



High-Level Forum on Urban Data Ecosystems for Growth, Jobs and Service Delivery

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The NITI-State Workshop on ‘Urban Data Ecosystems for Growth, Jobs and Service Delivery’ under State Support Mission was held on 20th & 21st November 2025 at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The SSM of NITI Aayog is aimed at fostering structured and institutionalized engagement with States and Union Territories. The workshop marks an important milestone in engaging with State governments to enable bottom-up approach with evidence-based data that will help in achieving the socioeconomic goals for developing Viksit Bharat@ 2047.

The primary focus of the workshop was to deliberate on how well-designed urban data ecosystems can enable cities to collect, integrate, and use data effectively for evidence-based policymaking, strategy formulation, and planning, thereby fostering economic growth, generating jobs, and improving the efficiency and quality of service delivery in urban areas.

The workshop was held in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh and World Bank. More than 100 participants from GOI, State governments, World Bank, academia and subject experts attended the event. Eminent dignitaries included Shri Anurag Jain, Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Srikanth Viswanathan, CEO, Janaagraha and Shri Sanjay Kumar Shukla, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh graced this landmark workshop.

Ms. Anna Roy, Programme Director, NITI Aayog, providing an overview of the Data Forum stated that this was the 3rd edition of the Forum. Shri Anurag Jain, Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh, in his special address said that the Data Forum 2025 shows the need for better, future-ready urban data systems to support India’s fast-growing cities. He added that national platforms like PM Gati Shakti, and ULIP along with GIS layers and data integration, have revolutionized decision making.

Highlighting NITI Aayog’s mandate to advance data-driven governance in India, the event also witnessed the launch of the City Data and Analytics Platform (CDAP), a dedicated micro-site of the National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP). CDAP has been developed to strengthen evidence-based urban governance by providing cities with a unified, user-friendly interface to access, analyze, and visualize high-quality urban datasets. The platform will enable policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to draw insights for better planning, improved service delivery, and more efficient decision-making, marking a significant step toward building robust, data-driven urban ecosystems in India.

The Data Forum centered around four key thematic areas critical to shaping India’s future-ready urban landscape. It deliberated on building strong data foundations for cities by strengthening institutional frameworks, data governance mechanisms, and standards to enable robust and

interoperable urban data systems. Discussions also focused on how data could position cities as engines of growth and job creation by informing economic visioning, guiding equitable development, and enabling strategic policy interventions. The Forum highlighted the role of data in enhancing participatory urban planning, improving the timeliness and quality of service delivery, and advancing sustainable urban development. In addition, it explored frontier technologies, including AI and ML driven innovations, to strengthen real-time city operations, improve monitoring capabilities, and support data-driven governance and decision-making.

Best practices were presented by representatives from different States, along with insights shared by experts from academic institutions. Representatives from the Government of India also explained the efforts underway at the central level to develop robust data systems and highlighted how States can leverage these frameworks to strengthen their planning and decision-making processes. World Bank representatives also presented global best practices, developing business economic register, estimating sub-national growth estimation, and leveraging data for better living.

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