

13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum concludes with adoption of Declaration on inclusive and resilient urban futures

The Forum presented a compilation of good practices from BRICS nations, titled 'Cities for People: Urban Stories from BRICS Nations'.

India's proposal for the establishment of the 'BRICS Urban Research and Knowledge Network', welcomed by member nations

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The 13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum concluded today at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan, New Delhi, with the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on inclusive, resilient and people-centred urban development.

Hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs under India's BRICS Chairship in 2026, the two-day Forum brought together Ministers, senior government officials and urban practitioners from BRICS member nations to deliberate on the theme, 'Cities for People: BRICS Cooperation for Inclusive and Resilient Urban Futures.' The Forum was formally inaugurated by Shri Manohar Lal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs. India hosted the Forum for the fourth time, after the editions held in New Delhi in 2013, Visakhapatnam in 2016 and virtually in 2021.

In his inaugural address, the Hon'ble Minister said that the Forum was an opportunity to bring the urban agenda more firmly into the global development discourse, and highlighted inclusive urban development, climate- and disaster-resilient infrastructure, strengthened institutions and digital innovation as key anchors of India's urban development approach.



During the session, Shri Manohar Lal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs released 'India's Urban Transformation: Stories of Change', a publication presenting select urban practices from India's States and Union Territories across the four priority areas of the Forum.

The inaugural session was followed by a high-level plenary chaired by the Hon'ble Minister, where participating countries shared national experiences, priorities and aspirations for the urban future through their country statements.



Delegations also undertook a curated field visit to select urban interventions in and around New Delhi, including the New Parliament Complex and the India Gate-Kartavya Path precinct, before the day concluded with a cultural programme and networking dinner.

On the sidelines, bilateral meetings were held, including between India and Russia, India and Iran, Iran and Russia, Iran and China, and Russia and the United Arab Emirates.

The second day of the Forum featured two high-level panel discussions on inclusive and resilient urban development, strengthening urban institutions, and scaling innovations for people-centred cities. Both sessions were chaired by Shri Tokhan Sahu, Hon'ble Minister of State of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.

The first panel discussion, 'Building Inclusive Pathways for Resilient and Equitable Cities,' was moderated by Ms Roopa Mishra, Joint Secretary, International Cooperation, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. Representatives of BRICS member nations discussed approaches to ensuring that urban growth improves access to housing, mobility, basic services, livelihoods and public spaces, particularly for vulnerable and underserved communities. Representing India during the session, Shri Srinivas Katikithala, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, said, "The success of urban development lies not in how much our cities consume, but in how



efficiently and equitably they use resources to improve quality of life.” The discussion also examined the need to integrate social inclusion with climate resilience and disaster preparedness, so that cities are better equipped to protect people, infrastructure and essential services.

The second panel discussion, ‘Strengthening Institutions and Scaling Innovations for People-centred Cities,’ was moderated by Shri Shalabh Goel, Managing Director, National Capital Region Transport Corporation. Representing India during the session, Smt D. Thara, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs noted, “The future of urban governance lies not in isolated innovations, but in institutions that can scale them.” Representatives of BRICS member nations exchanged experiences on strengthening urban institutions, building municipal capacity, improving coordination across levels of government, and using technology and data to enhance service delivery. The session also considered how successful local innovations could be adapted and scaled across different urban contexts.

During the valedictory session, BRICS member nations adopted the Ministerial Declaration. The Declaration highlights key priorities shared by member nations and reaffirms commitment to advancing people-centred urban development. It emphasises the importance of creating inclusive, sustainable, resilient and liveable cities that ensure equitable access to urban services, particularly for marginalised groups.



Shri Sudhakar Dalela, BRICS Sherpa and Secretary, External Relations, Ministry of External Affairs, commended the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on the successful conclusion of the Forum.

The Forum also presented a compilation of good practices from BRICS nations, titled ‘Cities for People: Urban Stories from BRICS Nations’.

To take forward the learnings of the BRICS Urbanisation Forum, and for continued cooperation, the member nations welcomed India’s proposal for the establishment of the ‘BRICS Urban Research and Knowledge Network’, for applied urban research, knowledge sharing, and peer-to-peer learning.

The Network has been designed as a Chairship-led, institutionally connected platform to provide a practical and sustained mechanism for urban cooperation within BRICS. It will support systematic knowledge-sharing and mutual learning, while helping bridge the gap between policy and implementation through the exchange of practical solutions, city-level experiences and operational lessons. Operating through a virtual, low-cost and flexible model, the Network will be coordinated each year by the lead institution of the BRICS Chair country, with activities and outputs handed over to the next Chairship.

Shri Srinivas Katikithala, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, presented a summary of the two-day Forum, highlighting the principal themes that emerged from the country statements, panel discussions, bilateral engagements and deliberations on the Declaration.

A valedictory video presented glimpses of the proceedings of the 13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum.

In the valedictory address, Shri Manohar Lal, Hon’ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, emphasised the value of the Forum as a platform for shared learning and practical cooperation among BRICS member nations. He called for the discussions held in New Delhi to be carried forward through sustained institutional engagement, exchange among cities and continued cooperation beyond India’s Chairship.

The outcomes of the two-day Forum will contribute to a shared roadmap for BRICS nations to build cities that are inclusive, resilient, sustainable and well governed.

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