



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India



G20 Series # 18

India's G20 Presidency

Urban20 (U20) Inception Meet
(Ahmedabad – February 09-10, 2023)

(Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)

March 02, 2023

"India's G20 Presidency belongs to the entire nation, and is a unique opportunity to showcase the country's strengths."

- [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#)

The inception meeting of the sixth U20 cycle is the City Sherpa meeting, which was held in Ahmedabad on February 09-10, 2023. Ahmedabad is the chair city for U20. The event was attended by over 70 delegates from close to 40 cities and more than 200 participants from observer cities, U20 Conveners, representatives from various working groups and engagement groups of the G20, senior officials from government, national and international organizations, and other guests.¹



Ahmedabad: U20 2023 Chair

The city of Ahmedabad is the U20 2023 Chair, following a handover from Jakarta, the U20 2022 Chair. Through the U20, cities from G20 member states engage with the G20 and commit to working together with national governments to move from intention to action and draft a roadmap for global change that will be driven together with cities, closing the gap between policy and practice at all levels of governance.²

¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1897795>

² <https://www.urban20.org/u20summit/2023-ahmedabad/>

Day 1

The **Opening Ceremony** commenced on February 09, 2023. The keynote address was delivered by the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel, in which he highlighted the rich urban legacy of Ahmedabad, a UNESCO World Heritage City, and recounted various urban development initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Gujarat under the guidance of Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi.

India's G20 Sherpa, Shri Amitabh Kant shared his thoughts on the importance of the U20 engagement group, given the importance of cities in taking forward the global sustainable development agenda. He gave a clarion call to all delegates to act as brand ambassadors of India's G20 presidency and carry the message of de-globalizing, de-carbonizing and digitizing cities.



The **Second Session** explored areas of convergence between urban priorities and aspects being discussed as part of key G20 Working Groups. The Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs made a special presentation on '**India's Urban Imperative**' highlighting the need for reforms in urban planning frameworks, infrastructure financing, and moving towards sustainable services.

A **Special Session** was held to showcase the pioneering work being undertaken by Ahmedabad and other cities in Gujarat. The speakers, Shri Mukesh Kumar, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Gujarat; Shri Keshav Varma, Chairperson, HLC of Urban Planners, Urban Economists and institutions; and Prof. H.M.Shivanand Swamy, Professor Emeritus, CoE-UT spoke about successful examples of affordable housing, riverfront development, and sustainable urban transport among others.

In the **Last Session**, City Sherpas from around the world discussed the urban issues and opportunities with their G20 national government counterparts. Over 20 international cities took part in the open floor discussion.

City Excursion

The day concluded with a city excursion for the delegates to Sabarmati Ashram and Atal Bridge. This was followed by a special programme hosted by the Government of Gujarat at the Sabarmati Riverfront, including a musical and dance performance and a Gala Dinner.



Day 2

On the second day of the City Sherpa meeting of the sixth U20 cycle, close to 40 delegates visited the World Heritage walled city of Ahmedabad, where a heritage walk was organized for them early in the morning.³



The formal sessions on the second day commenced with the deliberations that are central to any U20 cycle, namely the meeting of the City Sherpas. In this session, moderated by the U20 Conveners, over the course of the first half of the day, the Ahmedabad Sherpa presented the proposed six priority areas for the sixth U20 cycle, followed by rounds of deliberations on each priority.

³ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1898055>

The priority areas:



In the *Second Session*, under the guidance of Mr. Sanjeev Sanyal, Member Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, the areas of convergence between other engagement groups of the G20 and the priorities of U20 were explored.⁴

In the *Concluding Session*, the Mayor of Ahmedabad, Shri Kiritkumar J Parmar invited all delegates to the farewell dinner hosted at Kankaria Lake. Mr. M. Thennarasan, Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad, spoke about the urban initiatives being taken in Ahmedabad, following which he opened the floor to have an interactive session with the city delegates.

Key takeaways of the U20 City Sherpa Meeting

- Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, in his virtual address, highlighted India's role in leading the discourse and action on important issues of global governance.
- Potential areas of convergence for infrastructure financing, improving disaster



⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1898055>

adaptation, mitigation and response in cities, and mainstreaming digital governance were discussed.

- The areas of convergence between U20 and other engagement groups of the G20, particularly the role cities can play in engaging the youth and creating opportunities for them, were discussed with the Chair of Startup 20 and representatives from Youth 20 and Think 20.
- The City Sherpa of Ahmedabad, Shri Praveen Chaudhary presented six priority areas proposed by the Chair city and also discussed the zero-draft communique. He acknowledged the work done under previous U20 cycles and stressed on the need to move from 'intention to action' during the sixth cycle.
- City delegates from the various participating and observer cities deliberated on the six priority areas proposed by the Chair city Ahmedabad. The city sherpas expressed overwhelming support for all six priority areas and expressed solidarity in taking a collaborative agenda ahead at the Urban 20 inception meeting.



- Several innovative initiatives implemented in Ahmedabad and other cities of Gujarat were shared during the event by senior officers from the Government of Gujarat.
- A plan for the U20 cycle with key milestones was shared during the event. The Chair City announced that the Mayoral Summit, where the final communique will be presented to the G20 leaders will be held from July 07-08, 2023.⁵

⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1898056>

References:

- PIB Press Release on [Close to 40 delegates visit the World Heritage walled city of Ahmedabad](#) dated February 10, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [Key takeaways of the U20 City Sherpa Meeting](#) dated February 10, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [Urban 20 \(U20\), an Engagement Group under the G20](#) dated February 09, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [Urban-20 \(U20\) event being organised under G20 presidency of India](#) dated December 20, 2022.
- PIB Press Release on [Gujarat Chief Minister launches Urban 20 logo and social media platforms](#) dated December 19, 2022.
- <https://www.g20.org/en/media-resources/press-releases/december-2022/pib-delhi/>
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