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Date: 2nd September 2025

Moderator**Mihir Bhatt**

Director, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI)

Bio: Mihir R. Bhatt has worked on extreme heat since his involvement in the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change Special Report on “Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation”. He has led the Climate and Development Knowledge Network work on heat in India and the region. For the past six years, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) has worked on extreme heat in urban areas with a focus on small businesses and rural areas with a focus on family farms. He is currently involved in including extreme heat risks in the agriculture risk reduction plan of a state in India; building the capacity of civil society frontline workers; and conducting research on the demand side of cooling finance.

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Panelists**Bijal Brahmbhatt**

Director, Mahila Housing SEWA Trust (MHT)

Bio: Bijal Brahmbhatt is the Director of MHT and has extensive experience in housing, habitat, governance, informality, and gender issues affecting low-income urban communities and migrants. With over 20 years of work in cities, she focuses on governance for housing and habitat, women-led models for resilience, and socio-technical approaches for better living conditions. She has been awarded the Surya Mitra National Award and recognized by the Womanity Foundation and Schwab Foundation. She is also a member of the InsuResilience Gender Working Group. Bijal holds a degree in Civil Engineering and a certificate in Urban Planning and Management from the Institute of Housing Studies, Netherlands.

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Elisa Sutanudjaja

Executive Director & Co-Founder, Rujak Center for Urban Studies (RCUS), Jakarta, Indonesia

Bio: Elisa Sutanudjaja co-founded RCUS in 2010 to foster ecological transitions through community-based urban knowledge and practices. She has led initiatives like the Citizen Coalition for Jakarta 2030, the Kampung Susun Aquarium housing project (winner of Asia Pacific Housing Innovation Award 2023), and climate justice research through the CLICCC project. Elisa is also known for her critiques of urban governance issues and her cultural engagements such as “Archiving Resistance” and “Ziarah Utara Jakarta.” She holds degrees in architecture from Universitas Tarumanagara and the University of New South Wales.

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Avinash Chanchal

Deputy Program Director, Greenpeace South Asia

Bio: Avinash Chanchal is an environmental and climate justice campaigner with over a decade of experience. At Greenpeace South Asia, he leads regional campaigns on climate justice, urban equity, and ocean protection. Formerly with Greenpeace India, he worked on air quality, mobility, and resilience. He co-founded the Public Transport Forum in Delhi, authored *Singrauli Files*, and serves on the Steering Committee of MIRA. His work emphasizes inclusive and sustainable climate action for vulnerable communities.

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Sheikh Nur Ataya Rabbi

Assistant Manager – Research and Advocacy, Center for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD), Bangladesh

Bio: Sheikh Nur Ataya Rabbi is an economics graduate from Comilla University, specializing in research on climate change, macroeconomics, and policy analysis. At CPRD, he works on climate adaptation, mitigation, finance, loss and damage, and negotiations. He has contributed to policy papers, peer-reviewed journals, and advocacy efforts linking climate change with development. His expertise includes econometric modeling, qualitative and quantitative research, and policy synthesis.

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Ashok Kumar Byanju (Shrestha)

Hon. Mayor of Dhulikhel Municipality, Nepal

Bio: Ashok Kumar Byanju is the Mayor of Dhulikhel Municipality, focusing on sustainable urban development, public services, and environmental sustainability. His leadership highlights innovative waste management projects, tourism promotion, and grassroots governance. He has also represented Nepali municipalities in international forums, advocating for decentralization and stronger local governance.

Context**Kirtee Shah**

President, INHAF

Bio: Kirtee Shah is the founder President of India Habitat Forum (INHAF). He has served on Planning Commission of India committees, HUDCO's Board of Directors, and consulted for UN agencies and the World Bank. He advised on India's housing project for war victims in Sri Lanka and chaired a HUDCO committee on Building Centres Network in India. He is Chairman and Chief Architect at KSA Design Planning Services Pvt. Ltd., Ahmedabad.

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