



PRAJATANTRA 2023

National Youth Festival

Model City Government
Theme: Inclusive and Participatory Urban Economies

Prajatantra Samvad 2023

Issue 02



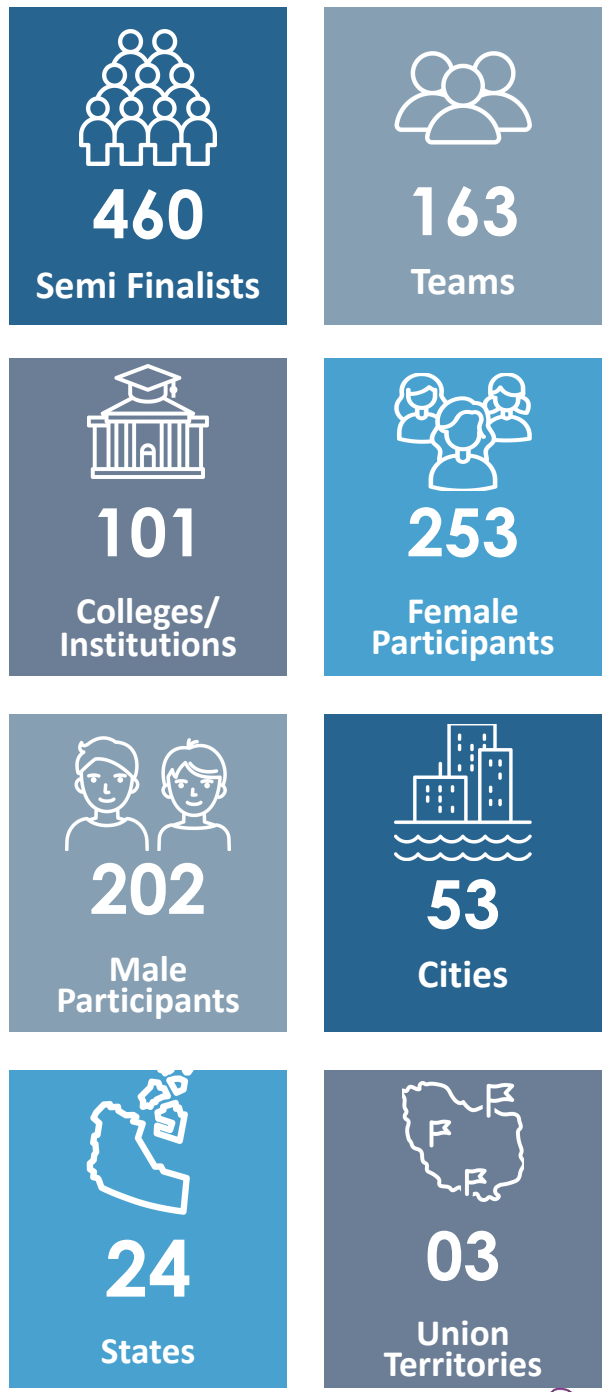
EDITORIAL

The **Semi-Final Rounds of Prajatantra 2023** took place successfully on September 16 and 17, 2023. We are delighted to share that **out of the 343 registered teams, 163 teams** were qualified to the Semi-Final Rounds. These teams represented a total of 53 Cities, 24 States, and 3 Union Territories. We observed notable growth in the enthusiasm and maturity of the participants as they assumed roles such as mayors, committee chairpersons, and elected representatives. **Prajatantra 2023, National Youth Festival** has been organised by **Praja Foundation** in collaboration with the **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** and with the support of **UN-Habitat** and **Friedrich Nauman Foundation South Asia**.

Exploring this year's **theme** of '**Inclusive and Participatory Urban Economies**', we noticed a stronger emphasis on sustainable and **equitable development**, as well as **gender equality**. It was encouraging to see the clear vision of participants for addressing the challenges faced by cities and the effective strategies proposed to resolve them using local resources.

Beyond the competitive presentations, it was truly gratifying to engage with participants during and after the event. Gaining insights into their concerns, experiences, and feedback was a **valuable learning experience** for our organising team. Some participants also shared personal stories of advocating for local issues, and nothing made us prouder than witnessing them take on the role of active citizens. Their revised presentations already reflect a more practical approach, and we are confident that they will carry forward these lessons on their journey ahead.

We look forward to meeting them as future leaders and changemakers in their cities.





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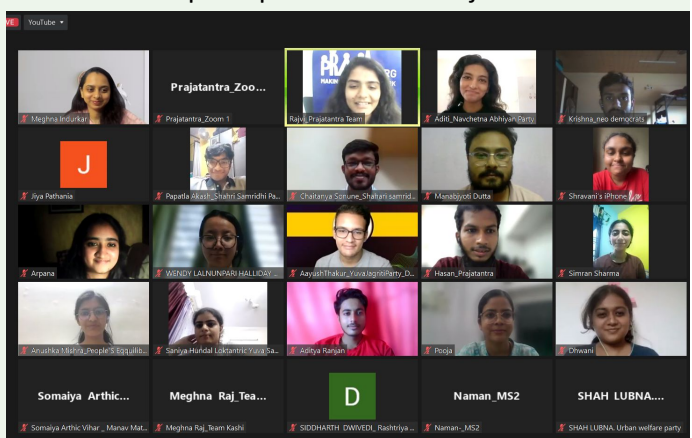
KNOWLEDGE SESSION 5:

74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992

The **fifth knowledge session** of Prajatantra 2023 focused on several discussions, including the Three Tiers of Governance, the provisions of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, and its significance for urban governance in India. This interactive session took place over four virtual sessions and featured expert speakers from Praja Foundation.

-  Meghna Indurkar - Head, Strategic Communications
-  Aviral Dubey - Program Manager, Capacity Building Team
-  Hetvi Chedda - Program Officer, Research & Analysis Team
-  Harshita Magroria - Program Officer, Research & Analysis Team

 [Click here to watch](#)

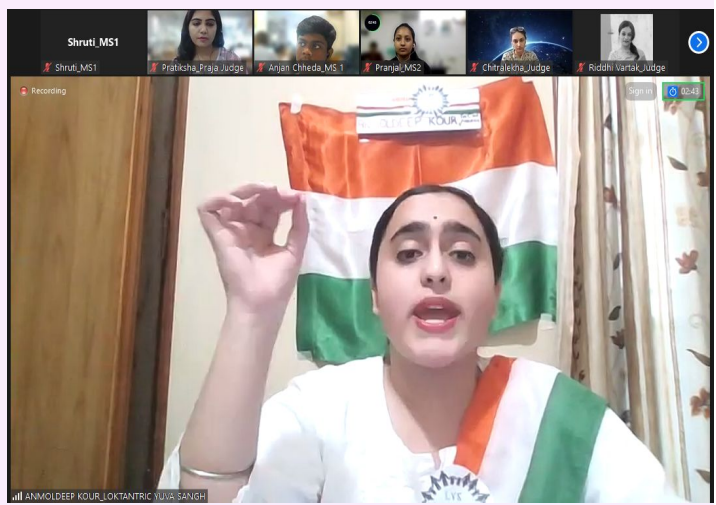


MAYOR'S SPEECH

Fine-tuning their presentations since the Qualifying Round, participants representing mayors from different cities in India gathered in the Semi-Final to exchange their ideas, visions, and aspirations for their upcoming terms. Many of the delivered speeches emphasised the development of their cities while preserving local cultures as a central theme.

Mayors highlighted various initiatives during their speeches, such as creating policies to support street vendors in Surat, which would enhance the city's street food culture, and empowering local artisans in Mysore to boost the arts and crafts sector of the city's economy. They stressed the importance of involving local entrepreneurial communities to foster inclusive and participatory urban economies within their jurisdictions.

Moreover, many mayors recognised the significance of coordination between the City Government and the State Government. They discussed the need to establish communication channels with state government agencies to ensure a synchronised approach to improved governance.

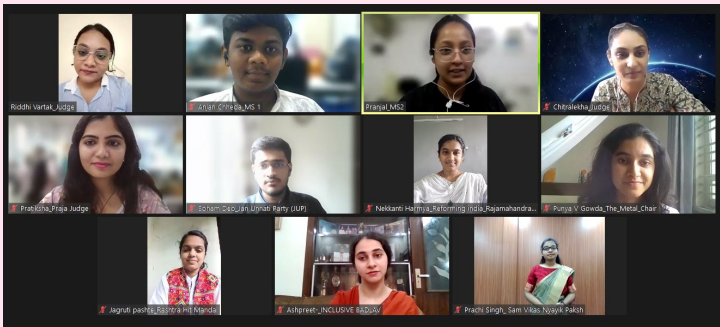




Additionally, mayors shared best practices in urban development and infrastructure that they had observed both in India and around the world. They discussed how they intended to adapt and customise these practices to suit the unique needs of their respective cities

Key themes focused during Mayor’s Speech Event

- Infrastructure development to improve civic services
- Growing Urban Economy and generating Employment
- Developing local Culture and Heritage
- Building safe and inclusive cities
- Environment and Sustainability



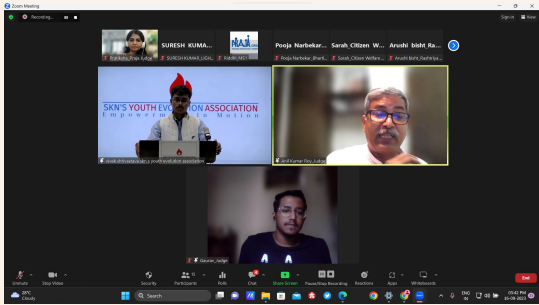
POLICY PRESENTATION

Public policy is a crucial part of governance. It plays important role in forming the guidelines and principles of society and influences how important decisions are made. The policies presented by our semi-finalists were broad and inclusive, covering a wide range of laws and regulations. These policies were also up to date, aligning with the current needs of our citizens.

Key highlights of Policy Presentation

Urban Economy

- Introducing smart contracts for licensing, social transfers, and leasing.
- Investing in public infrastructure creates jobs, improves quality of life, and helps businesses thrive.
- Skills Training: Training programs for in-demand skills help workers secure better-paying jobs and meet employer needs.
- Entrepreneur Support: Financial, technical, and mentoring support can help entrepreneurs start and grow businesses that meet urban needs.



Municipal Finance

- The corporation can issue bonds to raise capital for the projects. This can be cost-effective if the interest rates are low.
- The municipal corporation can partner with private entities to initiate specific development projects. This allows the corporation to leverage private capital to achieve public goals.





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DEBATE

The policy debate centred on the role of city governments in promoting economic development and enhancing the well-being of citizens. Both the proponents and opponents presented a range of arguments to explore different facets of their main argument.

The discussion focused on the connection between efficient service delivery and economic development, reinforcing the principle of subsidiarity. This principle emphasises the roles of city governments in delivering public services effectively and contributing to broader policy development, in coordination with State and Union Governments.

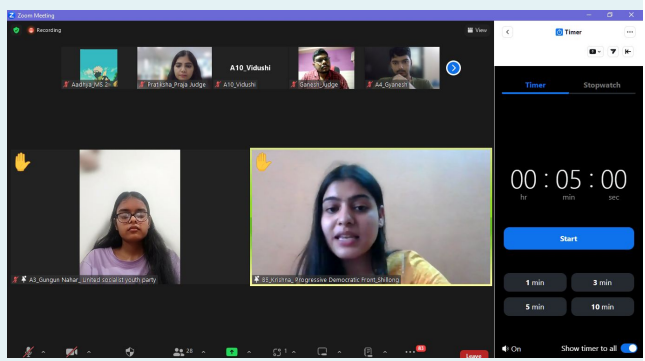
Debaters also made effective use of quotations from thinkers, leaders, and changemakers to support their arguments. They also cited case studies from cities in India and around the world to further illustrate how empowering city governments can strengthen urban economies.

Policy Debate Motions

Motion 1

Should City Governments be responsible for Service Delivery or should promote Economic Development?

- Government:** City government should only be a Service Delivery Agency.
- Opposition:** City government should also be Responsible for economic development.

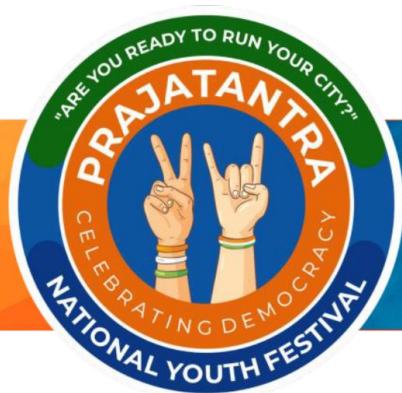


Motion 2

Should City Governments implement a minimum employment guarantee scheme to reduce unemployment or develop social welfare plan and provide jobs based on qualifications.

- Government:** City government should implement a minimum employment guarantee scheme to reduce unemployment.
- Opposition:** City Government should develop social welfare plan and provide jobs based on qualifications.





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FOUNDATION** For Freedom.
South Asia

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QUIZ

The Prajatantra Quiz has been designed with the aim of fostering intellectual curiosity among participants regarding topics related to the Indian Constitution, Urban Governance, and the Economy, which significantly impact our daily lives. The competition consists of three rounds: General Knowledge, True or False Round, and Rapid-Fire Round.

A unique and experimental aspect of this quiz competition was the interim period between two rounds. During this time, participants engaged in discussions about the questions from the previous rounds. Quiz Masters led discussions on answers and shared interesting facts related to the topics. Participants also had the opportunity to express their thoughts and share their experiences regarding individual questions. Many participants shared insights about local models of governance in their cities.

This interaction facilitated the exchange of ideas among participants in an open and interactive manner, enhancing the overall learning experience.



SEMI-FINAL CONCLUDING CEREMONY

From the Mayor's Speech competition to the engaging Policy Presentations on Municipal Finance and Urban Economy, and the intense Quiz and Debate competitions, we have seen participants evolve into confident, informed, and capable young leaders. It is a testament to the power of youth engagement and the potential they hold in shaping the future of our cities and communities.

Following these stimulating competitions, we gathered for a concluding ceremony, where participants, judges, and event coordinators came together to share their invaluable experiences and newfound insights from Semi-Final rounds.



[Click here to watch](#)

"Prajatantra exposed me to innovative ideas and diverse perspectives through my fellow participants. It helped me to enhance my presentation and boosted my experience. Prajatantra is a commendable initiative that not only empowers the youth but also makes us more responsible towards shaping our nation"

Junaid Mushtaq, Student of School of Social Sciences and Rural Reconstruction, Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Semi Finalist for Policy Presentation on Urban Economy

"Urban Governance is multidisciplinary subject, and every citizen of India must be aware of it. I was very happy to see young minds coming from different backgrounds on this platform. They must keep it up as their articulation is going to make a difference"

Anil Roy, Professor, CEPT University, Judge for Policy Presentation on Urban Economy

This marked the conclusion of the Semi-Final round. Within a few weeks, we could see a noticeable improvement in all the participants. The participants took the suggestions and advice from the judges seriously and worked on it. It was an unforgettable experience for everyone. In this thrilling journey, the team Prajatantra also learned many things throughout the process and worked tirelessly to provide a seamless experience for all the participants. Every year the participants do not fail to surprise us with their unique ideas and solutions to solve long-standing issues in our cities. Winning or losing is a part of every competition but what really matters is awareness and learning. The destination is not what matters but the journey. Our mission must be to improve the quality of cities and its governance. We wish all the very best to all our participants and teams for the upcoming competitions.

See you in Delhi for the Grand Finale!

Best regards,

Prajatantra Team



Prajatantra Steering Committee:

Hitesh Vaidya, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs; **Parul Agarwala**, Country Manager, UN-Habitat India; Nitai Mehta, Founder and Managing Trustee, Praja Foundation; **Milind Mhaske**, CEO, Praja Foundation.



Prajatantra Coordination Committee:

Dr Gayatri Doctor, Senior Associate Professor and Program Chair, Faculty of Management, CEPT University, Ahmedabad; **Dr Amit Singh**, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi University; **Dr Geeta Kubsad**, Assistant Professor, Pravin Gandhi College of Law, Mumbai; **Dr Vikas Tripathi**, Assistant Professor, Dept of Political Science, Guwahati University, Assam; **Pushkal Shivam**, Urban Planner, UN-Habitat, India; **Lovlesh Sharma**, Head, Urban Youth Unit (UYU) National Institute of Urban Affairs; **Himani Verma**, Manager, Urban Youth Unit (UYU) National Institute of Urban Affairs; **Kaustubh Parihar**, Project Associate, Urban Youth Unit (UYU) National Institute of Urban Affairs; **Priyanka Sharma**, Director Programs, Praja Foundation; **Kunaljit Bhatta**, Program Coordinator, Praja Foundation; **M Hasan Nizami**, Program Officer, Praja Foundation.

