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**RETHINKING
GOVERNANCE**

SMART GOVERNANCE

While India's top officials and key thought leaders are thinking big time about the e-governance to transform core areas of government functions particularly service delivery and to bring governance to the doorsteps of common citizens, much of the developed world is moving closer to smart governance.

Team INCLUSION reports

The background of the page is a silhouette of the Indian Parliament building (Lok Sabha) against a warm, orange-hued sunset sky. The building's iconic dome and central tower are clearly visible. The overall tone is professional and forward-looking.

Many of the OECD countries and even the governments across Central America are increasingly making smart governance a national priority. Called Governance 3.0, smart governance is about the creative use of new information systems such as cloud, big data, intelligent analytics, mobile devices (smart phones, tablets and similar post-PC era devices) and a long list of other strategic technologies to transform the ways services are delivered.



“We are currently experimenting with the idea of paperless governance. Almost 99 per cent files in my department are going through e-files. I just use my digital signature rather than my pen.”

— **Rajesh Aggarwal**, Secretary-IT,
Government of Maharashtra



“We have to create an environment in which the system encourages to make things happen. Transforming things are not easy, because it is a governance issue. Execution is a huge problem because you implement a solution but state governments and central government have different ideas and ways of doing things.”

— **D Krishna**, Commissioner (Systems),
Central Board of Excise and Customs

Few Examples of Smart Cities

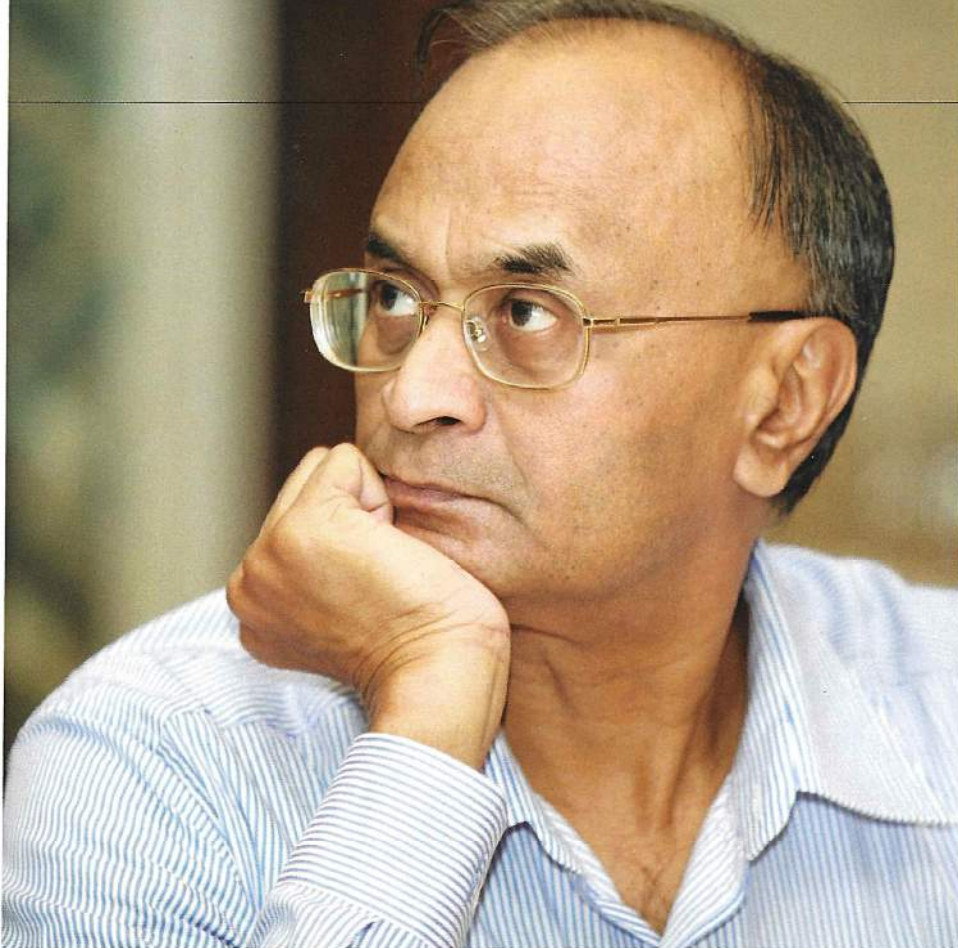
Songdo, South Korea: Songdo smart city is getting rave reviews for the kind of promises that it makes. With initial investment of \$35 billion, Songdo smart city project uses an extensive wired network that would connect nearly all components of the city as well as the buildings such as residences, offices, hospitals, schools and so on. A peep into the city plan suggests all residents will be able to control the functions of their homes remotely and everyone would be able to interact through video from anywhere.

Masdar, Abu Dhabi: Masdar smart city has propped up Emirates to showcase to the world that desert is not a constraint to urban imagination. Considered to be green city in the desert, Masdar plans to use traditional Islamic architectural engineering to ensure cooling and shading. It is believed that city's headquarters would require 70 per cent less water for normal activities. The vision is to create a zero-carbon, zero-waste, energy-positive smart city in the desert.

Skolkovo, Russia: A project led by former Russian President

Dmitry Medvedev, Skolkovo would be a Russian version of Silicon Valley. This smart city would cover everything - from urban housing and education to transportation, roads and retail space to name a few. Skolkovo plans to create “joint operating control center”, a “virtual service provider,” and, an “eco-tech showroom” to address many urban woes. In addition, the city plans to create a 3-D prototype of a ‘smart city’ that would enable to manage its traffic, safety measures, etc.

Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC): India has rolled out World's most ambitious infrastructure project that would build an array of smart cities is the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC). With an initial investment of \$100 billion (largely funded by Japanese companies), this 1,400 kilometres corridor stretching across seven Indian states not only envisages to build most modern railways, expressways, power projects, airports, it plans to build seven smart cities. As has been extensively reported, the key features of the smart cities include the setting up of vertical developments, an efficient public transportation system, the use of wired



“Karnataka has launched a new framework called Mobile Governance Applications to facilitate government-citizen interface through smartphones. All applications on Bangalore One (B1) and Karnataka One (K1) can now be accessed by using smart phones.”

— M N Vidyashankar, Principal Secretary-Commerce & Industries,
Government of Karnataka

and digital technology to create smart grids for efficient management of civic infrastructure, re-cycling of sewage water for industrial use, creation of green spaces, and easy accessibility to goods, services and activities designed to foster a sense of community.

Dholera, Gujarat: Dholera, which found a mention in the recent Union Budget (2012-13) is one of the most ambitious smart cities currently built up by a consortium of agencies under the DMIC project. Built with a mammoth \$90 billion investment, Dholera plans to have biggest Special Investment Region (SIR) in the world (much bigger in size than the Senzhen Special Economic Zone of China) and is called Gujarat within Gujarat as the city will be governed by its own charter, independent of other legislations. Interestingly, Dholera city will largely run on solar power.

Lavasa, Maharashtra: Currently under construction, Lavasa is a new smart city being brought out by a consortium of private agencies. As reported, once completed the Lavasa homes will have touch-panel automation, occupancy-based lighting, door and motion sensors, beam detectors and on-call transport services. The city will have range of other digital infrastructure to address issues of waste disposal, water, power and transportation needs

THE PROMISE OF A SMART CITY

The potential benefits accruing from a smart city seem quite huge. For example, wireless sensor networks technologies through a distributed network of intelligent sensor nodes can help measure various parameters for a more efficient management of the city. With ease, either logging into a PC or smart phone, a city dweller can monitor the pollution concentration in each street or can get automatic alarms when the pollution level goes up. Similarly, the sensor technologies would help authorities to detect water leakages and collect rubbish efficiently. Again, smart transportation in which sensors in parking lots can alert drivers or parking meters can send SMS messages (using mobile phone apps) to those parked that their time is over. Similar thing can be said about energy (smart grid) and water system (smart meters). In fact, the experiment in some Japanese and Central American cities show that as much as 40 per cent of water can be saved through smart meters. The basic concept of governance has not changed over the years, but how the government interacts with its people and delivers services has. “Technology, sustainability, innovative ideas, affordability and accessibility are the important elements of smart governance. The challenge for India is two-fold: first, it must overcome own set of governance problems; and second, it has to reach the level achieved by advanced countries already,” says Vikas Aggarwal, National Technology Officer, Microsoft Corporation (India).

In other words, wired and networked infrastructure is core to the concept of smart city and the skills and ability to harness these tools to address various dimensions of a city ecosystem will determine how smart the city is. ●