

15– 11 – 2023

News: Smart Cities

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs'** latest data, as of 3rd November 2023, provides insights into the status of India's Smart Cities Mission.

Key Findings Regarding the Status of India's Smart Cities Mission

Leading Cities in Completion of Projects

- **Surat (Gujarat)** emerges as the top performing city, leading in the completion of projects, fund utilization, and overall criteria.
- **Agra (Uttar Pradesh (UP)), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Varanasi (UP), and Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)** secure positions in the top five cities, showcasing commendable progress.
- The rest of the **top 10** include **Tumakuru (Karnataka), Udaipur (Rajasthan), Madurai (Tamil Nadu), Kota (Rajasthan) and Shivamogga (Karnataka).**

Regional Disparities

- **Union Territories (UTs) and cities in Northeastern states** find themselves in the **bottom 10**.
- The bottom 10 cities are **Kavaratti (Lakshadweep), Puducherry, Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands), Imphal (Manipur), Shillong (Meghalaya),**

Diu, Guwahati (Assam), Aizawl (Mizoram), Gangtok (Sikkim) and Pasighat (Arunachal Pradesh).

- Sources attribute the slower progress in smaller cities to capacity constraints, emphasizing the need for tailored strategies to address the unique challenges faced by these urban centers.

Overall Project Landscape

- About 22% of total projects (1,745 of 7,947) that account for 33% out of Rs 1.70 lakh crore) of the total cost are still ongoing.
- Many projects (6,202) have been completed, emphasizing the scale and financial investment involved.

National Smart Cities Mission

- National Smart Cities Mission is an urban renewal and retrofitting program by the Government of India with the mission to develop smart cities across the country, making them citizen friendly and sustainable.
- It was launched in 2015 with a deadline of June 2023, which was further extended to June 2024.
- The Union Ministry of Urban Development is responsible for implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme in collaboration with the state governments

of the respective cities. The mission initially included **100 cities**, with the deadline for completion of the projects set between 2019 and 2023.

- Key focus areas of the scheme include **construction of walkways, pedestrian crossings, cycling tracks, efficient waste-management systems, integrated traffic management and assessment.**
- The scheme also assesses various indices to track urban development such as the **Ease of Living Index, Municipal Performance Index, City GDP framework, Climate Smart Cities assessment framework, etc.**

Smart City

- There is **no standard definition or template of a smart city**. In the context of our country, **the six fundamental principles on which the concept of Smart Cities is based are: Community at the Core (Considering communities at every level of planning and implementation), More from Less (Effective utilization of limited resources), Corporative and Competitive Federalism (Cities selected through healthy competition competing with each other along with supporting each other), Integration, Innovation and Sustainability (Innovative methods used), Technology as means, not the goal (careful selection of apt technology) and Convergence (Sectorial and Financial Convergence).**

- Recently, the 10,000 acre Aurangabad Industrial City in Aurangabad, Maharashtra was inaugurated as the first Greenfield industrial smart city of India.
- The **Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs)** set up under the **Mission** are meant to coordinate traffic management, surveillance, utilities and grievance redressal.
- As on date, 69 smart **cities have developed and operationalised their Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs)** in the country.
- Recently, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has decided that the rest 31 cities will also have the Integrated Command and Control Centers (ICCC).

Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs)

- Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs) **act as the “nerve center” for operations management in the city with day-to-day exception handling and disaster management.**
- ICCCs **provide smart solutions to the city's municipal corporation** and help manage safety and surveillance of the city.

- The centres comprise video walls for real-time monitoring, emergency response system, operations planning to include critical ones and 24x7 manual maintenance.
- The centres are being established to enable smart living, smart environment, smart economy, smart governance, smart population and smart mobility.
- The centre will also provide valuable insights by processing complex data sets at an aggregated level to derive intelligence for improved planning and policymaking.
- The ICCCs are now also linked to the CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems) network under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Aim of the ICCC is to aggregate information across multiple applications and sensors deployed across the city and provide actionable information with appropriate visualization for decision-makers.
- These operational ICCCs functioned as war-rooms for COVID management, and along with other smart infrastructure developed under the mission, helped cities in fighting the pandemic through information dissemination, improving communication, predictive analysis and supporting effective management.
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