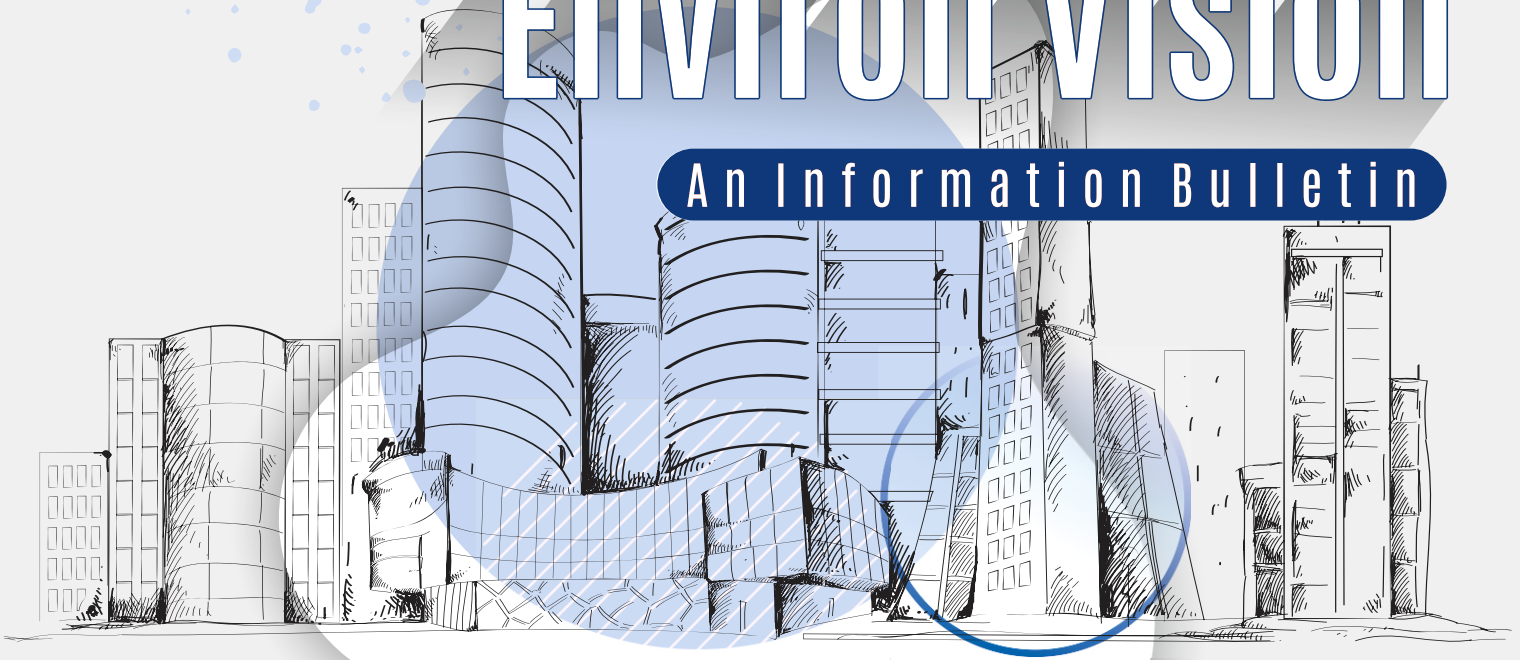


Vol - 20 No. 9 September 2025

RCUES, Mumbai
Enabling better cities...

Urban Environ Vision

An Information Bulletin



Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies
All India Institute of Local Self-Government, Mumbai
Established in the year 1968, supported by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India

Urban Environ Vision aims to take its readers through offline and online training programs of RCUES, Mumbai while providing encouragement and knowledge to its participants and displays the efforts undertaken by RCUES, Mumbai.

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Regional Specialized Web-Based Training Program on Urban Environment & Climate Change

23rd September 2025

Key Highlights

Participants gained a better understanding in addressing urban heat challenges, their impacts, and practical climate resilience strategies to drive effective urban climate action.

BACKGROUND

Climate change is significantly transforming how our city functions and grows. Rising temperatures, more intense heat waves, and changing seasonal patterns place immense pressure on urban systems. These shifts not only impact the environment but also strain public health, infrastructure, and essential services like water, energy, and housing. Cities, with their dense populations and heavy resource reliance, are especially vulnerable to climate-related stresses. From deteriorating air quality and increased disease outbreaks to higher energy demands and threats to urban ecosystems, the effects are extensive. Tackling these issues requires a move toward climate-smart urban planning, resilient infrastructure, and inclusive community efforts to protect our urban future. The recurring October heat is a timely reminder of how rapidly seasonal extremes are intensifying. It underlines the urgent need for immediate adaptation measures so that cities and communities are better prepared to withstand these rising climatic pressures.

Considering the consequences of climate change, the Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIIILSG), Mumbai, organized a Regional Specialized Web-Based Training Program on 'Urban Environment & Climate Change' on 23rd September 2025. The training program was supported by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India (GoI).

KEY OBJECTIVE

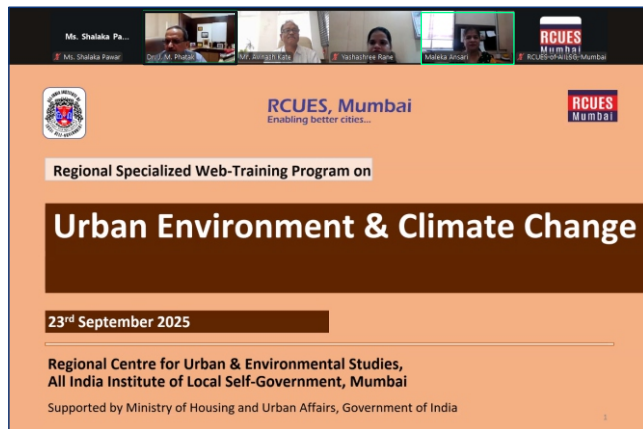
The training program aimed to enhance understanding of climate change impacts, particularly urban heat challenges and related health, environmental, and infrastructure risks. It aims to equip participants with practical resilience strategies, while promoting policy integration and community engagement to drive effective urban climate action.

PARTICIPATION

In all 40 participants, comprising Chief Environment Officers, Environment Conservation Officers, Municipal Engineers, Consultants, Assistant Professors, Sanitary Inspectors, Lab Assistants, Sanitary Workers, Sweepers and Helpers attended the training program.

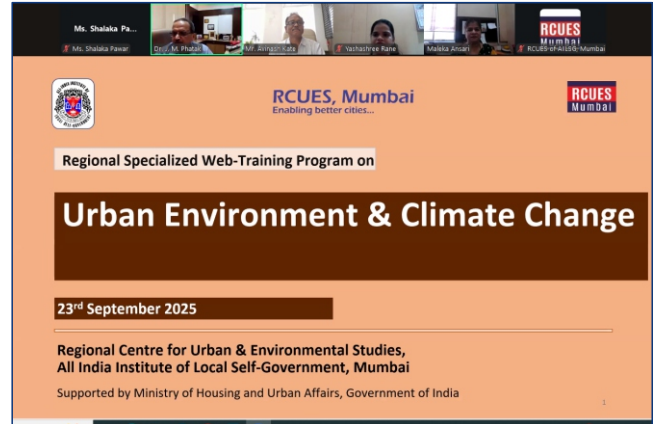
INTRODUCTION

Mrs. Maleka Ansari, Sr. Research Officer, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai, provided an overview of the role of the RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai in capacity building, research, and knowledge sharing to strengthen the urban environment and governance. She urged participants to understand the impacts of climate change and emerging urban heat challenges, and to adopt practical resilience and adaptation strategies for effective urban climate action.



Mrs. Maleka Ansari, Sr. Research Officer, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

INAUGURATION

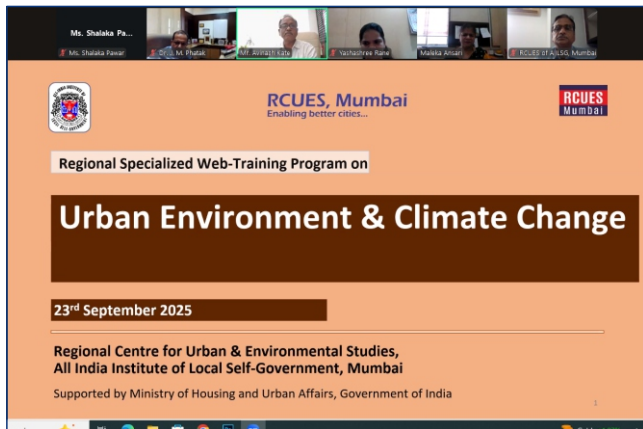


Dr. Jairaj Phatak, IAS (Retd.), Director General, AILSG addressing the participants.

Dr. Jairaj Phatak (Retd.), IAS, Director General, AILSG, in his inaugural address, emphasized the evolving role of the RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai alongside the changing environmental and climate dynamics. He stated that by focusing on this specialized web-based training program on the crucial topic of Urban Environment & Climate Change, AILSG is not only addressing an important issue but ensuring that it continues its core mission by providing Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) with the awareness, practical knowledge, and specific resilience strategies needed to govern and develop their regions effectively in a climate-stressed future. He added that this training program is a crucial mechanism for up-skilling municipal professionals and integrating climate action into the mainstream of urban governance, thereby reinforcing the overall strength and preparedness of ULBs.

Mr. Avinash Kate, Chief Engineer, Department of Environment & Climate Change (Env. & CC), Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Maharashtra, in his keynote address, outlined the profound impacts of climate change on cities and communities. He further detailed the significant steps taken by BMC, highlighting initiatives such as publishing the 'Mumbai Climate Action Plan (MCAP)' and achieving an important milestone by becoming the first ULB in India and the fourth city globally by releasing a 'Climate Budget'. Mr. Kate emphasized the importance of the training program in enhancing awareness and driving better implementation of critical resilience strategies and policy frameworks across the urban landscape.

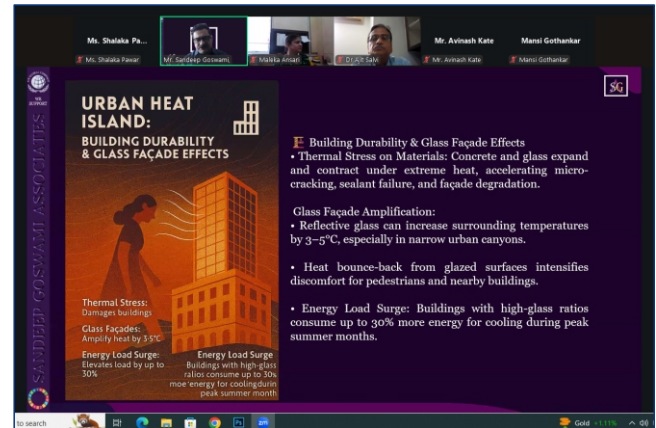
delivered a comprehensive overview of the urban heat challenges. He outlined the latest global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) trends based on India's 2025 data, and their cascading impacts on various sectors critical to city functioning. He further explained the mechanism of the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect and its role as an immediate urban risk. Mr. Goswami highlighted critical seasonal shifts affecting India, specifically the delayed monsoon and the increase in recurrent October heatwaves. He detailed the adverse consequences of these changes, which include severe impacts on infrastructure, loss of urban biodiversity, and profound risks to human health and vulnerable communities. To conclude, he transitioned from problem definition to actionable solutions, proposing innovative strategies rooted in sustainability. These included the application of bio-mimicry principles in urban development, advocating for integrated sustainable planning & architecture, promoting green buildings, and introducing tools & technology for accurate climate risk analysis to help cities build long-term preparedness & resilience.



Mr. Avinash Kate, Chief Engineer, Department of Env. & CC, BMC, Maharashtra addressing the participants.

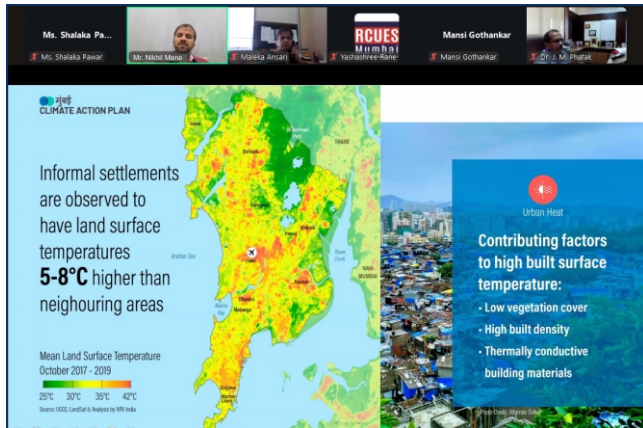
TECHNICAL SESSIONS

In the first session, on 'Climate Change & Emerging Heat Waves', Mr. Sandeep Goswami, Consultant, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Government of Maharashtra,



Mr. Sandeep Goswami, Consultant, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Government of Maharashtra addressing the participants.

In the second session on 'Urban Resilience & Adaptation Strategies', Mr. Nikhil Mene, Assistant Engineer, Department of Env. & CC, BMC, Maharashtra presented the MCAP as a central case study.



Mr. Nikhil Mene, Assistant Engineer, Department of Env. & CC, BMC, Maharashtra addressing the participants.

Mr. Mene articulated that the MCAP is a vital, multi-phased effort led by the BMC to achieve a net-zero and climate-resilient Mumbai by 2050. He detailed the plan's developmental flow, which began with a foundational alignment to global goals like the Paris Agreement and the C40 Cities Network. This was followed by rigorous, evidence-based assessments, including a GHG Inventory to identify high-emitting sectors (Energy, Transport, Waste, etc.) and a Climate and Air Pollution Risks and Vulnerability Assessment to precisely map critical threats like urban flooding and heat. He added that the plan's subsequent drafting involved extensive multi-stakeholder consultations to set ambitious targets and outline six priority strategic action areas (such as Sustainable Mobility, Energy

& Buildings, and Urban Greening, etc.). He emphasized that the MCAP's implementation is secured through robust governance mechanisms, including the creation of a dedicated Department of Environment and Climate Change and the establishment of a Climate Action Cell to coordinate cross-departmental efforts, monitor progress, and institutionalize change through innovative tools like Climate Budgeting. Further, Mr. Mene urged all the ULBs to adopt the methodology and strategic pathway demonstrated by Mumbai to ensure better governance, greater climate resilience, and sustainable urban futures for their respective regions.

The third session, 'Policy Frameworks & Community Preparedness', by Dr. Nisha Parekh, Associate Professor, R. N. Patel Ipcowala School of Law and Justice, Gujarat, focused on establishing robustness as the essential defense against climate challenges. She emphasized that addressing the interconnected climate risks requires a systemic approach by effectively linking national policies to local citizen engagement.

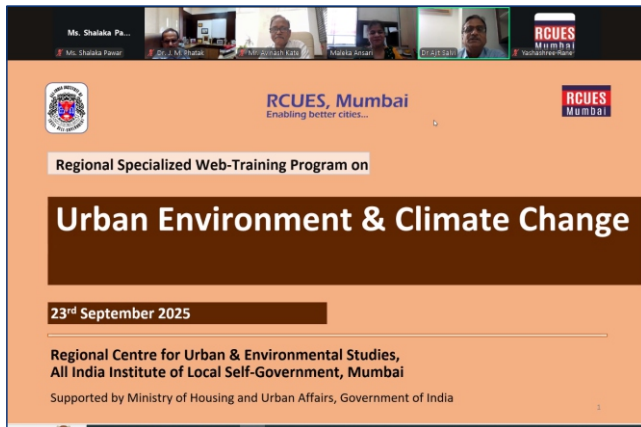


Dr. Nisha Parekh, Associate Professor, R. N. Patel Ipcowala School of Law and Justice, Gujarat addressing the participants.

Dr. Parekh detailed India's policy landscape, highlighting the importance of State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs) for translating national goals into context-specific regional strategies. She also highlighted the city-centric initiatives like AMRUT 2.0 for promoting a circular water economy and the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework across key sectors. She concluded by stressing that while governmental frameworks and ULBs set the vision and provide services, community engagement through awareness campaigns and citizen-led initiatives is the critical element that turns macro-level plans into tangible, on-the-ground urban resilience.

monsoon and the recurring October heat waves as live examples of this immediate reality. His key message was an urgent call to action: that cities are the frontline for climate action and that ULBs must transform their role from mere administrators into 'agents of change' for driving resilient urban futures. He extended his thanks to all the esteemed trainers and the participants, promising the continuation of such vital, climate-related training series.

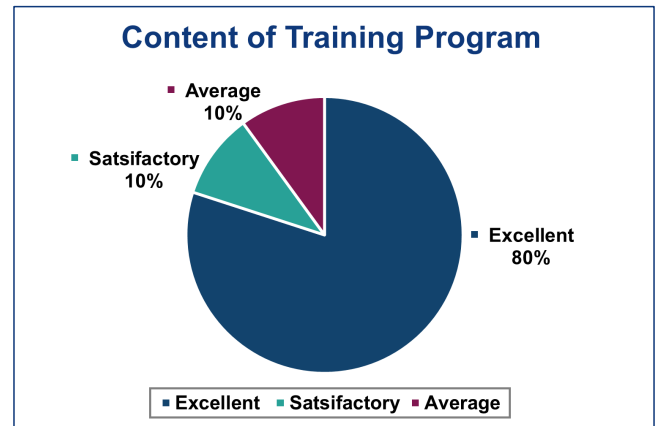
SUMMING UP



Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai, in his concluding remarks, delivered a powerful message, stating that 'climate change is no longer a distant phenomenon, but we are already experiencing it'. He cited the intensifying Mumbai

TRAINING EVALUATION



The feedback on the training program showed that 80% of the participants rated the content as 'Excellent', appreciating its relevance, practicality, and usefulness in their work. The 10% rated it as 'Satisfactory', showing that the program met expectations for all the participants. The remaining 10% of the participants rated it as 'Average,' reflecting that the training was well received by everyone. This encouraging response demonstrated the program's overall success and provided a strong foundation to make future sessions even more impactful.

GLIMPSES OF THE SPECIALIZED WEB-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM

MUMBAI'S GHG INVENTORY

Mumbai's total GHG emissions for the base year 2019

26.7 million tons CO₂e

1.8 tons CO₂e per capita

The transport sector 20%

The stationary energy sector accounts for 72% of the total emissions

The waste sector 8%

Fig 8 | Mumbai's GHG emissions for 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 []

Year	Million Tons CO ₂ e
2019	26.7
2020	24.61
2021	23.7
2022	24.56

Mumbai has updated its Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) inventory from 2019 till the financial year of 2022-23

The total GHG emissions for 2022-23 stand at 24.56 Mt CO₂e compared to the 2019-20 updated baseline emissions of 26,755,427 MT CO₂e



Regional Specialized Training Program on

Sustainable Environmental Strategies: Preparing for Nashik Kumbh Mela with Insights from Prayagraj

25th September 2025
Nashik, Maharashtra

Key Highlights

The key highlights of the training program were the presence of experienced faculty from Prayagraj who brought practical, first-hand knowledge of managing the Kumbh Mela. Their insights provided participants with valuable real-world perspectives. Alongside this, the program also emphasized interactive group exercise and strategy-building activities, encouraging collaboration, innovation, and problem-solving. Together, these elements enriched the training and prepared officials and staff with actionable strategies for the upcoming Kumbh Mela at Nashik.

BACKGROUND

National missions such as the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Atal Mission for Rejuvenation & Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0, the Smart Cities Mission (SCM), and the Solid Waste Management Rules (2024) provide a comprehensive framework to strengthen preparedness for large gatherings like Kumbh Mela.

India's mega events, particularly the Kumbh Mela, present extraordinary challenges and opportunities in managing sanitation, waste, water, and environmental resources. With

millions of visitors converging in a short period, cities like Nashik, which will host the Kumbh in October 2026, must be prepared with robust, scalable, and sustainable environmental strategies. Prayagraj holds immense significance in this context, having successfully implemented large-scale sanitation operations during previous Kumbh Melas. Drawing from Prayagraj's experience, this program aims to equip urban professionals with practical insights, strategic tools, and best practices to ensure safe, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable sanitation services during high-footfall events.

With a focus on sanitation, solid waste management, water reuse, pollution control, resilience, and community participation, the program will help participants align national mission goals with the unique demands of pilgrimage cities like Nashik.

This training program will strengthen the capacities of urban stakeholders by drawing lessons from past Kumbh Melas, especially Prayagraj's successful environmental management model. By integrating the objectives of national missions with real-world experiences from mega events, the program will promote sustainable environmental solutions that can be adapted both for special events and long-term urban planning.

With this background, the Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG), Mumbai conducted a Regional Specialized Training Program on 'Preparing for Nashik Kumbh Mela with Insights from Prayagraj' on 25th September 2025 at Nashik, Maharashtra. This training program was supported by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India (GoI).

KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objective of the training program was to equip urban professionals with practical insights, strategic tools, and best practices to ensure safe, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable services during high-footfall events under national missions.

PARTICIPATION

55 participants comprising Dy. Municipal Commissioner, Superintendent Engineer, Executive Engineers, Water Supply Engineers, Junior Engineers, municipal officials of SWM Dept., Sanitary Supervisors, Sanitary Inspectors from Nashik Division and TISS, Mumbai, Maharashtra attended the training program.

INTRODUCTION



Ms. Neha Hardikar, Sr. Research Officer, RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

Ms. Neha Hardikar, Sr. Research Officer, RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai warmly welcomed the dignitaries, guest speakers, and the participants. She gave an overview of RCUES, Mumbai and introduced the objectives of the training program and its relevance to the upcoming Kumbh Mela. She emphasized the importance of knowledge-sharing and capacity building for effective event management.

Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai highlighted the crucial role of this training program in strengthening preparedness for the Kumbh Mela. He emphasized that such initiatives act as the foundation for systematic planning and execution and equip participants with the necessary skills to manage complex challenges effectively.



Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

INAUGURATION

Ms. Manisha Khatri, IAS, Municipal Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra inaugurated the training program in the presence of Dr. Jairaj Phatak, IAS (Retd.), Director General, AILSG, Ms. Karishma Nair, IAS, Additional Municipal Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation, Dr. Salvi, Mr. Jeevan Sonawane, Regional Director, AILSG, Nashik.



Ms. Manisha Khatri, IAS, Municipal Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra inaugurated the training program by lighting the lamp. (L to R) Ms. Neha Hardikar, Sr. Research Officer, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai, Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai, Ms. Karishma Nair, IAS, Additional Municipal Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation, Dr. Jairaj Phatak, IAS (Retd.), Director General, AILSG, Mr. Jeevan Sonawane, Regional Director, AILSG, Nashik.

After the inauguration, Dr. Phatak gave an overview of AILSG and highlighted its remarkable legacy of 100 years. He emphasized the institution's long-standing contribution to capacity building and urban development. Dr. Phatak also highlighted that AILSG has been a pioneer in training and knowledge dissemination across the country. He further informed that the organization would mark its Centenary Celebrations in 2025-26. He concluded his address by underlining the importance of this milestone as a testament to AILSG's continued commitment to urban governance. He noted that this milestone represents AILSG's enduring dedication to strengthening institution's continued commitment to public service.



Dr. Jairaj Phatak, IAS (Retd.), Director General, AILSG addressing the participants.

Ms. Khatri expressed her appreciation for RCUES Mumbai's efforts in conducting the training program on the upcoming Kumbh Mela. She mentioned that such initiatives provide valuable insights into managing the event effectively.



Ms. Manisha Khatri, IAS, Municipal Commissioner, Nashik Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra addressing the participants.

According to her, the program will greatly support the preparedness of officials and staff. She added that this training will be highly beneficial for their roles during the upcoming Nashik Kumbh Mela.

TECHNICAL SESSIONS

The first session on 'Overview of National Missions & Mega Gatherings: Converging National Missions: SBM, AMRUT, SCM with Kumbh Mela Preparedness' was delivered by Dr. Salvi. The session highlighted the immense scale and challenges of organizing the world's largest religious gathering. The Kumbh Mela, held intermittently at four sacred riverbank cities, including Nashik, brings millions of pilgrims, resulting in astonishing pressure on infrastructure, sanitation, transportation, and public health systems. Temporary facilities such as tent cities, floating bridges, and sanitation units must be rapidly deployed, while permanent upgrades like road expansions and flyovers are often undertaken. However, these arrangements face limitations such as water shortages, waste overload, crowd risks, and environmental degradation remain persistent issues, making the task of city management during the Mela both challenging and demanding.

Dr. Salvi emphasizes aligning Kumbh Mela planning with ongoing national missions and regulatory frameworks to address these challenges. Solid Waste Management Rules (2024), Swachh Bharat Mission, National Health Mission, and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) guidelines provide a comprehensive structure for sustainable and safe event management. Provisions mandate waste segregation, safe sanitation, faecal sludge management, worker safety, and

health surveillance during mass gatherings. Successful campaigns like Lifebuoy's hand hygiene drive at Kumbh Mela 2013 and Godrej's school-based awareness program illustrate how partnerships can promote change and hygiene without disrupting traditions. The path ahead involves enhancing coordination among various agencies, enforcing regulatory compliance, and integrating sustainability into every facet of Mela management, which is striving for harmony between spiritual faith, public well-being, and care for the environment.

In conclusion, the Kumbh Mela presents both an extraordinary spiritual occasion and a critical test of urban governance. By integrating national missions with innovative management strategies, cities can transform these mega gatherings into models of sustainable, safe, and inclusive urban practice.

The second session on 'Integrated Sanitation Management: Learning from Prayagraj Kumbh Mela' was led by Dr. Anand Kumar Singh, Sanitation In-charge, Magh & Kumbh Mela, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. Dr. Singh highlighted its vision of ensuring world-class sanitation and hygiene standards during the Maha Kumbh Mela. He emphasized the scale of the event, spread across 4000+ hectares and 25 sectors, and outlined the innovative strategies being adopted to make the Mela an Open Defecation Free (ODF) gathering. Key interventions included planned toilet layouts [adequate installation of Fiber Reinforced Plastic (FRP), steel, mobile, and VIP toilets], as well as advanced septage management systems to ensure zero manual scavenging.

He further elaborated on the robust monitoring mechanisms set up by the Prayagraj Mela Authority, which include third-party inspection agencies, ICT-based monitoring systems with QR-coded toilets, and review committees under

local administrative officers. Dr. Singh explained how technology integration, real-time feedback, and the active involvement of over 1500 Ganga Sewa Doots are transforming sanitation monitoring into a transparent and accountable process. He also spoke about odor management solutions and the scientific uninstallation of toilets post-Mela, ensuring sustainability and hygiene even after the event concludes.



Dr. Anand Kumar Singh, Sanitation In-charge, Magh & Kumbh Mela, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh addressing the participants.

In the final part of his session, Dr. Singh shed light on the solid waste management strategy, which involves the deployment of 10,000+ sweepers, 25,000 dustbins, 35 lakh liner bags, and 796 dedicated cleaning gangs for round-the-clock street sweeping and ghat cleaning. He highlighted the welfare initiatives undertaken for sanitation workers, including proper accommodation, essential facilities, wages through direct transfers, and access to insurance and healthcare benefits. His address underlined how the Swachh Kumbh initiative is not just about managing waste, but about setting a new benchmark in public health, sanitation, and worker welfare at mass gatherings.

The third session on 'Integrated Governance, Civil Society & Local Communities in Sustainable Environmental Strategies in Large-Scale Events' was delivered by Mr. Keshav Upadhyay, Administrative Officer, G. B. Pant Institute of Social Sciences, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. In his presentation, Mr. Upadhyay underlined the enormous environmental challenges faced during the Maha Kumbh Mela, particularly in Prayagraj, and emphasized the importance of integrated governance to mitigate them. With more than 65 crore pilgrims visiting in just 45 days, the Mela exerts immense stress on the Ganga River, local infrastructure, and waste management systems. While the government has introduced robust policy frameworks, infrastructural improvements such as sewage treatment plants and bio-toilets, and technology-driven tools like GPS-based waste tracking and drone surveillance, the scale of the event demands coordinated action that extends beyond centralized approaches.



Mr. Keshav Upadhyay, Administrative Officer, G. B. Pant Institute of Social Sciences, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh addressing the participants.

Mr. Upadhyay stressed that civil society organizations and local communities are indispensable partners in sustaining environmental strategies. NGOs, religious leaders, and Akharas played a vital role in raising awareness, mobilizing volunteers, and embedding sustainability practices within cultural traditions. Local communities not only shared ground-level insights but also actively participated in waste collection, toilet management, and the use of biodegradable materials, creating strong ownership of environmental goals. This collaborative model is anchored by government, civil society, and local communities, which emerged as a practical and replicable framework for balancing religious and cultural practices with environmental protection during mega-events.

In conclusion, Mr. Upadhyay emphasized that the Maha Kumbh Mela shows that no single organization can handle such huge challenges alone. Sustainable solutions come from teamwork between institutions and local communities, making religious events environmentally responsible.

The fourth session on 'City & Mela Area Beautification & Junction Development' led by Mr. Abhinav Pathak, Dy. Collector Kumbh & Dy. Mela Adhikari, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. He said that the Maha Kumbh Mela was recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2017. He outlined the scale of the recent event, describing the development of the world's largest temporary city spread across 4,000 hectares, accommodating over 10 lakh Kalpwasis and 8,000 religious organizations. His talk highlighted the extensive city transformation projects undertaken, including the construction of bridges and flyovers, rejuvenation of ghats, improved urban mobility, upgraded sanitation and power infrastructure, as well as city beautification through thematic lighting, murals, and landscaping.



Mr. Abhinav Pathak, Dy. Collector Kumbh & Dy. Mela Adhikari, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh addressing the participants.

He further explained the innovations in planning and management, such as the use of GIS mapping, drone surveys, and digital systems for sector layouts, Suvidha allocation, sanitation monitoring, and lost and found services. Mr. Pathak stressed the importance of technology in ensuring efficiency, from AI-based crowd management and drone surveillance to QR-enabled ration distribution and facial recognition systems. He also elaborated on large-scale interventions for the comfort and safety of pilgrims, including public accommodations, medical facilities, traffic decongestion, fire arrangements, and deployment of volunteers and Jal Police for round the clock security.

Concluding his session, Mr. Pathak highlighted the milestones and global recognition of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, including Guinness World Record in community participation, record attendance of dignitaries, and cultural showcases that promoted India's heritage on a global stage. He emphasized that the successful execution of over 600 projects, transparent

governance, and innovative technology integration set a benchmark for managing mass gatherings. His address reinforced that Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 is not only a spiritual and cultural event but also a model of large-scale urban planning, digital governance, and inclusive development.

GROUP EXERCISE



Participants engaged in group exercise.

The group exercise on designing sanitation strategies for the upcoming Kumbh Mela encouraged participants to work collaboratively and apply the insights gained during the training sessions. Officials and staff were divided into 6 groups to brainstorm innovative approaches on key aspects such as:

- Stakeholder Synergy: Coordinating Sanitation at Scale.
- Beyond Toilets: Holistic Sanitation Planning for Urban Mega Events.
- Recreating Prayagraj: A Group Challenge on Mega Event Solid Waste Management.

- Closing the Loop: Circular Sanitation Strategies for the Kumbh Mela.
- Kumbh Mela Management Challenges.
- Crowd Management for Resilient Cities.

Each group presented their ideas, focusing on practical solutions that balance cultural traditions with modern management practices. The exercise not only promoted knowledge sharing but also helped participants develop actionable strategies tailored to ensure a safe, clean, and well-organized Kumbh Mela. The group presented ideas and practical solutions on 'Crowd Management for Resilient Cities', felicitated by a token of appreciation from the hands of Dr. Phatak.



Participants felicitated for best group work and presentation.

VALEDICTORY & SUMMING UP

Dr. Praveen Gedam, IAS, Divisional Commissioner, Divisional Commissioner Office, Nashik, Maharashtra in his Valedictory session, appreciated the active participation and enthusiasm of

all attendees throughout the training program. He highlighted the significance of the training in strengthening urban governance and effective management of mega events. Dr. Gedam encouraged participants to apply the knowledge gained in their respective roles and contribute to sustainable and efficient planning. He concluded by expressing his best wishes for their future initiatives and continued learning. The certificates of attendance were distributed to the participants by the hands of Dr. Gedam and Dr. Phatak.



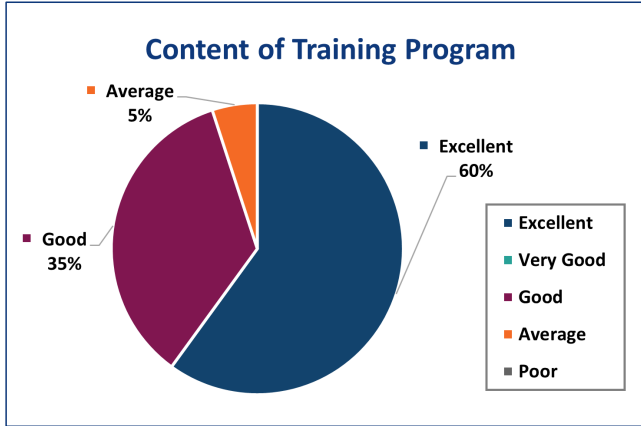
Dr. Praveen Gedam, IAS, Divisional Commissioner, Divisional Commissioner Office, Nashik, Maharashtra addressing the participants.

After the feedback session, Ms. Hardikar concluded the training program and proposed a Vote of Thanks.

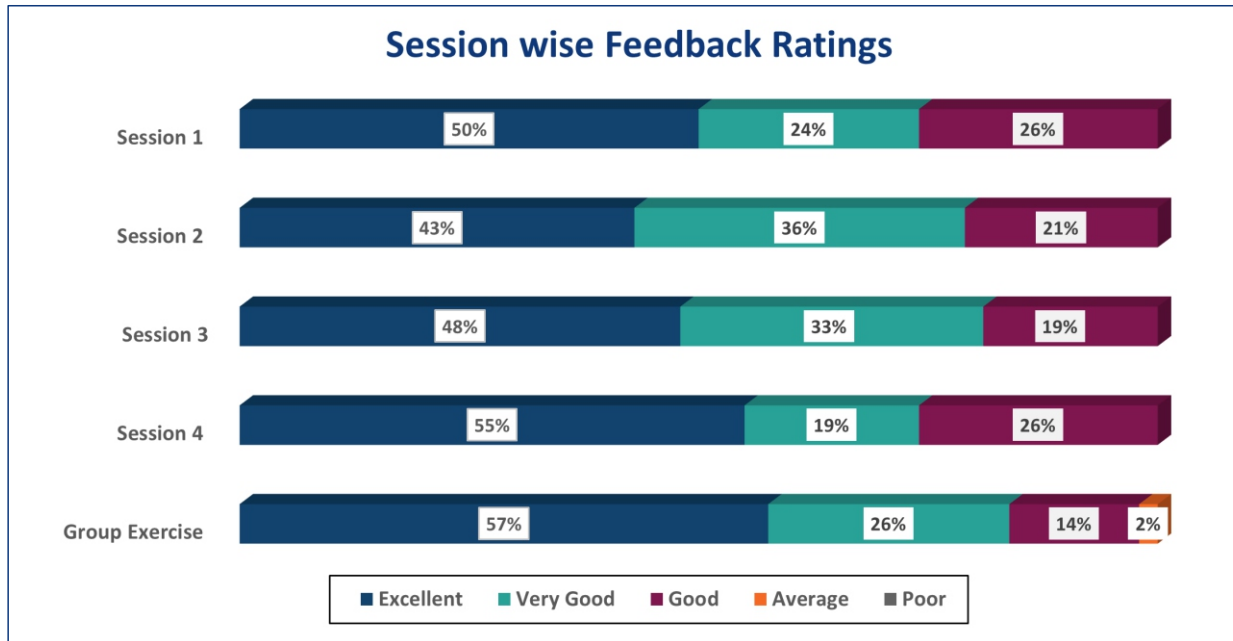
TRAINING EVALUATION

The chart titled 'Content of Training Program' presents participant feedback on the quality of the program's content. A majority of 60% rated the content as 'Excellent', while 35% found

it 'Good' and only 5% rated it as 'Average'. Overall, the feedback reflects a highly positive response, indicating that the training program was well received by the participants.



The 'Session-wise Feedback Ratings' chart presents a visual overview of participant responses. The Group Exercise session received the highest 'Excellent' rating of 57%, reflecting strong engagement and satisfaction. Session 4 performed comparably well, with 55% rating it 'Excellent', indicating overall positive reception. Session 1 displayed a balanced distribution, with 50% rating it 'Excellent' and 26% 'Good', suggesting minor scope for enhancement. Session 2 stood out for its high 'Very Good' rating of 36%, while Session 3 maintained consistency with 48% 'Excellent' feedback.



GLIMPSES OF THE SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM





Regional Specialized Web-Based Training Program on Digital Pathways for Sustainable Urban Governance

26th September 2025

Key Highlights

The key highlight of the program was the discussion on best practices in digital governance, including the use of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, chatbots, and blockchain for improving urban service delivery and management.

BACKGROUND

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) are at the forefront of delivering essential services, managing resources, and driving sustainable development in cities. With rapid urbanization, the demand for efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric governance is higher than ever. Digital transformation has emerged as a crucial enabler for strengthening urban governance, ensuring sustainable service delivery, and improving ease of living for citizens.

Digital platforms and tools not only streamline municipal processes but also enhance transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. From GIS-based planning to e-governance portals and smart dashboards, digital pathways empower ULBs to adopt data-driven decision-making, improve citizen engagement, and ensure long-term sustainability in urban management.

Recognizing this need, the Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIIILSG), Mumbai, organized a Regional Specialized Web-Based Training Program on 'Digital Pathways for Sustainable Urban Governance'. The training program was supported by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India (GoI).

KEY OBJECTIVE

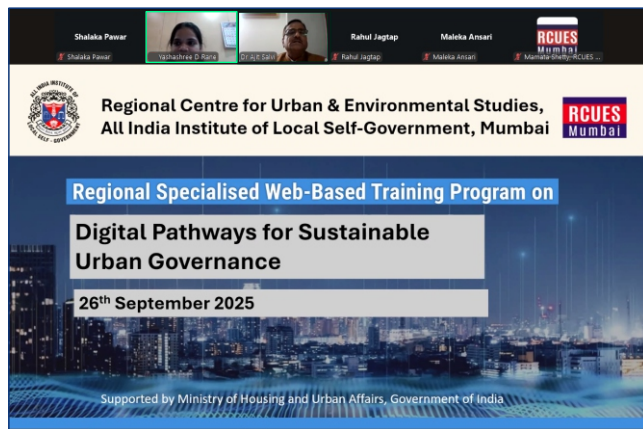
The program is designed to enhance the understanding of digital tools as enablers of sustainable urban governance. It seeks to strengthen the capacity of ULBs in adopting Smart digital solutions for efficient service delivery, while fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and citizen-centric governance.

PARTICIPATION

The program was attended by 43 participants representing various ULBs and departments from different States. From Maharashtra, participants included officials from IT Departments, Smart Cities Missions, and DAY-NULM functionaries of multiple municipal corporations. The Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu were represented by officials from the Silvassa Municipal Council, including the Development Officer, Project Manager, IT staff, and the SBM 2.0 Project Team. Additionally, senior representatives from the State of Tripura, including officials from the Urban Development Department, Joint Director level officers, and SBM 2.0 functionaries, also participated in the training program.

Ms. Yashashree Rane, Jr. Research Officer, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai delivered the introduction to the training program. She began by warmly welcoming all participants and faculty members and provided a brief overview of RCUES, Mumbai highlighting its role and ongoing efforts in the field of urban governance and capacity building. She outlined the program structure and objectives, emphasizing its focus on strengthening the digital capacity of ULBs. She further noted that the training was designed to showcase innovative tools, replicable case studies, and best practices in digital governance, enabling participants to adopt technology-driven approaches for improved service delivery at the local level.

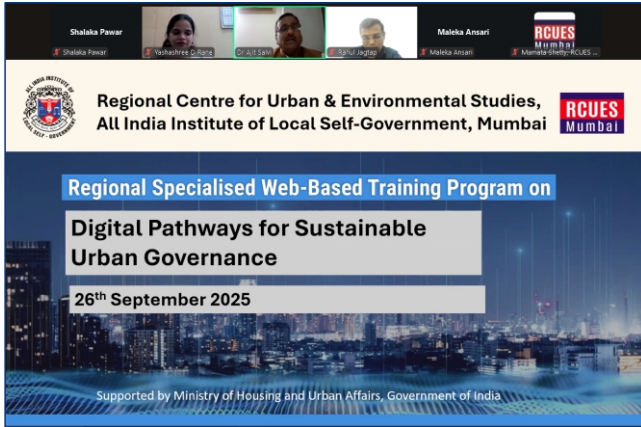
INTRODUCTION



Ms. Yashashree Rane, Jr. Research Officer, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

INAUGURATION

The training program was inaugurated by Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai. In his opening address, Dr. Salvi emphasized that the program was specially curated to strengthen the digital capacity of ULBs by enabling them to adopt innovative technologies and practical solutions. He highlighted that the training goes beyond traditional digital tools to cover emerging technologies such as blockchain, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and chatbot mechanisms, which are increasingly transforming the way cities manage services and engage with citizens. Dr. Salvi underlined the importance of replicating successful digital case studies and best practices to enhance efficiency, transparency, and citizen participation in governance. He concluded by encouraging participants to explore new technologies with an adaptive and problem-solving approach.

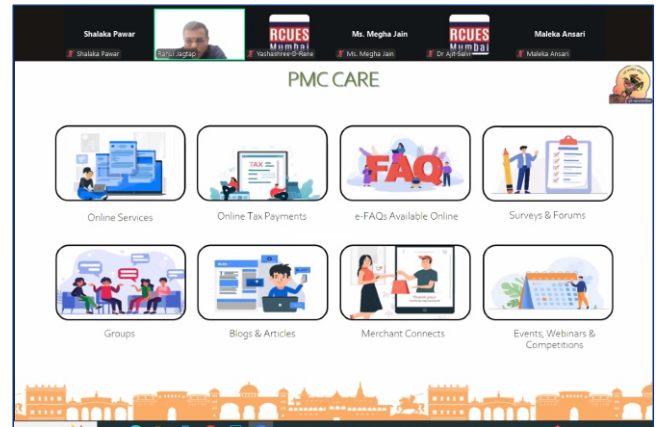


Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai addressing the participants.

TECHNICAL SESSIONS

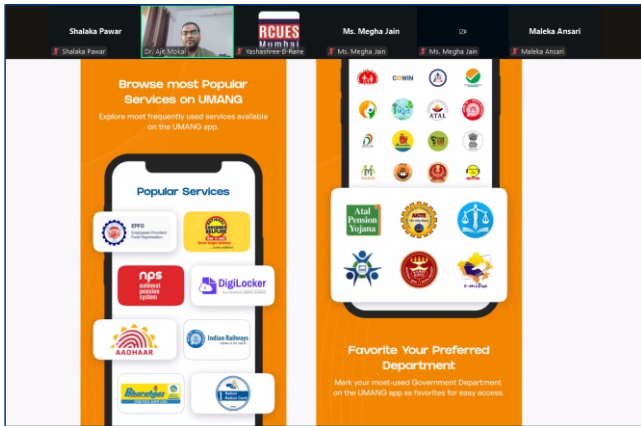
The first session on 'Digital Tools for Strengthening ULB Operations' was conducted by Mr. Rahul Jagtap, Smart City Mission Nodal Officer, Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), Maharashtra. He shared the pioneering digital governance practices of PMC, which has been recognized as the leading city in Maharashtra in the e-governance assessment. Mr. Jagtap elaborated on the PMC Care Program, a comprehensive digital initiative that stands for Citizen Assistance, Response, and Engagement (CARE). He explained that this 360-degree framework promotes citizen-friendly and responsive governance through an integrated mobile application and online portal. The platform has over 1.2 lakh active users on the mobile app and 1.3 lakh on the portal, offering a wide range of online services, event updates, and information articles. It also provides merchant connect features and hosts more than 2,800 pieces of digital content. Mr. Jagtap highlighted that the

PMC Care platform has recorded over 4 crore citizen engagements and successfully facilitated more than 1.10 lakh service requests. The initiative demonstrates how real-time citizen interaction, transparency, and accountability can be achieved through effective digital tools. He highlighted that such innovations have made municipal services more transparent, responsive, and citizen-friendly. The session concluded with practical insights on how similar digital platforms, modeled after PMC Care, could be developed in other cities to improve service delivery and efficiency.



Mr. Rahul Jagtap, Smart City Mission Nodal Officer, PMC, Maharashtra addressing the participants.

The second session on 'Citizen-Centric Platforms for Enhanced Ease of Living' was conducted by Dr. Ajit Mokal, Associate Professor and Gender Expert, Mumbai. He began by explaining how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a vital role in building a digitally empowered society under the vision of the Digital India Mission. The session emphasized how citizen-centric governance enhances accessibility, transparency, and accountability through digital integration.



Dr. Ajit Mokal, Associate Professor and Gender Expert, Mumbai addressing the participants.

Dr. Mokal highlighted key initiatives such as UMANG and Aaple Sarkar, which provide citizens with single-window access to multiple government services through web portals and mobile applications. He elaborated on the National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) and Maharashtra's integrated 'Samanvay' portal, designed to simplify service delivery under a unified digital framework. The discussion also covered emerging trends such as AI-powered chatbots like the MyGov Corona Helpdesk and Aaple Sarkar Bot, which provide real-time information and grievance support. Dr. Mokal further illustrated the use of cloud computing under the MeghRaj initiative and open data platforms such as data.gov.in, which enhance transparency and innovation. He explained how Internet of Things (IoT) applications under the Smart Cities Mission are improving efficiency in utilities, waste management, and public service monitoring. The session underscored that technologies like AI, IoT, and unified digital systems are shaping a responsive and inclusive governance

model. Dr. Mokal concluded by reaffirming that citizen-centric digital platforms are essential to achieving the vision of 'Maximum Governance, Minimum Government' and improving the ease of living for all.

The third session on 'Case Studies and Innovations in Digital Governance' was conducted by Ms. Sukhada Gole, Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai. She began by explaining the concept and goals of digital governance, focusing on improving efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness in service delivery. The session highlighted how digital tools foster transparency, accountability, and active citizen participation.



Ms. Sukhada Gole, Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai addressing the participants.

Ms. Gole presented several successful case studies from across India, including the use of GIS-based property tax systems in Surat and Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporations, which have improved tax collection and spatial planning. She also discussed the role of Integrated Command

and Control Centres (ICCCs) under the Smart Cities Mission, showcasing how real-time monitoring enhances coordination and urban management. The presentation further covered innovative applications of AI in traffic management, particularly the Ahmedabad Smart City initiative. Through these examples, participants gained practical insights into the adoption of technology in municipal operations. Ms. Gole emphasized the importance of interdepartmental collaboration, digital capacity building, and citizen engagement for effective governance. She concluded by noting that integrated systems such as ICCCs, AI, and GIS are no longer optional but essential for modern, citizen-centric cities.

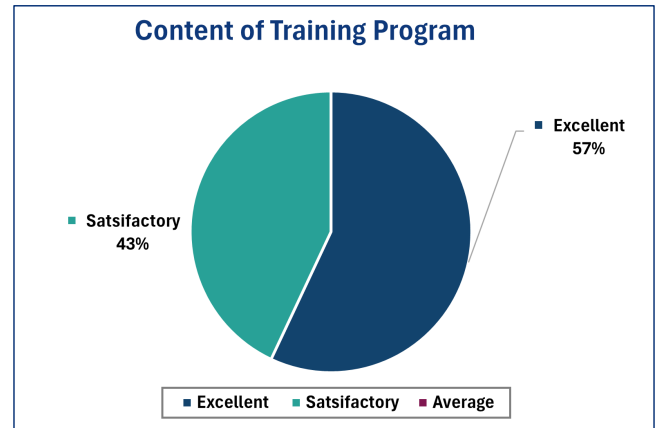
SUMMING UP

The training program concluded with a vote of thanks from Ms. Rane, following the feedback and Q&A session. She acknowledged the collaborative effort that made the program a success, expressing gratitude to the trainers for their insightful sessions and to the participants for their engagement.

TRAINING EVALUATION

The participants' feedback indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the content and design of the program. A majority of participants rated the training as 'Excellent', while the rest found it 'Satisfactory'. The sessions were appreciated for their relevance and comprehensive coverage of digital

governance, highlighting innovative tools, data-driven approaches, and discussions on emerging technologies such as AI, chatbots, and blockchain. Overall, the program was commended for enhancing participants' understanding of digital pathways and their applicability in strengthening urban governance systems.



GLIMPSES OF THE SPECIALIZED WEB-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM

PMC CARE: CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

- PMC CARE is a 360-degree framework by PMC to extend various delivery channels to its citizens for effective and responsive governance.
- 1.3 Lakh Active users on portal, 1.2 Lakh Active users on Application

C Citizen

A Assistance

R Response

E Engagement



Way Forward


- Set a Clear Digital Vision for Your City
- Initiate Data-Driven Decision Making
- Push for Smart Infrastructure
- Integrate Civic Services Digitally
- Collaborate with Startups and Tech Partners
- Ensure Digital Capacity Building

Case Study 1 –Property Tax Innovation

Previous Tax Collection System

- Property Assessment and Valuation
- Bill Generation and Printing
- Hand Delivery at Door
- Payment Physical/ Digital

CMS: CHANNELS FOR COMPLAINT REGISTRATION





OSH India Expo 2025

16th - 17th September 2025
Mumbai, Maharashtra.

OSH India Awards 2025, a ceremony to recognize and celebrate excellence in the field of Occupational Safety and Health, was held on 16th – 17th September 2025 at Mumbai. Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES) of All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIIILSG) Mumbai, served as a distinguished jury member for this prestigious award ceremony. On the jury, Dr. Salvi instrumentally evaluated a multitude of exemplary nominations, applying his extensive expertise to help identify and subsequently felicitate the brightest stars and most innovative organizations that are setting new benchmarks in workplace safety protocols and health initiatives.

The core motto of the awards was to honor those individuals and organizations who are proactively building a safer and more secure future for workplaces nationwide, which aligns perfectly with the foundational principles and expertise of RCUES of AIIILSG, Mumbai. The representation of RCUES of AIIILSG, Mumbai, at such a high-caliber national forum is compelling evidence of the organization's profound and unwavering commitment to the intertwined domains of environmental sustainability and workers' safety, underscoring the belief that comprehensive urban safety extends far beyond physical infrastructure to encompass the holistic health, well-being, and dignity of every worker operating at the ground level. It was a strategic engagement that allowed to share research-driven insights and learn best practices from various industries, thereby reinforcing our role as a key knowledge partner in shaping safer, healthier urban environments and workspaces.

On the second day, 17th September 2025, the RCUES of AIIILSG Mumbai hosted a strategic panel discussion on 'Invisible Hands, Visible Risks: Addressing Occupational Health Hazards faced by Sanitation Workers'. The session, moderated by Dr. Salvi, highlighted that India has nearly 5 million sanitation workers, of which 2 million are engaged in high-risk roles; yet 77% lack contracts, and 72% have no social security, and brought together an esteemed panel comprising Mr. Vinayak Bhat, Chief Engineer, SWM, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Dr. Shubhangi Baviskar, Dy. Commissioner, National Institute of Public Health Training & Research, Government of India, Mr. Anand Jagtap, Ex-OSD, BMC and WASH Expert, Mr. Satish Bhosale, President, Swachhata Sanvardhan Sanstha, and Dr. Anup Rashit, Executive Director, Indian Technical Textiles Association.

The discussion shed light on critical on-ground challenges faced by sanitation workers, including unsafe working conditions, lack of protective equipment, and exposure to multiple occupational health hazards such as toxic gases, infections, and ergonomic stress. Panelists highlighted the persistence of weak policy enforcement of safety regulations, lack of awareness, and resistance to change among workers. They further stressed the importance of addressing stigma and social exclusion that aggravate the vulnerabilities of sanitation workers. Innovative solutions were also explored, ranging from personalized & climate-suitable protective equipment and mechanization of high-risk tasks to the potential of public-private partnerships in improving workplace safety and dignity for workers.

The panel concluded with a clear call to action: strengthen enforcement of occupational safety policies, integrate modern technologies and mechanization, foster collaborations between government, private stakeholders, and community organizations, and above all, ensure the health, dignity, and

social recognition of sanitation workers. RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai extended its gratitude to OSH India Expo 2025 for providing an opportunity to host this crucial dialogue, which paves the way for stronger partnerships and long-term reforms to safeguard sanitation workers across India.

GLIMPSES OF THE EXPO





Launch Event of AILSG's Centenary Celebration (1926 – 2026)

26th September 2025
Mumbai, Maharashtra.

All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIIILSG) celebrated its launch event of Centenary Celebration on 26th September 2025 at its Mumbai Head office at Bandra, marking 100 years of excellence in Urban Development & Local Governance. AIIILSG staff sang devotional songs for Saraswati Vandana followed by the inauguration.

The event was inaugurated by Dr. Jairaj Phatak, IAS (Retd.), Director General, AIIILSG, in the esteemed presence of Dr. Sneha Palnitkar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Waste Management Research Centre (WMRC), AIIILSG, CA Devarshi Pandya, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), AIIILSG, Ms. Utkarsha Kavadi, Sr. Executive Director, AIIILSG, Mumbai, and Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director, Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES) of AIIILSG Mumbai, Mr. Shekhar Naik, Executive Director (HR & Admin) and Mr. Amit Biswas, Executive Director (Training & Exam) of AIIILSG, Mumbai.

Dr. Phatak shared insights into the rich history of AIIILSG, while Dr. Palnitkar reflected on her dedicated service and transformative contributions to the institute. CA Pandya and Ms. Kavadi recounted their journey with AIIILSG, adding warmth

and inspiration to the event. Dr. Salvi presented a visual journey through AIIILSG's century long legacy, highlighting milestones that have shaped its remarkable impact on urban governance in India.

This celebration not only honored the past but also reaffirmed our commitment to advancing knowledge, innovation, and leadership in local self-governance for the next century. AIIILSG staff created a vibrant rangoli, enhancing it as a festive ambience. AIIILSG will mark its centenary with year-long events and initiatives.

GLIMPSES OF THE LAUNCH EVENT OF AILSG'S CENTENARY CELEBRATION





Framing the Future



Dr. Ajit Salvi, Director of RCUES Mumbai, met with Ms. Karishma Nair, IAS, Additional Municipal Commissioner, and Avinash Dhanait, Superintending Engineer (Technical), Nashik Municipal Corporation, to explore potential avenues for collaboration and discuss strategies for sustainable municipal development.

The meeting was also attended by Ms. Neha Hardikar, Sr. Research Officer, and Ms. Mansi Gothankar, Research Associate, RCUES Mumbai.



Advisory Committee, RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai

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Ex-Officio Chairperson

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Dr. Liyaqat Ayub Khan,
Member

Professor & Head,
Department of Civics & Politics,
University of Mumbai, Vidyanagari,
Mumbai.

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Disclaimer

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**Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies
All India Institute of Local Self Government, Mumbai**

M. N. Roy Human Development Campus, Plot No.6, 'F' Block,
Opp. Bandra Colony Metro Station (Aqua Line 3, Gate No. A2), Near Uttar Bhartiya Sangh,
Bandra (East), Mumbai – 400051.

Tel. No. : 8657622550 / 51 / 52 / 54

Email.: dir.rcues@aillsg.org ; rcuestraining@aillsg.org

Website: www.aillsg.org/rcues