

'Smart cities should network, and not compete'

Says Spanish delegation on meeting city's civic authorities

dna correspondent @dnahmedabad

The sense of competition is deep-rooted in the Indian society and gets reflected even in the smart city project. That was the observation made by a delegation from Valladolid, Spain, which was in city to meet Gautam Shah, mayor of Ahmedabad, as well as visit premier educational institutes. Both cities are expected to sign an agreement to be sister cities for sharing of knowledge as part of events to mark 60 years of diplomatic relations between India and Spain.

The delegates feel that smart cities should network internally for



Oscar Puente Santiago, mayor of Valladolid, with Gautam Shah, mayor of Ahmedabad at the meet

better development of the nation rather than try to compete with each other. Guillermo Martin, director of

Casa de la India, Spain, and part of the delegation, said, "For us smart city means having a holistic ap-

proach and not just technology but people-centered."

About India's smart city project, he added, "The hierarchy of competing with each other is very much embedded in India's culture from the very beginning. But in civil society, rather than competing, it is much better to start a network of smart cities, where they share their problems and find solutions together which will save resources, time, and money." "You cannot have competitive approach in 21st century and government of India has to find a way to get out of this," he said. Talking about the sister-city pact, he said, "Both the cities have many things in common. We hope that the delegation from Ahmedabad will come to our city in autumn to sign this twinning of cities," added Martin.

'Need the spirit of young India'

When asked about his takeaway from the city, Santiago said, "We are two different worlds. Here everything is brand new. Valladolid needs more activity and spark."

Drawing comparisons between the two countries, he said, "Spain is an old country and India is younger. Spain has more old-aged people while India has the power of youth. Spain needs a revamp and a burning spirit like India has." He joked that getting people from India to Spain would be the best thing to overcome the mundane spirit of Spain.