
PRESS RELEASE

A smart, integrated transport system can solve traffic bedlam in Mumbai, say Experts

Mumbai, December 11: The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) today organized a Regional Dialogue titled, '**Sustainable Urban Transport and Solid Waste Management in Mumbai**'. The Dialogue was organized in the run up to TERI's annual flagship event, the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS), which will be held in New Delhi from February 5 to 7, 2015. A series of Regional Dialogues were organized in the run-up to the Summit, which come in the wake of the new Government's two major announcements -- 100 Smart Cities for India and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. The first Dialogue was held in Bengaluru, which mapped smart city concepts and practices to reduce carbon footprint to ensure sustainable habitats, while the Chennai Dialogue deliberated on access to basic facilities, including clean drinking water and sanitation.

Delivering the Welcome Address, **Dr Annapurna Vancheswaran, Director, Sustainable Development Outreach**, said: "DSDS over the years has become the foremost platform on sustainable development and we are truly delighted that the Summit each year sees the convergence of developed and developing countries; sharing and learning from their experiences to make the planet safer and more livable for all. The 15th edition of the Summit will be truly inclusive as it will have sub-national representation through the Regional Dialogues held in Bengaluru, Chennai and Mumbai."

At the third and the last Dialogue in Mumbai today, top experts deliberated on ways to tackle the ever-increasing traffic-related problems here and also how waste management can be streamlined. Mumbai and the metropolitan region around it has been growing seamlessly, with its total population expected to touch 44 million in 2052 even as the resources to service the burgeoning masses remain more or less stagnant.

The city is experiencing major traffic problems even though public transit represents more than 60 per cent of the motorized transport modal share. With one of the highest per capita incomes in the country, Mumbai has seen an unprecedented increase in the number of personal vehicles.

Speaking at the event, Mr Shri Prakash, Distinguished Fellow, TERI, said: "Although the rail-based transport system consisting of suburban rail and newly introduced metro and monorail would cater to the major transport needs of the city, provisions of adequate facilities for growth of non-motorized transport are also very essential for accessible and sustainable transport system."

"We are looking at smart ticketing, smart cards that can be used for all modes of public transport system. A 100 to 200-km network in the next 8 to 10 years should have a positive impact on Mumbai city's infrastructure," said UPS Madam, Metropolitan Commissioner, Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority.

"It is not only about setting up transport systems but also about improving road connectivity, accessibility which are extremely critical," said Mr Abhay Mishra, CEO, Mumbai Metro One Pvt Ltd.

While discussing waste management , experts said the city generates about 10,000 MT of municipal solid waste and more than 2700 MLD of sewage per day. Managing and processing this huge amount of waste is a huge challenge faced by urban local bodies. Even in small peripheral cities of Mumbai, MSW collection and treatment is a huge task.

Dr. Suneel Pandey, Associate Director, Green Growth and Resource Efficiency, TERI, said: "It's time to look at integrated waste management framework to not only treat and dispose the waste, but also, in the process of doing so, recover resources like energy, nutrients and water not only to close the loop of material use, reduce use of harmful chemicals but also improve financial viability of waste processing options."

"Decentralization, biomechanisation, and waste management at the household level are the need of the hour. Today, waste processing, co-processing are some of the technologies which can treat waste efficiently. There is a need to introduce curriculum in universities that will teach people to run and operate the technology systems. This is currently lacking," added Pandey

"Each individual generates waste and today there is no understanding of waste management. The need of the hour is to first study how, where and what waste is being generated. This will let us decide how we can best manage waste in the country. Then develop the right technology for the specific waste. Bad and inadequate waste management is responsible for the spread of dengue,"

said Dr. Amiya Kumar Sahu, President and Founder, National Solid Waste Association of India.

CHALLENGES AHEAD OF MUMBAI TO BECOME A SMART CITY

A. Growing transport woes: One of the major problems is road space which is sparse and the volume of traffic is immense. The number of private cars in Mumbai is a matter of concern. It has a significant impact on issues of air quality and on human-induced climate change. Current estimates indicate that over 400 motorized vehicles are added to Mumbai's streets every day.

Mumbai also lacks public bike-share schemes and also does not have any Bus Rapid Transport Systems (BRTS). Indeed, there are not even any dedicated bus lanes, despite the city's efficient bus system. The city has been making investments in building new infrastructure like new roads, flyovers, bypasses, etc., but there has been little improvement in the traffic situation of the city.

B. Messing it Up: As large piles of garbage dot the streets of Mumbai and dumping grounds overflow with a mixture of its residents' discards, waste management continues to be one of the most serious problems in Mumbai. As Mumbai is land starved, the biggest question is where can the garbage be dumped safely? Along with this, are concerns of high-level emissions of greenhouse gases from the city's unsanitary landfills and the growth of bacteria that cause life-threatening diseases.

C. OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUMBAI TO BECOME A SMART CITY

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS: The city will have to promote sustainable mass transit systems very quickly if it is aiming to address the current traffic challenges and move towards sustainable and smart transport for its residents.

- Monorail, metro rail, catamarans, buses should supplement with the sub-urban rail.
- The Mumbai region has a long coastline, dotted with small jetties and small ports. However, a sustainable passenger water transport, which could offer an alternative transport system to the Railways, was never developed.
- Increase in the number and frequency of feeder buses. There are no buses close to the monorail stations.
- Use of electric vehicles, particularly as last mile connectivity, should be encouraged.
- Proper pathways, pavements and cycle tracks should be developed for non-motorized transport.

DECENTRALIZING THE WASTE MANAGEMENT:

- Segregation of garbage at source into dry and wet waste, a standard international practice, could have helped the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) handle the city's refuse more efficiently — drastically reducing the amount that needs to be dumped at landfills, and promoting micro-management of waste at housing societies, schools and hospitals.
- Different dust bins for different types of waste should be provided so that residents are publicly educated to segregate wet waste from paper, plastic, glass and metal.
- Waste-processing plants at transfer stations and composting sites at civic markets and gardens in each of Mumbai's 24 wards need to be planned
- In 2013, BMC has floated an expression of interest to set up a 1000-tonne waste-to-energy (W2E) incineration plant at Deonar
- Co-digestion of municipal sewage, solid waste and sludge needs to be explored

A SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITY

The deliberations at the Mumbai Regional Dialogue will provide intellectual inputs to the DSDS 2015. This milestone 15th edition of the Summit assumes greater significance as the United Nations is in the process of finalizing the Sustainable Development Agenda post-2015. It also comes in the wake of the findings of latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which has presented a grim picture for ecosystems, and poor infrastructure planning and unsustainable systems can aggravate the damage to critical utilities during natural calamities. The DSDS 2015, to be held in New Delhi from February 5 to 7, would present a unique and timely opportunity to discuss 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Dealing with Climate Change', which is the theme this time. The curtain raiser to the Summit, the High Level Corporate Dialogue will be hosted on February 4, 2015 under the broad rubric of 'Delhi to Paris: Corporate Action to Combat Climate Change'.

Reference: 15t Delhi Sustainable Development Summit

Link: http://www.teriin.org/files/press_mumbai.pdf