SBM-U 2.0 and AMRUT 2.0

Why in news?

Prime Minister has announced the second phase of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) with a fresh promise to make India's cities clean.

What is the state of affairs of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) in India?

- Urban India alone generates nearly 0.15 million tonnes per day of MSW, with per capita generation ranging between 0.30–0.45 kg per day.
- Of the 62 million tonnes of waste generated annually in India only 68 per cent is collected, of which only 28 per cent is treated by municipal corporations.
- Lower recycling in India is attributed to reasons such as lack of social awareness, socio-political hindrances, inefficient segregation and lack of appropriate infrastructure and technology.
- The informal sector is often not officially approved or recognised besides the fact that they potentially contribute to waste recycling practices of cities.

What is the second phase of scheme about?

- SBM-U 2.0 aims to make Indian cities **garbage free** and all urban local bodies (ULBs) **open defecation free**.
- It will focus on source segregation of solid waste, utilising the principles of 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle), scientific processing of municipal solid waste and remediation of legacy dumpsites.
- The scheme has an outlay of Rs. 1.41 lakh crore.
- It focuses to transition to a **circular economy** that treats solid and liquid waste as a resource.
- It also aims 100% tap water supply in about 4,700 urban local bodies and sewerage and septage in 500 AMRUT cities.

What are the concerns of the scheme?

- The current model of issuing mega contracts to big corporations has left segregation of waste at source a non-starter.
- In the absence of a scaling up of operations which can provide large-scale employment, SBM-U 2.0 cannot keep pace with the tide of waste in a growing economy.
- On sanitation, many of the toilets are without water and are unusable.

How to address these concerns?

- State and municipal governments, which do the heavy lifting on waste and sanitation issues, should work to increase **community ownership** of the system.
- The high ambition of achieving 100% tap water supply in 500 AMRUT cities depends crucially on making good public rental housing accessible to millions of people.

Source: The Hindu, Down to Earth

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