Extension of Smart Cities Mission

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Context

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry is thinking about extending the Smart Cities Mission. This extension would give cities more time to finish ongoing projects, which make up about 10% of all the projects.

About Smart Cities Mission

- **About**

  - It was launched on 25 June, 2015, with the objective to sell cities that offer middle infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment.
  - 100 towns had been decided on to be advanced as Smart Cities (by a two-stage competition) in various rounds from 2016 to 2018, with every getting five years from their choice to complete the projects, i.e., the original closing dates were from 2021 to 2023.
  - After the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, the closing date for all 100 cities became constant to June 2023 in 2021.
  - In May last year, the Ministry again prolonged the deadline, this time to June 30, 2024.
  - It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
  - The Central Government will give financial support to the extent of Rs. 48,000

crores over 5 years i.e., on an average 100 crore per city per year.
- An identical quantity on an identical basis is to be provided through the State/ULB.

Objective of SCM

- It will make certain a decent quality of existence to their residents via the software of 'smart solutions'.
- It aims to drive economic growth and improve quality of life through complete work on social, financial, physical and institutional pillars of the metropolis.
- The recognition is on sustainable and inclusive development by the advent of replicable models which act as lighthouses to different aspiring cities.

Financing of Smart Cities Mission

- The Smart Cities Mission in India is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- It requires state governments and concrete local bodies (ULBs) to contribute an equal quantity for implementing projects under the Smart City Proposal (SCP).

Performance of SCM

- Out of the completed projects, 5,588 projects worth Rs 65,996 crore had been funded under the Mission.
- The final are from the cities' own resources, PPP mode, convergence with other missions and different sources.
- All one hundred towns have installed Integrated Command and Control Centres at a cost of Rs 11,775 crore.
- The specific categories which account for the top categories of completed works consist of:
    - water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) projects worth Rs 44,300;
    - smart mobility projects worth Rs 33,019 crore; and
    - clever governance projects worth Rs 15,474 crore.

Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs

- In February 2024, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs submitted its document at the assessment of the Smart Cities Mission provided inside the Lok Sabha.
- The report stated that four hundred projects, out of the 7,970, well worth Rs 22,814 crore would take beyond December 2024 to finish.
- Among the diverse reasons noted by the report for the delays had been difficulties in resettlement of local population and criminal troubles along with land procurement.
- Frequent transfers of smart cities' CEOs and delay in initiatives that require convergence with other government ministries or agencies have also been flagged.
- It further said that in case of non-completion of these projects within the extended time frame, the state governments concerned will have to complete the projects at

their own cost.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Q. With a brief background of the quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme.' (2016)