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# India Will Show How Developing Economies Can Tackle Global Challenges

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**HARDEEP S PURI**

The inaugural event of the Urban 20 Engagement Group was held in Ahmedabad on February 9-10, 2023. Urban 20, or U20, is among the most influential city-level diplomacy initiatives held annually. Receiving participation from mayors and designated 'city sherpas' from the G20 cohort, the deliberations at U20 inform G20 negotiations and are integral to the broader discourse on urban development. The inaugural meeting was attended by more than 70 delegates from 42 cities — the largest recorded attendance since the inception of U20.

Under the Modi government, India has increasingly led action on issues of global governance. One such success story has been the transformation of our urban areas which has now become a blueprint for other countries to learn from, particularly in the Global South. This year's U20 aims to shed light on the powerful implications that policies adopted by cities have on global agendas of development. The inaugural meeting built on these themes by foregrounding the role of cities in economic prosperity and ecological harmony. Significant progress was made on developing a consensus around the six priority areas identified. The highest emphasis was given to the urgency of adopting environmentally responsible behaviours to reduce carbon footprint. Secondly, conserving water resources and providing equitable access to water assumed greater salience. Thirdly, there was acceptance that climate financing needed to be accelerated as we seek to retrofit legacy infrastructure. Fourth, it became imperative that we

rethink regulatory and governance frameworks to achieve strategic targets. Fifth, the popular demand to promote local identities of cities to animate civic society was recognised. Lastly, it was deemed essential to democratise processes that champion the use of technology and data. City representatives expressed their solidarity in taking forward this collaborative agenda. This sixth edition of the U20 has morphed into a platform that aims to equip city governments to close the gap between policy and practice by translating deliberations on urban governance into on-ground solutions. As 'Chair City' of U20, Ahmedabad led by example as it expounded on the innovations adopted in developing the Sabarmati riverfront and key features of its affordable housing policy and heritage management plan, among other reforms. Ahmedabad encapsulates the spirit of citizen-oriented rejuvenation that India has embarked upon. In the last nine years, the Modi government has undertaken



the largest planned urbanisation programme in the world, based on cooperative and competitive federalism; universalisation and saturation of basic services; technological innovation; economic opportunity; and a rural-urban continuum. Our urban transport policies are designed to fulfil the commitments of the Paris Agreement by adding green mobility options to India's urban landscape. Various transformative urban missions have

resulted in Indian cities poised to help the country achieve its economic and SDG targets. It is widely acknowledged that the onus of achieving SDG targets will lie with cities. In the case of India — which will have more than 600 million people residing in its cities by 2030 — I have often said that "if India succeeds, the SDGs will succeed; and for the SDGs to succeed, India must succeed." I have no doubt that India will succeed, and in doing so, shall show the rest of

the world how developing economies can tackle global challenges. The proof of our urban capabilities lies in the way we overcame the pandemic despite the fact that our populous cities were severely affected. Through measures such as decentralised healthcare, direct cash transfers, universal service delivery and affordable rental housing, India demonstrated a governance approach that not only received global admiration, but also led to recent calls for replication. At a time when the world is beset with geopolitical conflict, financial uncertainty and climate stress, it is imperative that we coordinate and calibrate policy response from the lowest local level to the highest global gathering. As the oldest and largest democracy, it is in the Indian DNA to gain consensus among diverse opinions. It is from this ethos that the theme of this year's G20 summit emanates: 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — One Earth, One Family, One Future'. G20/2023 has the potential to be the crucible from which a framework for mu-

tuually beneficial and sustainable international economic cooperation will emerge. I believe U20 Ahmedabad will be the vanguard for this spirit of collective action to take shape among our cities. With continuous guidance from the G20 Secretariat, the National Institute of Urban Affairs which is the U20 Technical Secretariat, and knowledge partners from across the globe, Ahmedabad's stewardship will enhance the impact of this sixth edition of U20. I commend the city sherpas who made meaningful contributions to the inaugural U20 event. I hope mayors, sherpas and representatives from cities will continue to participate in the 2023 U20 cycle leading up to the Mayoral Summit in July. As we pursue the shared goal of a prosperous and sustainable world, this sixth edition of the U20 has the unique opportunity to build a roadmap that can inform urban policies for years to come. *The writer is Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas*

IndianOil commits to achieving net zero by 2046 through new green initiatives	The Statesman	08	Hardeep Singh Puri
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## IndianOil commits to achieving net zero by 2046 through new green initiatives



Mr. N M Nimje, Chief General Manager, Odisha State Office, IndianOil interacted with media delegates during a press meet in presence of other senior officials including Mrs. Susmita Tripathy, GM (CC Planning & Coordination) ODSO, Mr. Krishnendu Chaudhuri, GM (CC) ER.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. N M Nimje said, "IndianOil has declared 2023 as the year of "Strengthening the Green Resolve." Going forward, we will immerse ourselves in new green opportunities and leverage the power of collaborations to strengthen our purpose.