

## **NREGA to come into force in April**

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PUDUCHERRY: The District Rural Development Agency and the local administration department are gearing up to implement the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in Puducherry and Karaikal regions from April 1, 2008.

Sources in the departments said that they had visited Villupuram and Cuddalore, where the programme was under way, to equip themselves on the modalities of the implementation of the programme.

A massive awareness programme would be launched shortly in the 98 village panchayats that come under the two regions, they said.

Village panchayat presidents had been entrusted with the task of identifying beneficiaries for the programme and they would also issue job cards. The cards would have details of the family members, officials said.

The Grama Sabhas would meet in February to identify the beneficiaries and the work to be taken in each village. Based on the nature of the work and the number of people involved, work estimate would be drawn.

The proposal would then be sent to the Centre for allocation of funds, the officials said.

As per the guidelines of the NREGA programme, the villages would be offered works such as desilting canals, tank rehabilitation and water conservation. The heads of the village panchayats would start issuing applications for joining the programme by March, the officials said.

<http://www.thehindu.com/2007/11/23/stories/2007112351620300.htm>