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## PRESS NOTE

The National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)'s **CLIMATE CAFÉ Celebrates, Communicates and Co-Creates** ideas for climate action at the three day 'Smart Cities – Smart Urbanization' conference, Surat.

The Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF) launch, climate panels, pavilion, case clinics, donors meet, interactive games, tree of life, video stories and data walls part of the *Smart Cities, Smart Urbanization* conference.

**Surat, 20 April 2022**

NIUA through its Climate Centre for Cities (C-Cube) played a pivotal role on April 18 and 19, 2022, at the *Smart Cities, Smart Urbanization* conference organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MOHUA), Government of Gujarat, and Surat Smart City, as part of its celebration of the 75th anniversary of India's Independence as *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)*.

The Climate Café, the Climate pavilion, set up by C-Cube served as a platform for city managers and stakeholders to learn from each other, discuss possibilities, share their experiences and scale up their successes. Through the climate engagements, C-CUBE aimed at getting more cities engaged with **Climate Action Planning and Strategising**, implementation of **Climate Actions** and communicating the **impact of Sustainable Climate Actions** executed by cities globally.

On April 18, 2022, the first day of the conference, **Honourable Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** graced the Climate Cafe with his presence. During his visit, he placed a message on the Tree of Life display, reiterating India's climate commitments.

On April 19, 2022, the top performing cities in the **Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework 2.0 (CSCAF 2.0)** were felicitated for their efforts in building climate resilience and meeting India's resilience goals. Prizes were given to the top two winners (from over 1000 entries) of the **National Photography competition**, a pre-event activity held on the topics '*Climate Impacts in Cities*' and '*Climate Actions in Cities*'. As a part of the pre-event engagement, C-CUBE had also organised a **Climate Change Awareness Campaign** across schools and colleges in 100 smart cities.

The Climate Cafe attracted several participants who took part in the discussions and interactive activities on both days. It proved to be an experiential platform aiming at 'learning by doing' and 'learning by sharing'. Seven case clinics, 4 donor meets, 1 panel meet, multiple games and a data wall were part of the interactive engagement.

'Learning by doing' included an **experience data wall**. **Interactive gaming consoles** enabled participants to explore the different games, designed to generate awareness on the climate actions and access the climate smartness and readiness of the participants to deal with disaster scenarios.

'Learning by sharing' included setting up **case clinics**, curated sessions for engagement with stakeholders to stimulate a dialogue on the relevance of urban resilience and local actions. The **Meet the Donor** sessions allowed city officials to understand the funding mechanisms and processes involved to enable cooperation for climate investments. The **panels at the Pavilion** saw the roll-out of cutting-edge events with leaders and local change-makers in a deliberative, iterative, and action-oriented format.

The second day saw a vibrant **panel discussion on embedding resilience at the heart of the urban discourse**. Surat, Vijaywada, Vishakapatnam, Pune and Indore participated in this dialogue which discussed urban adaptation and mitigation measures, mainstreaming resilience in urban planning, climate-relevant data management systems, technological innovations, and solutions.

**Hitesh Vaidya, Director NIUA** in his address spoke of the importance of embracing holistic and inclusive pathways that are localised and equitable: *"The climate challenge is a 'dharmayuddha', a battlefield, where each stakeholder will need to give an 'ahuti', an offering for the next generation, for just and sustainable futures"*.

**Dr. Umamaheshwaran Rajasekar Chair, Urban Resilience Unit and heading the Climate Centre for Cities (C-Cube) said:** *"NIUA is working with over 50 national and international organizations as a 'Climate Alliance' towards building resilience. The collective efforts of NIUA and city governments in showcasing the good practices of Urban Local Bodies, has enabled them to plan for climate informed development. This acts as a beacon of hope for sustainable development and improving the quality of life of 400 Million+ citizens"*.

### **About NIUA**

Established in 1976, the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) is India's leading national think tank on urban planning and development. As a hub for the generation and dissemination of cutting-edge research in the urban sector, NIUA seeks to provide innovative solutions to address the challenges of a fast urbanizing India, and pave the way for more inclusive and sustainable cities of the future.

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