



Students from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and La Salle painted seat covers for World Toilet Day, now exhibited at \*scape Youth Park. **TREVOR TAN**

## A 'bloo-print' for public toilets

A "BLOO-PRINT" that hopes to take Singapore's toilet cleanliness and hygiene standards up a few notches; That's the mission of the Restroom Association of Singapore (Ras) as it launched the "Let's Observe Ourselves" or LOO campaign.

Only between 20 and 30 per cent of Singapore's public toilets currently get a three-star rating in cleanliness and hygiene, and it hopes to double or even triple this figure, said the association at the start of its two-year nationwide campaign, held in conjunction with World Toilet Day yesterday.

Public toilets here saw a marked improvement in cleanliness and hygiene during the 2003 Sars outbreak. But standards have slackened and hence comes the latest "three-star drive" to make them clean, dry and odourless.

The Ras hopes to see at least 70 per cent of the country's 35,000 toilet blocks achieving this by 2010. Said Ms Tan Puay Hoon, president of Ras: "We are using a multi-pronged approach. We go to the toilet owners and tell them that looking into the design is important. Having enough provisions in the toilet

cubicles is also important, especially the ratio between the ladies and male toilets."

With Singapore hosting more international events, such as the 2010 Youth Olympics, the campaign is timely. But for it to be successful, a holistic approach is needed.

Said Dr Amy Khor, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Water Resources Ministry: "It is important to look into the welfare of the toilet cleaners, in this case, in terms of pay. So we need to urge employers to look into best sourcing, and not cheap sourcing, because that will also affect the effectiveness of the toilet cleaners. With the launch of the LOO campaign, let's hope that the employment conditions of toilet cleaners will improve."

The Ras is collaborating with the World Toilet College to conduct courses for cleaners to enhance their job performance and change public perception of the profession.

Also, the Ras will train more "eco-assessors" to rate public toilets, and expand its Happy Toilet School Education programme, currently conducted in primary and pre-schools. **CHANNEL NEWSASIA, 938LIVE**