

KARUNA GOPAL HIGHLIGHTS HOW SIMPLE THINGS MATTER WHILE CREATING NEW CITIES, AND WARNS AGAINST GETTING MIRED IN DEVELOPMENT JARGON



# BUILDING A SMART CAPITAL

The arc lights are now on the capital city of Andhra Pradesh - a city that will soon emerge as the epitome of smartness and sustainability, a 'show stopper' at any global Smart City catwalk.

Perhaps it is now when all the excitement, energy, investments, technology and action are at a high point, we have to hear what some 2,000 Smart Projects around the world have learnt through experience. Before that voice is lost in high decibel technology, cacophony of competing priorities and stew of strategic plans, a few pointers:

#### A SMART CITY IS

- Less about investments and is more about innovative business and operating models.
- Less about smart grids, smart transportation, smart buildings and smart governance and is more about sustainability and livability.

■ Less about technology and more about the 'technique' of picking a right set of technology vendors, system integrators and investors from a landscape that's practically littered with options.

■ Less about bureaucratic bustle and is more about a common man; managing expectations and keeping the fire of hope alive as citizens have to be engaged and entertained.

■ Less about technology platforms to integrate, discrete and disparate technologies and is more about collaborative platforms to break interdepartmental silos.

■ Less about computers 'talking' to one another and is more about stakeholders 'sharing' information, ideas and collaborating.

■ Less about international best practices and is more about the city's internal dynamics, collective readiness and geo political realities.

■ Less about IT legacy systems

in departments and is more about the 'load of legacy' presented as attitudes and beliefs that cannot be ripped and replaced easily.

■ Less about sensors, open data and cloud computing and is more about sensitivity, being open, and dispelling clouds of doubt.

■ Less about exotic international brands and is more about herbs in the back yard - home grown resources have proved to be invaluable in smart city efforts around the world.

Be it the grandiose plan of Songdo of south Korea or the humble efforts of a Rokkasho village in Japan, this has been the common thread of learning. It is just as well we heard it before the city goes under the scalpel to be shaped into a smart city

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