Smart Cities Mission

Why in news?

The government has announced that 80 of the 100 planned Integrated Command and Control Centres have been set up, with the rest to be completed by August 15.

What is the Smart Cities Mission?

> *India is urbanizing exponentially with the expected influx of over 400 million people over next 35 years.*

- Smart city is defined as a one that makes optimal use of all the interconnected information available to better understand and control its operations and optimise the use of limited resources.
- Smart Cities Mission was launched in 2015 under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The Mission is operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- **Objective**- To promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment and give a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of smart solutions.
- 100 cities have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities through a two-stage competition.
- **Area based development**- It includes city improvement (retrofitting), city renewal (redevelopment) and city extension (greenfield development).
- **Key focus areas**
    - Construction of walkways, pedestrian crossings, cycling tracks
    - Efficient waste-management systems
    - Integrated traffic management and assessment
- **Assessment of indices**- It 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.
- **Fundamental principles of Smart Cities**
    1. Community at the Core
    2. More from less
    3. Co-operative and Competitive Federalism
    4. Integration, Innovation , Sustainability
    5. Technology as a means
    6. Convergence

What is an Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC)?

> *The ICCCs are envisaged to be the brain for city operation as it will act as a decision support system for city administration to respond to the real time events by consuming data feeds from different data sources and by processing information out of the data sets.*

- The Smart Cities Mission includes setting up ICCCs for each smart city.
- **Monitoring**- These ICCCs are designed to enable authorities to monitor the status of various amenities (water, power supply, traffic movement, city connectivity and internet infrastructure, etc.) in real time.
- **Operations management**- The ICCC acts of a smart city acts as a "nerve centre" for operations management.
- **Data processing**- The ICCC is the nodal point of availability of all online data and information relating to smart services included in a smart city.
- **War rooms**- During the pandemic, they also served as war-rooms for Covid-19 management.
- **Link with CCTNS**- The ICCCs are linked to the CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems) network under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

What is the current status of the Smarts Cities Mission?

- The project had an initial deadline of 2021 for the first lot of 20 smart cities out of the 100 selected.
- The cities were selected over a period of two years between 2016 and 2018, each with a deadline of completion within five years from the time of their selection.
- On the recommendation of NITI Aayog, the timeline was extended last year until 2023 due to delays caused by the pandemic.
- According to Ministry data, the SCM has so far covered over 140 public-private partnerships, 340 smart roads, 78 vibrant public places, 118 smart water projects and over 63 solar projects.
- The Ministry noted that almost 100% of these projects have been work-ordered.
- Currently, the Centre is preparing a 60-point action plan.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has begun work to finalise its recommendation for providing ICCCs as a service to states and smaller cities.
- The Ministry is also aiming to finalise an ICCC model and implement a pilot project across 6 states — Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

References

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