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Smart grid project: Will Bescom be 3rd time lucky?

Sandeep Moudgal, TNN | Oct 25, 2015, 05:47AM IST

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BENGALURU: Continuing its efforts to save energy and cut down on transmission losses, Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) has embarked on yet another smart grid project.

Unlike its previous two projects that were tested in urban areas and failed, Bescom's next pilot smart grid has been planned at Chandapura, a small pocket near Anekal, which has a mix of rural and urban consumers. Besides benefiting about 2,000 consumers, the project will help Bescom to explore or study the possibilities of smart grid at a larger scale.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will provide Rs 2.13 crore for the project being taken up in association with the Indian Institute of Technology-Banaras Hindu University and the Center for Study of Science, Technology & Policy (CSTEP), Bengaluru. An MoU for the project was signed by the three agencies recently.

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The project is expected to facilitate effective online recording and monitoring of energy besides better control of the energy exchanges in the distribution system to reduce operational errors. Further, the smart grid is expected to result in better load management of power.

"The implementation of smart meters will offer us an unprecedented real-time view of consumption of power, enabling peak load and outage management. This, in turn, will help in reducing distribution losses and pilferage, thus making the system more efficient and reliable," said Bescom MD Pankaj Kumar Pandey.

Asked about the failure of two other smart grid projects in Bescom jurisdiction, Pandey said the Electronics City smart grid failed to take off as KEMA, a USA based agency, and USAID failed to provide any concrete plans. "The other project in Indiranagar area is under DPR preparation, and will be shortly ready for implementation," he said.

CSTEP is confident that its project will succeed where others have failed. "While the other two smart grid proposals concentrated on primarily the urban sector, our pilot location in Chandapura has a mix of urban, rural and commercial consumers. It will help us gauge the requirements of the consumers much more efficiently," said Sandhya Sundararaghavan, a research scientist at CSTEP.