
Varanasi, Lucknow to Get Smart Meters by Year End

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency Varanasi will be connected to smart meters by the end of this year, as the government plans to cut down on the losses of state distribution companies and reduce power theft in cities.

Lucknow, which is home minister Rajnath Singh's constituency, will also see a partial roll-out of smart meters by 2018 end.

State-run Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) floated a global tender last year to procure 5 million smart meters, which were to be deployed in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Of the 4 million smart meters to be installed in Uttar Pradesh, around 3 lakh electricity consumers will be connected to smart meters in Varanasi, and 2 lakh in Lucknow, officials aware of the development said.

"By the end of this year, the smart meters will be rolled-out

in Varanasi and Lucknow. That's the mandate given to us," Saurabh Kumar, managing director at EESL, told ET.

The roll-out to high loss and high congestion consumers will be prioritised in these cities, and the plan will include replacing basic meters with smart meters in both residential and commercial segments.

"As of now, the plan is to connect the entire city (Varanasi), but during the implementation stage, things may be tweaked as per the requirements of the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd," another official said on condition of anonymity.

Recently in a bid to track power theft and illegal connections, distribution cables were also pushed underground in Varanasi. The Central transmission utility was given the task of modernising the distribution network in a 16 km sq areas part of the Central government's Integrated Power Development Scheme.
