Problems with Smart City Mission

Why in news?

\n\n

The Ministry of Urban Development's released its fourth list under the Smart City Mission, taking the total number of cities picked under the Centre's flagship project to 90.

\n\n

What is Smart City?

\n\n

\n
- There is **no universally accepted definition** of a smart city.
\n
- The conceptualisation of Smart City varies from city to city and country to country, depending on the level of development, willingness to change and reform, resources and aspirations of the city residents.
\n
- To provide for the aspirations and needs of the citizens, urban planners ideally aim at developing the entire urban eco-system, which is represented by the four pillars of comprehensive development-institutional, physical, social and economic infrastructure.
\n
- This can be a long term goal and cities can work towards developing such comprehensive infrastructure incrementally, adding on layers of 'smartness'.
\n

\n\n

What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n
- A major share of the Centre's investment in the Mission will flow to well-developed pockets that account for less than 3% of the cumulative area of the cities.
\n

- One of the objectives of the Smart City Mission was to act as a corrective to a lopsided developmental pattern.
  \n
- The mission intended to create employment and enhance incomes for all, especially the poor and disadvantaged leading to inclusive cities. This **emphasis on inclusive development has been diluted.**
  \n
- Only 26 of the cities selected have plans to provide affordable housing, education and medical facilities.
  \n
- The city development plans have not been aligned with some of the government's employment-generating initiatives.
  \n
- The government does have plans to promote start-ups and infrastructure projects. But these projects are concentrated in tiny pockets in the selected cities.
  \n
- Smart city plans have also **not found a way to deal with recurring problems.**
  \n
- For instance, Guwahati has no effective plan to deal with floods that ravage it every year.
  \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Indian Express

\n

