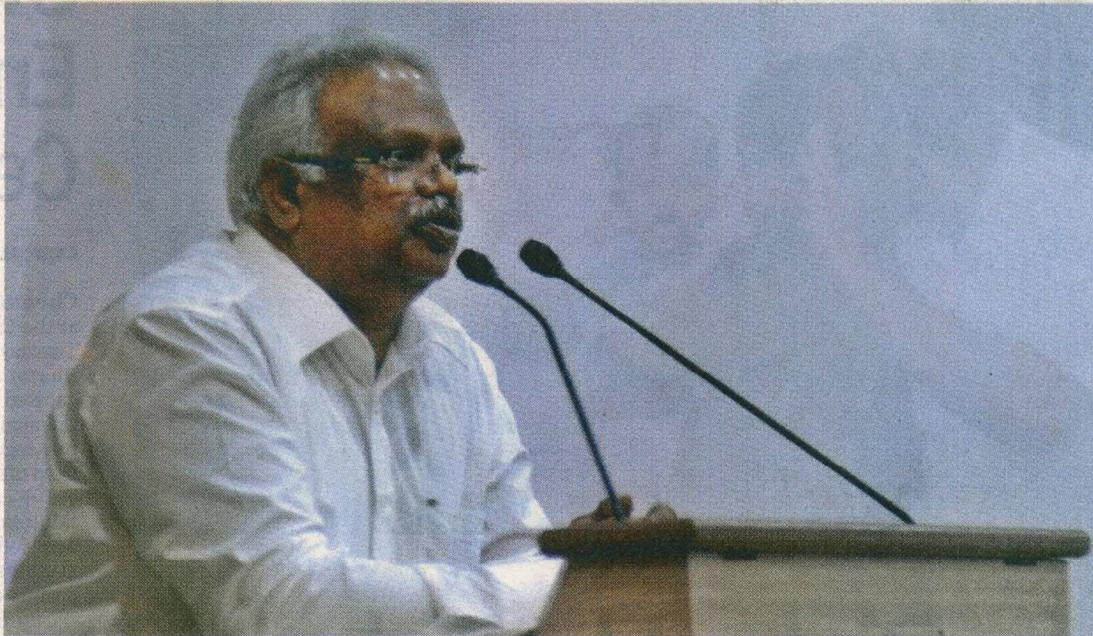


# 'Smart City Policies Should include Slums'

**Former CHO of Chennai Corporation P Kuganantham rues that the role of public health officials is ignored while chalking out development plans, says focus should be more on local issues**



ALBIN MATHEW

## Express News Service

**Chennai:** Policymakers should include slums while working out drafts to develop smart cities, said Dr P Kuganantham, former city health officer of Chennai Corporation.

Delivering the special address at the 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 policymakers often went by the global agenda instead of thinking locally. "I have been in the city for the last 30 years and seen so many conferences being held on sustainable cities. But none was people-centric," he said.

He said the stress should be on local issues. "Ponder realities, not dreams," Kuganantham said and added that the role of public health officials was ignored in development of cities.

Policy makers should also focus on garbage disposal in the city, cleaning up of canals to prevent breeding of

mosquitoes and satellite-operated traffic signal system.

"We do have the wherewithal, but for the last 67 years, we are yet to see changes. It is time IITs work towards finding a solution locally," he said.

Former Union environment secretary and director of TERI Dr Pradipto Ghosh highlighted how the Environment Impact Assessment clearance for high rise buildings came into being. "When the government

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in the State proposed to build a new administrative building, the then Union environment minister, who was from the rival party, tried to scuttle it by bringing in a law so that it could not be cleared without his approval. This move was purely political in nature. Although this policy on high rises had political connotations, it nevertheless was a welcome step," said Ghosh.

S Janakajan, professorial consultant of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), Chennai, said that people often associated the city with only flyovers, metros and huge buildings but never took into account the marshland, canals and estuaries. "Unless we don't pay attention to these, our cities can't become smarter," he said.

Krishna Vasudevan from Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT-M, stressed the need to work on efficient electrical systems. "We are already working on this and this can be implemented in several States on limited basis," he said.

