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Smart city should be citizen-friendly, say experts



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HYDERABAD:, AUGUST 26, 2015 00:00 IST
 UPDATED: MARCH 29, 2016 17:36 IST

Union Minister Bandaru Dattatreya calls for short and long-term plans for providing drinking water and housing for creating a slum-free Hyderabad.

Smart healthcare systems with a grid of intelligently-deployed sensors, better education, cleanliness, safety for women and geriatric care, preventive steps to tackle autism spectrum and cerebral palsy, peri-natal care, optimal use of human resources and a blend of technology was not all, but the speakers wanted the 'City of Pearls' to be more citizen-friendly.

Union Minister of State for Labour Bandaru Dattatreya wanted short and long term plans for providing drinking water and housing - in short, a slum-free **Hyderabad**, while Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy expressed concern over wastage of food at function halls in and around the twin cities. Over three dozen speakers voiced their concerns and spelt out what in their opinion should be the focus to turn Hyderabad into a Smart City, at a round table initiated by the Foundation for Futuristic Cities president Karuna Gopal here on Tuesday.

Setting the ball rolling, she said that after being short-listed under the '100 Smart Cities Challenge' of Government of India, the next level involved submission of a Smart City Plan, a strategic document that captured the city's vision, strategy, outcomes and financial investment plan. Now to qualify in the second round where 20 cities would be selected, what was required was a 'collective vision' in consultation with citizens and other stakeholders, she pointed out.

Secretary-Information Technology, Government of Telangana, Jayesh Ranjan regretted that at this point of time there was a sense of disconnect between the people and the government. GHMC Special Commissioner Navin Mittal said the blueprint had to have four component - of citizens participation, government's role, physical environment and infrastructure and the eco-system.

The Hindu-Business Line Chief of Bureau M. Somasekhar said that unlike in the west, Hyderabad was a population-heavy city and hence all models should address this. Taking the citizen's view was the key to becoming a Smart City, he said.

Printable version | Nov 16, 2018 8:57:13 PM | <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/smart-city-should-be-citizenfriendly-say-experts/article7580542.ece>

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