



URBAN GOVERNANCE DIALOGUE

Transforming Urban Governance

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Prajantra 2022-23: National Youth Festival Grand Finale



Participant Map of Prajantra 2022-23

The Grand Finale of Prajantra 2022-23 truly marked the pinnacle of this National Youth Festival, celebrating City Governance and the **75th anniversary of Indian Independence**, this year's theme was **'Model City Government'**.

Praja and the National Institute of Urban Affairs co-organised the event. The Grand Finale was an in-person ceremony with a global-level stature. It was an anchor point for the **National Youth Conclave**, organised jointly by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (U20)** and the **Ministry of Youth & Sports Affairs (Y20)** under the **G20 Forum**. The ceremony took place at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi** on 13-14 March. Prajantra 2022-23 was co-funded by **Friedrich Nauman Foundation**.

Several dignitaries such as the honourable **Hardeep Singh Puri, Cabinet Minister of Urban & Housing Affairs (MoHUA)**, **Kaushal Kishore, Minister of State of Urban & Housing Affairs**, **Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator for India**, **Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary of MoHUA** were present for the Grand Finale of Prajantra.

Following high-spirited, Quarter Final and Semi Final rounds 75 National Youth Champions were selected as the grand finalists. The grand finalists represented nooks and corners of India and came from diverse backgrounds including Social Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Law. Finalists presented their vision for model city government in five events as they role played Mayor (Mayor Speech), Municipal Committee Chairpersons (Policy Presentation), Councillors (Policy Debate) and civil society (Op-ed Writing). While the Quiz competition tested their knowledge of urban subjects. In this edition of the newsletter, Prajantra Event Coordinators elaborate on individual events.

"Praja team has done an excellent job in organising a national event. I encourage them to not let this momentum go and continue to take forward this mission and involve more and more youth."

Dr Gayatri Doctor, Associate Professor, CEPT University, Ahmedabad

(Prajantra Coordinator and Judge, Prajantra Debate Competition)

CONGRATULATIONS PRAJATANTRA WINNERS!

Mayor's Speech		
1st	Samridhi Bhardwaj	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati off Campus, Assam
2nd	Madhumathi M V	Women's Christian College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
3rd	Monis Rizwan	Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Belagavi, Karnataka
Policy Presentation on E-Governance and Citizen Participation		
1st	Joe Mammen John	Loyola College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
2nd	Milen Anugraha Paul	Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi
3rd	Ishwarya S	Faculty of Planning - CEPT University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance		
1st	Swastik Madake	DES Shri Navalmal Firodia Law College, Pune, Maharashtra
2nd	Mehvish Wani	National Institute of Technology, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir
3rd	Navaneeth Joshi	Ramaiah College of Law, Bangalore, Karnataka
Debate		
1st	Anshi Pandey	Gokhale Institute of Politics And Economics, Pune
	Saanj Chougule	
2nd	Akanksha Tiwari	Loreto College, Kolkata, West Bengal
	Neha Sen	
3rd	Augen Joe	Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, Kerala
	Swetha Siva Subramanya Iyer	
Quiz		
1st	Mariette Rose George	Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
	Sneha Vyas	
2nd	Saqib Hamid	AAAM Degree College Bemina, Cluster University, Srinagar
	Abdul Basit	
3rd	Dhruva Kansagara	MIT-Adt University, School Of Architecture, Pune, Maharashtra
	Amar Malode	
Op-Ed		
1st	Roshni Agarwal	Amity Law School, Amity University, Noida, Uttar Pradesh
2nd	Yashaswini Inala	National Institute of Technology, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir
3rd	Ananya Dubey	Hindu College, University of Delhi
India's Best Youth Team		
1st	Faculty of Planning - CEPT University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	
2nd	Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College, University of Delhi	
3rd	National Institute of Technology Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir	
Champions of Democracy		
Madhumati M V		Women's Christian College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
Hrishikesh Dahale		Karve Institute of social services, Pune, Maharashtra

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Still from Mayor Speech Event

Mayor Speech:

Have you ever heard of a speech competition where mayors from different towns participate to present their perspectives on issues related to their communities? The Mayor Speech Competition offered an opportunity for individuals to showcase their leadership skills, communicate with the public, and deliver a message of hope, vision, or inspiration. This competition had an objective to encourage participants to prepare for city policy, good governance, and a futuristic view.

12 grand finalists representing cities including Chennai, Kolkata, Delhi, Pune, Guwahati and more participated in the grand finale of Prajatantra 2022-23. They highlighted unique cultures, traditions,

obstacles, and visions for their respective corporations. The judging panel consisted of Honourable **Junaid Mattu, the sitting Mayor of Srinagar City** and **Tikender Singh Panwar, the former Deputy Mayor of Shimla**, and **Dr Amit Singh, Associate Professor at ASD College**.

The participants focused on addressing the basic needs of people, such as providing access to quality education, proper food, clothing, shelter, and a hygienic living environment. They also emphasized the importance of making technology accessible to all sectors, allocating finances according to the needs of the time, and prioritizing environment-friendly and sustainable development of cities by promoting greenery.

This competition was unique in its form. As the event coordinator, I was amazed to observe the diverse ways mayors were elected and the varying levels of power they held in their respective municipalities. I also enjoyed listening to the perspectives of my peer group on their cities and communities while engaging a company that embodies the values of democracy in action. -Afreen Shaikh, Praja Fellow and Event Coordinator- Mayor Speech

"Good governance is not firefighting or crisis-management. Instead of opting for ad-hoc solutions"

Samridhi Bhardwaj, Winner Mayor Speech Competition

The Policy Presentation on e-Governance and Citizen Participation

The policy presentation on e-Governance and Citizen Participation was a platform for 10 participants to present their proposals on how to improve service delivery to citizens by making it more efficient, effective, and responsive to their needs.

The policies presented also emphasized the need to collect, store, and use citizen data securely, and facilitate innovation by encouraging the development and adoption of new technologies and solutions that can enhance government operations and service delivery. These proposals highlighted the diverse approaches and strategies that can be implemented to enhance citizen participation and improve services.

Participants presented a range of innovative ideas to improve e-Governance and citizen participation in their cities. One participant proposed the use of e-Governance in the healthcare system, while another focused on implementing e-Governance in the Public Distribution System (PDS). Another participant suggested ideas for



Still from the policy presentation event

improving the overall governance system, and one even created an app to facilitate citizen participation.

Still from the Debate Competition

an app to



Still from the policy presentation event

The presentation was judged by **Shri Tikender Ji, the Deputy mayor of Shimla city, Shri Manpreet Singh, the chief program officer at NIUA, and Dr Geeta Kubsad, a professor at Pravin Gandhi Law College.** The panel evaluated the proposals based on criteria such as feasibility, impact, and innovation, providing a valuable opportunity for participants to share ideas and strategies for enhancing e-Governance and citizen participation.

As the event coordinator, it also provided with an excellent opportunity to observe the importance of citizen participation and the innovative ideas that can be implemented to improve e-Governance. - Ashwini Bhagane, Praja Fellow and Event Coordinator, Policy Presentation on e-Governance and Citizen

Participation

Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance

The objective of the Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance event was to engage Indian youth on the critical subject of Municipal Finance that affects the service delivery in a city.

The 10 grand finalists shared different educational backgrounds including non-economic streams like law and medicine. The finalists showcased impressive knowledge and research on municipal finance and governance policies. The event was judged by esteemed judges such as **Pragya Sharma, a Programme Manager at NIUA, Debarpita Roy, a Fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress, and Shri P.D. Hari Prasad Ji, the Former Deputy Comptroller of Accounts (DCA) in Municipal Corporation of Delhi.**

Discussions revolved around taxable and non-taxable revenue, public-private partnership, and laws governing taxation. Financial inequalities between big and rich corporations and smaller cities were also points of contention. The transparency of municipal bodies was also raised as a concern by a participant from Srinagar. Another participant from Belagavi suggested the "SPIDER WEB" scheme for linking, connecting and evaluating an individual property and linking bank accounts, Aadhar, and monitoring. The competition witnessed participants presenting policies such as Pragati Niti, which aims to improve urban planning, public works, and civic amenities. It was heartening to see participants taking up the challenge of presenting policies for cities they were not familiar with and presenting their policies with confidence and conviction.

The event provided a platform for students from different domains to come together and showcase their skills and knowledge and provided valuable insights into municipal finance and governance for all involved. - Lekhani Raja, Praja Fellow and Event Coordinator, Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance

"Prajatantra was an incredible experience. It was fascinating to meet with participants from different regions and learn about their unique perspectives and ideas. I thank Prajatantra team for providing such platform to showcase our talents and bringing together a diverse community of individuals."

Amar Malode, Grand Finalist, Prajatantra Quiz

Debate

The debate competition was organized to encourage college participants to critically think about primary issues related to urban governance and policies.

The competition aimed to provide a platform for participants to enact as municipal councillors in the General Body Meeting of the Municipal Corporation.



The debate competition revolved around two motions – ‘whether Urban Local Bodies should levy user charges for Solid Waste Management service from citizens or generate their revenue through efficient solid waste management (recycling, reusing, and composting)’ and ‘whether the mayor should be elected directly by citizens or indirectly by councillors’. Teams were divided into two categories and were told if they will speak for the motion or against it on the spot. Motion for each round was selected on the spot. This format was adopted to enhance their quick-thinking skills.

From the hundreds of participants, 20 finalists qualified for the grand finale. They came from different parts of India, including Kolkata, Delhi, Pune and other places. Each team had five minutes to present their views on solid waste management and engage in a question-and-answer session with their opponents. Many of them brought real-world examples to validate their sides.

As the Debate Coordinator, my favourite part of the competition was interacting with participants from around India. I also had a bigger role in terms of clearing their doubts, guiding participants during their preparations and keeping their spirits up throughout. Activities like setting up calendars, meetings and drafting and responding to emails helped me to develop my organisational skills. - Riddhi Parab, Praja Fellow and Event Coordinator- Debate Competition

Prajantra Quiz

Prajantra Quiz was designed to encourage participant to learn more on urban subjects. The Grand Finale tested the knowledge of 9 finalist teams on Indian Constitution, Urban Governance, E-Governance, Municipal Finance and Climate Change. The grand finale featured 5 rounds;

- First was the General Q & A Round
- Second was the Stand up and Answer Round.
- Third was the Audio-Visual Round
- Fourth was the Fastest Finger First Round
- Fifth was the True or False Round

Along with participants, audience too enthusiastically participated in the segments dedicated for them.

- Sakshi Ghule, Event Coordinator- Quiz Competition



Cabinet Minister MoHUA, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri Ji launching Prajatantra 2022-23

Minister of State MoHUA, Shri Kaushal Kishor Ji and Joint Commissioner Kunal Kumar Ji inaugurating National Youth Conclave



We would like to know your views and feedbacks based on the above information shared. Feel free to reach us at info@praja.org

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ntai Mehta'.

Nitai Mehta
Managing Trustee, Praja Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Milind Mhaske'.

Milind Mhaske,
CEO, Praja Foundation

CONGRATULATIONS WINNERS!



**SEE YOU SOON IN THE NEXT
PRAJATANTRA!**