

Report

Panel Discussion on Smart Cities and AMRUT Cities: Business Opportunities



Kerala Development Society (KDS-Delhi)



Dr. Jacob John delivering the Welcome Address

A panel discussion on business Opportunities in Smart Cities and AMRUT Cities was organized by Kerala Development Society jointly with Kerala Business Forum on 23 April 2016 at Conference Hall, Kerala House. A total of 60 entrepreneurs participated in the meeting. Dr. K.R.G. Nair (formerly Professor and Head, Department of Business Economics, University of Delhi) chaired the meeting. Dr. Jacob John (President, KDS-Delhi), Dr. K.P. Sunny (Director, National Productivity Council, New Delhi), Mr. P. Z. Thomas (Managing Director, Environmental



From L to R: Mr. Rajveer Singh, Dr. K.P. Sunny, Prof. K. R. G. Nair, Dr. Jacob John, Mr. P.Z. Thomas and Mr. Sushanta Kumar Pal



Prof. K.R.G. Nair addresses

Engineers & Consultants Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi) Mr. Rajveer Singh (Managing Director, Apex Cluster Development Services Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi), Mr. Sushanta Kumar Pal (Development Specialist, formerly Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group) were the panel speakers.



A view from participants



Dr. K.P. Sunny addresses

Salient features of Smart Cities for urban transformation were discussed in the meeting. A Smart City is an urban region that is highly advanced in terms of overall infrastructure, sustainable real estate, communications and market viability. It is a city where information technology is the principal infrastructure and the basis for providing essential services to



A view from participants



Mr. P.Z. Thomas addresses

residents. The list of 20 smart cities out of the 98 shortlisted for the 'Smart Cities Mission' was released by Government of India in 2016. The next two years will see the inclusion of 40 and 38 cities, respectively. Of the 98 cities and towns that five years down will graduate into Smart



A view from participants



Mr. Rajveer Singh addresses

Cities, 24 are capital cities, another 24 are business and industrial centres, 18 are culture and tourism influenced areas, five are port cities and three are education and health care hubs. Strategies were discussed to promote the entrepreneurship in the first 20 Smart Cities in India



Mr. Sushanta Kumar Pal addresses



A view from Open House discussion

are Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Pune (Maharashtra), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Surat(Gujarat), Kochi (Kerala), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Jabalpur(Madhya Pradesh), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Solapur (Maharashtra), Davangere, (Karnataka), Indore (Madhya Pradesh), New Delhi Municipal Corporation, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), Belagavi(Karnataka), Udaipur (Rajasthan), Guwahati (Assam), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ludhiana (Punjab), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh).The panelists stated that the objective is to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'Smart' Solutions. The core infrastructure elements in a Smart City would include: adequate water supply, assured electricity supply, sanitation, including solid waste management, efficient urban mobility and public transport, affordable housing, especially for the poor, robust IT connectivity and digitalization, good governance, especially e-governance and citizen participation, sustainable environment, safety and security of citizens, particularly women, children and the elderly, and health and education. A Smart City will offer people a better quality of life: world class infrastructure, public transport, healthcare services, education system, Wi-Fi Connectivity: 24x7 electricity, water supply: Garbage and waste disposal: an automated waste disposal System. E-governance mechanisms will have a major role in making a city smart. Huge money will be utilized for executing such a massive plan. The estimated cost of the project Rs 96,000 crore will be split equally between the Centre and the state government. An allocation of Rs.7060 crores for smart cities is made in 2016-17. This fund is being transferred to state government as 14th Central Finance Commission grant within the



A view from Open House discussion

framework of cooperative federalism. Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) will be created by the state for the execution of Smart Cities project.

The meeting discussed salient features of AMRUT Cities that providing basic services such as water supply, sewerage and urban transport to households and build amenities in cities which will improve the quality of life for all, especially the poor and the disadvantaged. The purpose of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is to (i) ensure that every household has access to a tap with assured supply of water and a sewerage connection; (ii) increase the amenity value of cities by developing greenery and well maintained open spaces (e.g. parks); and (iii) reduce pollution by switching to public transport or constructing facilities for non-motorized transport (eg. walking and cycling). Five hundred cities will be taken up under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation. It will focus on the thrust areas water supply, sewerage facilities and septage management, storm water drains to reduce flooding, pedestrian, non-motorized and public transport facilities, parking spaces, and enhancing amenity value of cities by creating and upgrading green spaces, parks and recreation centers, especially for children. In addition, sectors such as power, telecom, health and education will get priority in the programme.

Opportunities for Indian and Foreign Companies

The meeting discussed opportunities for Indian and foreign Companies .The Smart City programme represents several opportunities for companies operating across sectors such as

urban and inter-urban transportation (metros), energy-efficient public buildings and smart grids, water, sewage and ICT. It is reported that many American and European companies have created separate business units to grab opportunities provided by the Smart City programme in India. Smart City programme will benefit local players the most in terms of business opportunities and revenue generation. India has few players across the spectrum with the kind of expertise and exposure required for such an ambitious project. This is expected to lead to increased possibilities of cross-border collaboration and partnerships with the leading global companies. Indian entrepreneurs will have to enter into business partnerships and alliances with foreign entrepreneurs. The meeting has identified potential sectors for Malayalee entrepreneurships Agri Food: ethnic food products: Food cart or ethnic restaurant, health care including palliative care, primary health care, nursing, education, waste management including e-waste management and traffic- transportation and supply chain. Investors consisting of investors, banks, family offices, private equity investors, venture capitalists and individuals can avail the opportunities. Professional and service providers such as architects, other individual consultants and consulting firms will have ample opportunities.

There are several opportunities for young and new entrepreneurs. The incubation of new ideas, talent and units/ enterprises for setting up business operations will be the focus. Business Incubators can mentor entrepreneurs, especially young entrepreneurs, to participate in 20 Smart Cities of India. There are several government supported business incubators for entrepreneurs. Incubator will spot new ideas, talent and units of micro, small and medium enterprises. It can provide them a platform to set up new ventures in Smart Cities.

