

MLA's grievance boxes turn a hit in Madurai



MADURAI: A first-time visitor to the Madurai Central constituency will be pleasantly surprised to see many grievance boxes placed at various points. These boxes had seen close to 1,600 petitions being dropped by residents in a year out of which 671 had been redressed, according to DMK's P T R Palanivel Thiagarajan, the MLA of the constituency. According to him, awareness is being created to make more people use it for their benefit.

The MLA says that it was in December 2016 they realised that having an MLA's office was not enough for the people to get through to their elected representative. Hence, they decided to place fabricated boxes of wood and tin for complaints and grievances at important places in the constituency. People could drop their petitions into it on Wednesdays and Saturdays. ``There was good response in the beginning. Now, some of the boxes got damaged but we are putting up posters to create awareness to make the people use them more,`` he said.

Till date, as many as 671 of the 1,597 petitions dropped by people had been redressed, the MLA claims, adding that it had made the people happy. Of these petitions, about 285 pertained to drinking water issues and 223 to personal issues, while many had complained about bad roads, electricity connection problems and mosquito menace. Many people had also sought help through the boxes to seek old age pension. ``214

petitions were for OAP and 152 for widow pension, but we were only able to help a handful of them,” he said.

Pandian, a resident of Thathaneri, said that this was a better way to get their grievances redressed. “We had a drinking water problem and when a petition to this effect was dropped in the box it was attended, saving time,” he said. People also used the facility to inform their MLA of the bad roads in the area including sewage problems which he takes up with the concerned authorities.