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'Plenty to learn from other cities'

Residents unhappy with civic amenities; suggest a variety of other models

Lack of water, poor waste management, and a surge in traffic mar   Chennai's record in urban development. "The slums in Kannagi Nagar have   been built on a waterbody. The area was inundated during the floods in   2015 because of the incompetence of the Corporation. The city's   developmental projects are 20 years behind time," says Chandramohan, secretary of Arappor Iyakkam (AI), an NGO.

The organisation   recently released a report stating that the city generates 1,500 million   litres of sewage a day (MLD), a figure that is three times more than   what is stated by Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board   (CMWSSB).

Kaiona Chhatrapati, a student in Noida, says Chennai can learn from other cities. "Despite pollution being worse in Noida, the   Corporation there has better waste management practices," she says.   Citing the example of Chandigarh,

Seenivasan Varadachar, a businessman   who has lived in the city for over 28 years, notes it is well planned   and green. " The parking lots are spacious and there is little traffic   congestion. Chennai's traffic is rising and security is an issue   nowadays," he adds.

Obtaining documents

Residents   like Uma Gurumurthy, who have lived in several tier II cities such as   Coimbatore and Dhanbad, feel that it is easier to obtain government   documents such as marriage and building registrations in such towns.   "The volume of transactions is lesser. Building registrations come   through in two months. Unless one knows higher officials in Chennai, we don't receive papers," she says.

Education is one of the factors   that many residents feel is a plus point for Chennai. With students of   the city notching up consistent performances in competitive exams,   educators feel that primary schooling is also on a strong footing.   "Active reforms are in place with respect to primary education in Chennai. The use of Activity Based Learning in classrooms has

provided   greater results," says Shivaranjani R., a fellow at Teach For India.

(*With inputs from Kavya Balaji)*