

# After 2 proposals, steps on for new Smart City project

Govt initiates steps for project under Pondy municipality; draft proposal by March 2017

DEBJANI DUTTA @ Puducherry

THE government has initiated steps for a new Smart City Project under Puducherry Municipality after learning from the failures of two earlier proposals for Smart City Project under Oulgaret Municipality.

“An action plan is being evolved on which the city can focus, by taking inputs from stakeholders, non-governmental organisation, developmental experts, French Institute of Puducherry, Auroville and Agence Française de Développement, (French Development Agency) AFD,” said P Jawahar, Secretary, Local Administra-



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“Real estate consultant Jones Lang LaSalle who has successfully prepared the action plan for Bhubaneswar, Amritsar and Chennai, has been assigned the task of preparing the Smart Cities action plan,” said Jawahar.

Puducherry has been advised by the Union Ministry of Urban Development to go for retrofitting of Smart Cities instead of Green Field Smart City Project submitted earlier by the government.

“Now the government is planning Smart City proposal by bun-

dling the retrofitting of cities, redevelopment and green field under Area Development proposal,” said Jawahar.

Already a draft vision statement for Smart City Project has been developed with a proposal for transforming Puducherry into a global tourism destination by leveraging its heritage, cultural, spiritual and educational advantages and to enhance the quality of life of its citizens by providing smart service delivery and participative decision making. This vision statement which was evolved through a participatory exercise in a workshop conducted on November 22, would be further refined into an action plan by an interactive process by comparing it with the details on citizens’ needs and aspirations gathered from household surveys and suggestion boxes that have been installed in prominent public places in the city.

The sample survey of 2,500 households in the 42 wards of the Puducherry Municipality began two weeks back. It is in the form of a questionnaire where citizens have to express their views. By November end it should be completed. Besides the number of suggestion boxes would be increased to have a wider view. An online survey has already been conducted, according to Jawahar. The suggestions and feedback given by the participants will be incorporated in the action plan. A series of such consultations will be held with citizens, before the finalisation of the Smart City draft proposal by March 2017. The draft vision statement will be finally laid before the Cabinet for approval and then forwarded to Ministry of Urban development by March for approval.