

1. How far do you think the concept of smart city or digital hub seems to have a vision that originated with giant technology companies hoping to earn profit from big municipal contracts? How can the Programme aid in Governments efforts towards urban poverty alleviation? (150 Words)

Answer:

- The phrase smart city is defined as the ability to integrate multiple technological solutions in a secure fashion to manage the city's information systems, schools, libraries, transportation systems, hospitals, power plants, law enforcement, and other community services.
- Smart cities have become very important today, because of several challenges faced in area of urban transport, climate change, and energy scarcity. Thus, efficiency gain has emerged as the biggest challenge.
- ICT is used to enhance quality, performance and interactivity of urban services, to reduce costs and resource consumption and to improve contact between citizens and government.
- Through the use of real-time systems and sensors, data are collected from citizens and objects - then processed in real-time. The information and knowledge gathered are keys to tackling inefficiency.
- However, it is also a challenge that since the process has become too technical and challenges, it is mostly the big corporations, like IBM, CISCO, etc., which specializes in big data, would win major contracts from municipal boards of these cities. In most of the technology driven area in urban management this trend has been observed.
- In fact in many cities the entire digitalization program has been designed by such companies, for example, in Amsterdam, a majority of city budget is spent on Suzlon and cisco. However, if the same program is designed by local IT firms with local talent of those cities, it can help in generating large scale employment and a boost to local economy too.
- Most important advantage of local talent is that, there wouldn't be too much pressure on housing and local colleges' students would get better recruitment, reducing the need for Rural-urban migration and also such personnel would provide better solutions as they would know the city better.
- Smart cities would also attract better investments, which would promote job creation and innovation. Similarly the governance would get a major boost due to applications of ICT, further improving the disbursal of services and helping the urban poor.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. State the factors which have led to India being categorized as a water-stressed nation. Also, identify sustainable solutions for averting the crisis at hand. (150 words)
2. Arresting the deterioration of soil health is key to achieve food security. Discussing the regional variations in soil quality, mention some measures taken by the government for its improvement. (150 words)

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