

**Press Release**

**IIMA hosts National Conclave**

**On Universal Design and Accessibility in Smart Cities**

**Ahmedabad August 27 2016:** The National Conclave on Universal Design and Accessibility (UD&A) in Smart Cities conceptualized and organized by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA) and sponsored by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India (GoI) was inaugurated today at 9.00 am at the IIMA Campus.

Prof. Ashis Jalote Parmar, Faculty Chair & Organizer, Universal Design and Accessibility Conclave welcomed the participants and delivered her address on 'Imagining Smart Cities for Accessibility and Universal Design'. This was followed by Shri Sanjay Singh, Ministry of Social Justice – Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, GoI dwelling on 'Accessibility Compliance: The Road Ahead'. Shri Ashank Desai, Founder & Former Chairman, Mastek and Former Chairman, NASSCOM was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

Prof. Nanda, Director, IIMA said, "Universal Design conclave is an initiative to generate awareness about the concept of “Accessibility or Design for All" which focuses on designing buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to people with disabilities, older people and also people without disabilities."

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Ashis Jalote Parmar said, “Indian Policy makers from different ministries and relevant stakeholders from academia, NGO's and corporate need to work together in tandem to make Accessible India a reality, therefore this conclave is specially designed as a platform for igniting thoughts."

The panel of expert speakers in the conclave included, Shri. Mukesh Kumar, Municipal Commissioner- Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Mr. Deepinder Singh, Head Strategy planning, Digital India, Ministry of Electronics and Information technology, Mr. Dipendra Manocha, Managing Trustee, Saksham Trust; Ms. Anjlee Agarwal, Executive Director, Samarthyam; Mr. Subhash Chandra Vashishth, Lawyer, Delhi High Court and Founder – CABE; Mr. Deepinder Manocha, Managing Trustee, Saksham Trust Professor Rachana Khare, Head, School of Planning & Architecture, Bhopal along with Mrs Nirmita Narsimhan, Center for Internet Policy.

The conclave was well received and attended by Planners, Policy, Corporate working in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Architects, Builders, Product Designers, Information Technology Specialists, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Researchers and Educators from across India.

The concluding panel discussion on "Re-imaging Smart Accessible Cities”, saw enthusiastic participation from the audience.

More information please visit: <http://www.iima.ac.in/ud>

-The End-