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Title: Need to develop 10 'Smart Cities in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI C. GOPALAKRISHNAN (NILGIRIS): Madam Speaker, the Centre has announced developing 100 cities as Smart Cities. I, on behalf of my leader, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, would urge upon the Government to announce at least 10 cities in Tamil Nadu as Smart Cities without delay.

Hon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's grand vision to build 100 Smart Cities will require a whopping Rs.7 lakh crore over the next 20 years, which works out to a whopping Rs.35,000 crore every year to put the requisite infrastructure in place.

These estimates have been compiled by the Ministry of Urban Development in a 'draft Concept Note on the Smart City Scheme'. The Union Finance Minister earmarked Rs.7,060 crore in this fiscal year to provide the necessary focus on the Scheme.

The Smart City Scheme, as of now, envisages only a 'viability gap funding' from the Government side, which is expected to be a small portion of the total investment and may not be a sufficient attraction. Besides, the State Governments and the urban local bodies are also expected to chip in for the viability gap funding and most of them are cash-strapped.

Tamil Nadu has urbanized population close to 50 per cent and because of various measures taken by our revered leader, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, Tamil Nadu has been making strides in urbanization in developing IT for bettering the living standard of the people. As a reward for this enviable record of performance, at least 10 cities in Tamil Nadu apart from Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai cities like my constituency, Ooty, the Nilgiris, which is the Queen of Hills, Salem, Tiruchi, Thoothukudi, Thanjavur, Cuddalore and Erode have the credential.

Hence, I would urge upon the Government to declare a minimum of 10 cities in Tamil Nadu as Smart Cities. I would appeal to the Government to declare the proposed cities in Tamil Nadu as Smart Cities without delay. Thank you.