The Grand Finale of Prajatantra 2023 truly marked the pinnacle of the National Youth Festival. This year’s theme ‘Inclusive and Participatory Urban Economies, celebrated the financial significance of our cities.

Praja Foundation in collaboration with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and with the support of UN-Habitat and Friedrich Naumann Foundation South Asia, organised the Grand Finale Ceremony at the National Bal Bhavan, New Delhi. 3-day Grand Finale Ceremony was a combination of Competitive Events as well as non-competitive events to help grand finalists expand their intellectual and cultural horizons. This year, we also used Prajatantra Platform to facilitate an exposure visit to Delhi for a batch of youngsters from Rangoonwala Foundation, Mumbai who engaged in all activities of Prajatantra especially non-competitive activities.

The grand finalists represented nooks and corners of India and shared diverse backgrounds including Social Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Law. Experts, Changemakers and Leaders from fields of urban governance and policy making such as Shri Tamme Phasang, Hon’ble Mayor of Itanagar Municipal Corporation; Hyun Hee Ban, Chief of Social Policy for UNICEF India; Tikender Singh Panwar, Former Deputy Mayor of Shimla Municipal Corporation; Chakshu Roy, Head of Legislative and Civic engagement initiatives at PRS participated in the Grand Finale to guide young participants.

In this edition of the newsletter, Prajatantra Event Coordinators elaborate on individual events.

“I would like to congratulate Prajatantra Team for organising such special event. It captures so many dynamics of city governance, citizenship and public service and train youth on how they lead mobilise their communities and lead cities tomorrow.”

Tamme Phasang, Honourable Mayor, Itanagar Municipal Corporation
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS

**Mayor’s Speech**

1st Manas Anand
2nd Anmol Limbu Subba
3rd Mayur Narute

**Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance**

1st Maansi Sood
2nd Mehwish Wani
3rd Chaitanya Sonune

**Policy Presentation on Urban Economy**

1st Rakshana Devi DS
2nd Mehak Singh
3rd Yash Singh Parihar

**Policy Debate**

1st Kavya Singh
2nd Gyanesh
3rd Akanksha Tiwari

**Quiz**

1st Mangesh Satpute
2nd Parikshit Thakur
3rd Jiya Pathania

**Op-Ed Writing**

1st Aarul Bhalekar
2nd Irad Mansoori
3rd Rachael Daniel Nadar
Footpath facilities are mostly not continuous, and often encroached.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS

### Best Field Engagement

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<td>Manas Anand</td>
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<td>Yeheill Shah</td>
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<td>Maansi Sood</td>
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### Champions of Democracy

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<td>1st</td>
<td>Kavya Singh</td>
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### Best Team

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<td>3rd</td>
<td>Shahari Samriddhi Parishad</td>
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### Special Appreciation

Youth Community Team From Chembur, Mumbai Apnalaya (NGO)
Have you ever heard of a speech competition where mayors from different towns participate to present their perspectives on issues related to their communities? Grand Finalists were encouraged to address local challenges, propose innovative solutions, and inspire others to take action. The competition served as a platform for individuals to voice their concerns, share their vision for the cities, and advocate for positive change.

“As the coordinator of the event, I was amazed at how all the participants came up with solutions to the problems that were faced by the cities, which included Delhi, Gangtok, Jammu, Bhopal and others. Their solutions were not only innovative but they ensured that these solutions are environment friendly.”

-Maitri Bhanushali & Iman Mulla, Event Coordinators- Mayor Speech

The primary objective of the event was to encourage participants to think innovatively about finance and budgeting. Participants presented unique ideas for fund allocation funds in their respective cities at various levels.

The policies ranged from working on schemes like Waste Management, Public Private Partnerships, E-governance, Digitisation and many more concepts which were ideas that could help revive the economies of their cities.

“As an event coordinator, I thoroughly enjoyed the entire process. From reaching out to participants to interacting with them and getting to know them better, every moment has been dear to me.”

-Rajvi Raja, Event Coordinator, Policy Presentation on Municipal Finance
Urban Economy

Policy Presentation on Urban Economy Competition focused on the comprehensive economic development of the city and factors such as migration, sociocultural resources and others that affect the policy framework.

The participants came from metropolises such as Delhi, Mumbai Kolkata but also smaller cities such as Hubli-Dharwad. The most common aspect that they talked about was boosting the tourism sector. There were also highlights on carbon credit systems and e-bikes to ensure sustainable economic development.

“Integration and progress of the informal sectors was a subject in line with the theme. Suggestions to build smart shops and leasing them to the street vendors as well as community mobilisation emphasising the informal sector were discussed by participants across the board.”

-Saachi Sahastrabuddhe & Ashish Mohite, Event Coordinators, Policy Presentation on Urban Economy

POLICY DEBATE

The motion; ‘Should City Government only be a Service Delivery Agency or whether they are responsible for Economic Development’ was selected as the debate motion for the grand finale. Participants were divided into Government and Opposition sides to either favour or oppose the motion on spot.

As a Debate Coordinator, it was great to witness the event unfold, where participants put forward their thought process & knowledge that were tested on the spot. The Q & A Round was particularly intense with critical questions were being moved back and forth.

-Sharvi Ambekar, Event Coordinator- Policy Debate Competition

QUIZ

Prajatantra 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, 74th Constitutional Amendment Act and Municipal Finance. 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.

-Poonam Prajapati, Event Coordinator- Quiz Competition
The Opinion Editorial competition’s climax in Delhi was a nail-biting, thrilling, and enjoyable experience for both finalists and the engaged audience. As the event’s focal theme revolved around “Inclusive and Participatory Urban Economics,” inquiries from judges not only tested participants’ research but also their opinions on this very topic. This interactive scrutiny wasn't just a challenge; it became the heartbeat of the event. The journey from ease to exhilaration became a testament to the unpredictable thrill of unfiltered expression. This finale isn't just a culmination; it is a testament to the courage of unfiltered voices shaping our future discourses.

-Srimurty Pouloomi & Anjan Chheda, Event Coordinators- Op-Ed Writing Competition

The Field Engagement was a new activity introduced this year. It was designed to provide grand finalists with a functioning of city governance in their cities. During the Grand Finale, every Grand Finalist made a presentation on their findings.

The activity was divided into two phases: in Phase I, participants conducted a comprehensive review of urban economic policies in their respective cities. They also mapped the demographic profile of their cities, studied the website of the City Government, and analysed the Municipal Corporation Act.

Phase II focused on Field Visits and Citizen Surveys, where participants interacted directly with administration officials, elected representatives, and citizens. These interactions provided valuable insights into the implementation of urban economic policies and the effectiveness of service delivery.

“As the Activity Coordinator, I was particularly impressed by the ability of participants to identify challenges and formulate practical recommendations for improvement. Their perspectives on their respective cities and communities provided a nuanced view of urban India.”

-Pranjal Garg , Event Coordinator Field Engagement Activity.
Prajatantra 2023 featured six non-competitive events that were designed to emphasize on community-building, idea and cultural exchange between Grand Finalists as well as expose them to deeper thoughts on society, citizenship and governance.

- **Knowledge Sessions**: Before the Grand Finale, 4 Knowledge Sessions were organized focusing on Writing Skills, Reading the Municipal Act, Right to Information and Constitution and Active Citizenship to guide the preparation.

- **Reel Retreat hosted in collaboration with Ashris Choudhary Founder of India in Pixels**: 2 documentaries ‘I am 20’ and ‘Where are they now? Indians from 1967’ were screened under this segment. Both documentaries focused on the aspirations and ideas of 20-year-old Indians from 1967. The screening was followed by an eventful discussion with grand finalists.

- **Prajatantra UnPlugged in collaboration with Youth Alliance**: This was a community-building segment for participants to know each other better. Through different interactive activities anchored by unique card games, participants were tasked to share hidden aspects of their personalities.

- **Networking Dinner**: A special dinner was hosted between grand finalists as well as stakeholders of Praja Foundations and Praja Alumni, former interns, employees and fellows to engage and network.

- **Cultural Night**: In this segment, they were invited to celebrate the diversity of Prajatantra through cultural performances ranging from folk/traditional music, dances and poetry recitals.

- **Visit to Indian Parliament**: For the first time, we facilitated a guided tour of Parliament House (old). During the visit, participants closely observed the structure of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and Central Hall and how proceedings of Parliament take place.

We are now all set to achieve a bigger milestone in Prajatantra 2024

Best regards,
Prajatantra Team

Stills from Cultural Night

Stills from Parliament Visit
“The experience of these four days at Prajatantra has been unmatched. It was more than just a competition. It gave me a glimpse of all of India’s diversity and cultural richness. Events has left a mark on my life and I have learnt bags of things from everyone.”

-Priya Singh, Prajatantra 2023 Grand Finalist, Policy Presentation on Urban Economy