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## Thiruvananthapuram: Class X student makes biodegradable sanitary napkin

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*Each napkin costs around `2 to make, mass production to reduce costs further.*



📷 Ishaani R Kamath and her teacher Amina Roshni with the clay-based biodegradable napkins

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Studying at Government GHSS Cotton Hill was one of the reasons why Ishaani R. Kamath set out to design a biodegradable napkin. The amount of napkins the school with the largest number of girl students in the state has to deal with is huge. Ms Kamath now claims that she has been successful, developing a completely biodegradable napkin, which will surely fit the Indian Standard specification for sanitary napkins.

“Disposal of sanitary napkins is a problem in every household. Imagine how much difference this invention can make. The napkin can simply be buried underground, and in six months, it will be absorbed into the soil,” she says.

The trigger for the invention was the final round of 'Haritha Vidyalayam', a reality show conducted by education department on Doordarshan when she was asked what her school does to dispose of the napkin. Even after the show ended, she and her teacher Amina Roshni continued with their napkin project.

That clay had haemostatic property was something she had heard from her mother Pramada, who has researched in clay before at CSIR-RRL (now CSIR-NIIST).

The first prototype was made manually, grinding plant fibre in a mixie. The fibre and clay were pressed together.

Later to scale up the process, they approached Kanika, a pad manufacturing unit in Thrissur.

"Each pad cost us around Rs 2. If it is mass manufactured, the cost will further come down," she says.

To test the efficacy of pads, goat blood was trickled on to them at 15 ml in a minute rate.

"The pads were effectively absorbing it. It can be used continuously for five or six hours, like any other pad," says Ms Roshni.

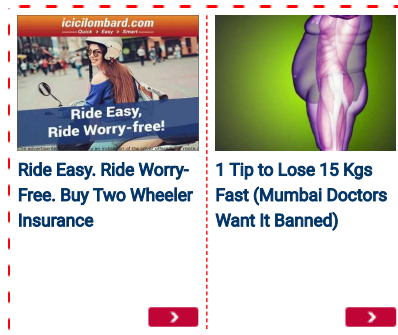
Her mother and her teacher are now trying to see if they can establish a startup manufacturing biodegradable napkins.

"But we don't have the initial capital. If we can make 100 pads a day, it will support at least 6000 menstruators in the school. We also wish we could file a patent, but it might be a costly affair," says Ms Pramada.

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