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Replacing conventional meters with smart meters

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her recent Union Budget speech highlighted that India's average aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses are at 21.4 percent, pushing up the dues of DISCOMs to power generating companies to ₹72,938 crore at the end of November. Smart meters will minimise human intervention in metering, billing and collection, and help reduce theft by identifying loss pockets.

Lauding the government's proposal to install 250 million prepaid smart meters across the country, Gautam Seth, Managing Director, HPL Electric & Power Ltd., says, "This move can radically improve the financial health of the power utilities grappling with inefficiencies and operational challenges. Prepaid smart meters would be instrumental in improving the billing and revenue collection and reduce meter-reading and data-entry errors and costs. Through smart meters, power utilities will also be able to accurately forecast the demand and accordingly plan power purchase." At the same time, prepaid smart meters would also help improve detection of power theft and help DISCOMs reduce power outages.

The government's evolving framework and policies are doubling the installations in the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. Countries like China and the US have witnessed the highest deployment of smart meters, mainly due to support from their respective governments. To conclude, these factors are expected to drive the demand for analytic solutions to handle the vast amount of data generated from smart meters.

Gautam Seth, Managing Director, HPL Electric & Power Ltd.

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Dhiman Chakraborty, DGM, Delta Electronics

In India, we haven't yet evaluated multiple communication technologies pertaining to smart meters and AMI. Till date, only GPRS and RF are installed and being extensively utilised by the industrial leaders.