Swachh Survekshan Awards 2025-26

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Governance*

Why in news?

President of India honoured India's cleanest cities at the Swachh Survekshan Awards 2025–26 held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

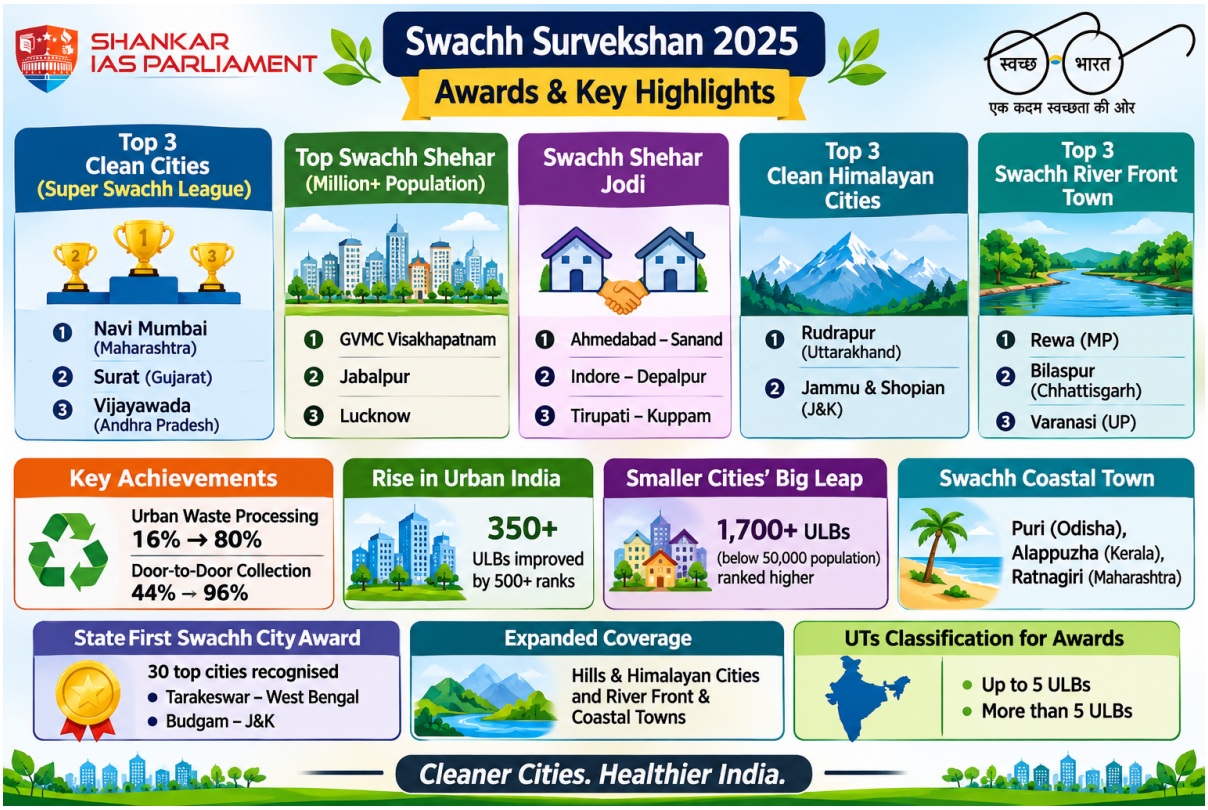
- **Swachh Survekshan Awards** – These are annual national honours presented by the Government of India to recognise the cleanest cities, towns, and states across the country.
- It is the world's largest urban sanitation and cleanliness survey.
- **Launched in** – 2016 as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission–Urban (SBM-U).
- **Organised by** – Conducted by the Department of Urban Development (DoUD), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- **Theme** – "Swachhata Ki Nayi Pehel – Badhayein Haath, Karein Safai Saath".
- **Participation** – Over 4,751 cities evaluated, with 2.70 crore citizens providing feedback
- **Total Awards & Categories** – This year, 60 national awards have been announced under 5 categories -
    - Swachh Shehar Jodi (SSJ)
    - Clean Cities of Super Swachh League
    - Swachh Shehar in 5 population categories
    - Swachh River Front Town
    - Swachh Coastal Town
    - Clean Himalayan City
    - State First Swachh City
- Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) were assessed across 43 indicators covering 10 critical domains.

Key winners

- **Top 3 Clean Cities of Super Swachh League** – Maharashtra's Navi Mumbai, Gujarat's Surat and Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada.
- **Top Swachh Shehar** – Marking the rise of a new generation of clean cities, as India's top Swachh Shehar in the million-plus population category
    - GVMC Visakhapatnam,
    - Jabalpur and
    - Lucknow.

Progress achieved by Swachh Bharat Mission since 2014, that urban waste processing has increased from 16% to 80%, while door-to-door waste collection coverage has risen from 44% to over 96%.

- **Rise in urban India** – A strong upward momentum across urban India, with over 350 ULBs improving their position by more than 500 ranks.
- Smaller cities have emerged as key drivers of this transformation, as 1,700+ ULBs with populations below 50,000 improved their rankings compared to 2024–25.
- **Top 3 Swachh Shehar Jodi award** – Joint performance and collaborative efforts of both cities under the Swachh Shehar Jodi initiative with the motive of Each One - Teach One.
- Mentee cities showed sharp gains, with visible cleanliness jumping from 48% to 70% and door-to-door waste collection rising from 52% to 74%.
    - Mentor city Ahmedabad & Mentee city Sanand,
    - Mentor Indore & Mentee Deopalpur and
    - Mentor Tirupati & Mentee Kuppam.
- **Expanded coverage** – For the first time, the award expanded its coverage to include the Hills and Himalayan cities as well as riverfront and coastal towns.
- **Top 3 Clean Himalayan Cities**
    - Rudrapur in Uttarakhand,
    - Jammu & Shopian in J&K.
- **Top 3 ranks for the Swachh River Front Town**
    - Rewa (MP),
    - Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) &
    - Varanasi (UP) consecutively,
- **Award for Swachh Coastal Town** – Odisha's Puri, Kerala's Alappuzha and Maharashtra's Ratnagiri.
- **State First Swachh City Award** – It was conferred on 30 top-performing cities, to recognise and reward excellence across States and Union Territories.
    - Tarakeswar emerged as the best-performing urban local body in West Bengal.
    - Budgam received the State First Swachh City Award for Jammu & Kashmir.
- Union Territories have been classified into two categories for awards:
    - Up to 5 ULBs and
    - More than 5 ULBs.
- **Scale & Impact** – Highlighted the growing scale and impact of Swachh Survekshan, which has expanded from 73 cities in 2016 to 4,751 cities in 2025–26.
- 2.70 crore citizens provided feedback during this year's survey, while over 1,700 smaller cities improved their rankings and more than 350 cities registered improvements of over 500 positions.



Reference

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