

'Sub-urbanisation can decongest the city'

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Dec 24: Principal Secretary to Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, M R Sreenivasa Murthy, on Sunday said that sub-urbanisation could be one of the solutions to de-congest the City.

Speaking on urban planning and other issues at the late WH Hanumantappa Memorial Lecture organised by Gandhi Peace Foundation here, he said that the growth of the City should be curbed after a level has been attained.

"Townships at distances of 20-25 kilometres from the City, equipped with infrastructure

amenities and good connectivity, will help to de-congest the City. Building of communities is important and not just housing colonies," he said.

Murthy further said that growth without planning could be hazardous and attributed traffic congestion to bad planning. Citizens and even the media are obsessed with cities, even projects like JNNURM focuses only on mega cities.

Town planning in metro cities should focus on the orderly arrangement of infrastructure, traffic circulation must be excellent and plans must be chalked out for schools, colleges, hospitals, etc. Even basics

like water supply, electricity and solid waste management must be looked into.

Elaborating on the challenges that are thrown up by unchecked growth of cities, Murthy said that the 3.4 per cent growth in Bangalore's population, also posed problems to development.

The informal development of housing colonies was another challenge.

He said that the expansion of the City was not a good idea. While drawing up ideas for townships, the problems of infrastructure need to be considered. Good roads and other infrastructure required huge

investments, he said.

Murthy pointed out that new methods had to be devised to solve such problems. For instance, producing electricity from solid waste, as is done in many major cities of the world, was a good option. He highlighted the importance of private participation in the development of cities.

The issue of the urban poor, who form almost 10-19 per cent of the population in the City, needs to be addressed, he added.

Former mayor G Narayana and freedom fighter H S Doreswamy were present on the occasion.