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## ■ Don't Exclude Slums When Devising Strategy for Smart City, Say Experts

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CHENNAI: Slums in Chennai and across the country should not be excluded when the policy makers work out a draft to develop smart cities, according to Dr P Kuganantham, former city health officer of Chennai Corporation.

Delivering a special address 2nd regional dialogue of the 15th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and IIT Madras here on Monday, Kuganantham said the issue with the policymakers are that they never think locally but go with the global agenda. "I have been in the city for the last 30 years

and I have seen so many conferences being held on sustainable cities but none are people centric," he said.

He said the need for the people is ponder on local issues. "Ponder into realities not dreams," he said.

He said that role of public health officials are ignored in the development of cities. He said the focus of policy makers should be to look into disposal of garbage in the city, have satellite operated traffic signal system besides cleanse the canals so that mosquito can't breed. "We do have wherewithals but for the last 67 years we have yet to see changes. It is time IITs work towards finding the solution locally," he said.

Former Union environment secretary and director of TERI Dr Pradipto Ghosh, who also spoke on the issue, highlighted how the issue of EIA clearance for high rise buildings came into being. "It was purely political in nature. "When then chief minister J Jayalalithaa wanted to build a new secretariat, then Union Minister T R Baalu tried to scuttle it by bringing in this act so that it can't be cleared without his approval. Although this policy on high rise had political connotations, nevertheless it was a welcome step," said Ghosh.

S Janakajan, professorial consultant of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) said that people link the city to only flyovers, metros and huge buildings but never take into account the marshland, canals and estuaries.