

# Can Chennai get 'SMART'?

❑ Increase in slums, water woes seen as major impediments

## Envisaged solutions

- Tamilnadu is a pioneer in making RWH schemes compulsory, yet many buildings lack it.
- Apart from Minjur and Nemmili projects, Chennai with one of the largest coastal line can still get into more of desalination projects.
- Effective use of waste water in construction and industrial purposes

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Chennai, Dec 2:

While efforts in achieving the 'Smart city' status seem to be making tardy progress, environmentalists in the city said there were several key issues, which have halted Chennai from achieving the coveted tag.

Speaking about this, a retired health official of the Chennai Corporation, P Kuganantham said that the city is spread over 426 sq-km area with slums alone occupying 186 sq-km, which is more than 3800 slums.

'Poor sanitation, improper water supply and electricity are the predominant problems faced by residents of these slums. The rise in number of slums in the city reveals that social inequality has sharply surged', he added.

The city faces an acute power shortage, but no alternative source of energy is developed to tackle the situation. 'The proposal of a smart city requires uninterrupted power and it is wise to use the available resources in a best possible way', said managing director of Solkar Solar Industry Limited, K E Raghunathan.

The Chief Technology Officer of VATEch, Wabag Limited, Dr K Yagna Prasad encapsulated the whole idea as 'Towards Sustainable Cities'.

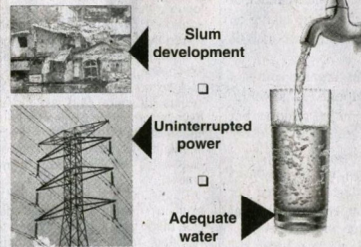
He elaborated, 'Technology should progress along with sustainable development as it is essential to make a city smart. It was the effective use of

*Experts feel residents haven't realised the effectiveness of the government's RWH system by failing to implement it properly and thus continue to face water shortage*



Director of TERI and former Secretary, Ministry of Environments&forests, Dr Prodipto Ghosh lighting the lamp in Chennai yesterday. Also seen are Director, Sustainable Development, TERI, Dr Annapurna Vancheswaran and former Chennai Corporation Health Officer Dr P Kuganantham.

## Main indicators of SMART city plan



technology to save natural resources, made Singapore a better economy than Chennai'.

According to a survey, if 109 temple tanks present in the city were utilised properly in (re) charging ground water, then the city would not have experienced a drought in 2003, noted P Kuganantham.

Though the RWH scheme was made compulsory for all government buildings and households, many of them still don't have it, proving it to be a deliberate misuse of the resources.

'It was not just the temple tanks that were misused, but also the plan of Rain Water Harvesting was ineffectively implemented,' he added.

If the city can manage to overcome these factors, it can definitely go 'smart', he signed off.

The 15th edition of Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) will be held in New Delhi between 5 and 7 February 2015.