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Washermen demand facilities

Washermen working at the ghat near Muthumandapam, of ward-59 of the Vellore Corporation, have sought water pipelines and renovation of the decrepit godown and drainage facilities in the area.

More than 65 washermen live in the area while dhobis from other areas also work there. They have been washing clothes on the nearby Palar riverbed for several years. The then Vellore Municipality had constructed 60 washing stones with water tubs and a godown in September 1963.

“Of the 60 stones, 20 were recently demolished for the construction of a Animal Birth Control Programme Centre,

while 20 more have been unused since 1963 due to absence of pipelines,” said P Ravi, president of the Vellore City Washermen Union. He added that bushes were growing near the unused stones.

The washermen complained that they received water for only about 15 minutes in a day as two bore wells, which were sunk for their use about 5 years ago, were going dry. They claimed that this delayed their work.

Sivakumar, deputy secretary of the union said, “There is no drainage line. This makes the place marshy. The water can either be released into the ground or connected to the nearby sewage treatment plant.”