Swachh Survekshan 2021 Awards

Why in news?

President Ramnath Govind presented the Swachh Survekshan Awards 2021 and the winners were honoured at the Swachh Amrit Mahotsav organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

What is Swachh Survekshan?

- Swachh Survekshan is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in cities and towns across India.
- It was launched as part of the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** which aimed to make India clean and free of open defecation by 2nd October 2019.
- The first survey was undertaken in **2016** and covered 73 cities.
- **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** ranks all cities under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) with Quality Council of India (QCI) as its implementation partner.
- The objective of the survey is to
    - Encourage large scale citizen participation
    - Ensure sustainability of initiatives taken towards garbage free and open defecation free cities
    - Provide credible outcomes which would be validated by third party certification
    - Institutionalize existing systems through online processes
    - Create awareness amongst all sections of society towards making towns and cities more habitable and sustainable
    - Foster a spirit of healthy competition amongst towns and cities to improve their service delivery to citizens

What is the 2021 ranking?

- **Cleanest City – Indore, Madhya Padesh** for the fifth consecutive year (in the more than 1 lakh population category) and, **Vita, Maharashtra** (in the population category of less than 1 lakh)
- **Best Ganga Town - Varanasi**
- **India’s Cleanest Cantonment - Ahmedabad Cantonment**
- **Fastest Mover City - Hoshangabad (Madhya Pradesh)**

- **Fastest Mover States** – **Karnataka** in the big (more than 100 ULBs) and **Mizoram** in the small (less than 100 ULBs) category
- **Cleanest State – Chhattisgarh** for the third consecutive year (in the category of more than 100 Urban Local Bodies) and **Jharkhand** for the second time (in the "less than 100 ULBs category)
- Under **Prerak Daaur Samman**, a new performance category introduced under Swachh Survekshan 2021 to assess solid waste management, 5 cities – Indore, Surat, Navi Mumbai, New Delhi Municipal Council and Tirupati were categorized as 'Divya' (Platinum).
- Indore, Navi Mumbai, Nellore and Dewas emerged as the top performers in the **Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge**.
- Chhattisgarh and Chandigarh bagged the award for best performing State and Union Territory under the Challenge.

Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge was launched in 2020 by MoHUA to eradicate human fatalities from hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

- A total of 9 cities – Indore, Surat, New Delhi Municipal Council, Navi Mumbai, Ambikapur, Mysuru, Noida, Vijayawada and Patan have been certified as 5 star cities while 143 cities have been certified as 3 star.

The Star Rating Protocol of Garbage Free Cities was introduced as a SMART framework by MoHUA in 2018, to holistically evaluate cities across solid waste management parameters.

What is the significance of the ranking?

- The environment conservation has been an integral part of the traditional lifestyle of India and the whole world is emphasising to reduce, reuse and recycle the resources.
- Good examples are coming out of the idea of 'Waste to Wealth' and many start-ups are active in these areas.
- A publicity boost and recognition for the winners will motivate others to climb higher on the rankings.
- Six years is a good time to take stock of what the ranking programme intends to achieve.
- The Mission has taken the shape of a people's movement – **a true 'Jan**

Andolan' and is the world's largest urban cleanliness survey today.

What questions remain unanswered regarding the survey?

- Is it motivating cities to significantly allocate resources towards improving sanitation?
- Are cleaner cities cleaner because they are better positioned to access State funds and thus able to pull further away from other cities?
- Do States focus their energies and funds in keeping some cities clean to avail of a rank in any of the wide number of categories?
- There should be more qualitative analysis of whether India's cities are getting cleaner in the aggregate or if numbers are hiding inequity.

References

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