DIPP Secretary Amitabh Kant outlines top priorities for Smart Cities in India

India Infoline News Service | Mumbai | April 16, 2015 08:23 IST

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Urbanisation is now a global megatrend and by 2050, around 64% of the developing world and 86% of the developed world is expected to be urbanised. Rapid urbanisation is putting a strain on the infrastructure, environment and social fabric of cities. The new Indian government has taken cognisance of this accelerating expansion. Investments required to stabilise, augment as well as build a robust urban infrastructure are at the forefront of the government's current agenda.

This was echoed in the inaugural address at a seminar on "Smart Cities - The Urban Challenge" by Mr. Amitabh Kant, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Government of India, where he said, "One of the key challenges for India to grow at 9 to 10 per cent per annum is the challenge of urbanization. He further remarked that according to a recent study, India will have 700 million people getting in the process of urbanization by 2050 and therefore the challenge for India is to create two and a half Americas by 2050 and do it in a far more innovative and sustainable manner."

During the seminar today on the day two of partner country – India at Hannover Messe 2015, FICCI signed an MoU with Hannover Milano Fairs India (HMFI) to organize a platform to discuss and showcase new solutions and innovations in urban development in 2015-16, partnership and opportunities in this sector.

The panel discussion on Smart City & The Urban Challenge was illuminated by presentation and insights shared by Sushil Sethi, MD, SPML Infra Limited, Indresh Batra, VC & MD, Jindal ITF Ltd, Sangeeta Prasad, CEO – Integrated Cities & Industrial Clusters, Mahindra Lifespace Developers Ltd, Willfired Wienholt, Global Head – Citu Account Management, Siemens Plc, Adrian Harris, Director General, Orgalime, Frank Stuhrenberg, CEO, Phoenix Contact.

The afternoon saw another session on the topic 'Financing of Urban Infrastructure' where the following leaders from the corporate shared their views – Shailesh Pathak, Executive Director, Bhartiya Group, Kamal

Maheshwari, President (Business Development & Strategy), Essel Infra & Utilities, roland Siller, Member of Management Committee, KfW and Global Head, Siemens One.

Sigmar Gabriel, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy and Vice Chancellor, Germany visited the pavilion of the official partner country - India at the Hannover Messe 2015 where Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Commerce & Industry, Government of India and Amitabh Kant, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government explained the Make in India vision. He took keen interest in the installations showcased by India to explain key facets of Make in India that make India the destination for investment and manufacturing.

Six more MoUs (Memorandum of Understanding) were signed by Indian public sector companies at Hannover Messe 2015 to enhance cooperation with global firms, during a special event organized by Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC) at the India Pavilion. The MoUs, signed by companies under Department of Heavy Industries, consisted of tie-ups between Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) India and Russian Joint Stock Company, INTMA for upcoming projects in Russia and Kazakhstan, Rajasthan Electronics & Instruments Ltd. (REIL) and Milkotronics Ltd., Bulgaria for manufacturing milk analyzers in India, Instrumentations Ltd and KE Kauer Engineering, Germany for production of control valves, and three MoUs by Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) with Num Controls, Switzerland for manufacturing of CNC controls, systems and drives; FT Machine Tools, Germany for collaborating on flow forming machines and Enit GmbH, Germany for total engineering solutions.