garbage.

While in a posh residential locality in the centre of the city, some residents said they do not have the time to put the waste in separate bins, some others said it was not their job to do so and that the Corporation should take care of it. On the western outskirts of the city, several residents said they were not aware of source segregation. Some said their domestic help handled garbage and that they were uneducated.

Perungudi's success

Quite in contrast, the Perungudi panchayat distributed two bins of different colours to all residents and traders in its area and persuaded them to separate the waste.

About 80 per cent of the people there were implementing segregation, the students pointed out.

Students of standards VII and VIII from Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Schools in Nungambakkam and T.P. Road, Sankara Vidyashram, Thiruvanmiyur, Amrita Vidyalayam, Nesapakkam, Guru Shree Shantivijai Jain Vidyalaya, Vepey, Valliammal Matriculation

Higher Secondary School, Mogappair, and Bala Vidya Mandir, Adyar, participated.

They surveyed residences in Koyambedu, Nungambakkam, Mandaveli, Villivakkam, Anna Nagar, Chepauk, Adyar, Thiruvanmiyur, Thorapakkam, Alwarpet, T. Nagar, Virugambakkam, K.K.Nagar, Vepery, Sowcarpet, Chintadripet, Perungudi, Aminjikarai and Ayanavaram.

At the end, moderators S. Krishnan, Scientist, Zoological Survey of India, and Sekhar Raghavan, Director, Rain Centre, told the students that the focus of awareness campaigns should be on bringing about a change in the attitude of the people.

Multi-storeyed apartments should be given special emphasis, they added.

Kamla Ravikumar, project coordinator, Student Exnora Programme, said the survey results would be compiled and presented to the Chennai Corporation to help it in its drive.

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