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Bihar Saras Mela - 2023 : Celebrating Self-Reliance through Rural Empowerment

The vibrant tapestry of self-sufficiency woven by rural women, linked to various self-help groups, was on full display at the Bihar Saras Mela 2023. The Bihar Saras Mela is a pioneering initiative in promoting rural entrepreneurship, organized by the Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society (JEEVIKA) since 2014. The Saras Mela serves as a unique confluence of handicrafts, folk art, and culture, where artisans from various states across India showcase their crafts under one colorful canvas. The primary objective of Bihar Saras Mela is to empower rural entrepreneurs and boost their economic prospects.

The event occurs in two editions. The first edition hosted every year at Gyan Bhavan, Patna, takes place for a span of ten days, featuring participation from other states. The second edition is hosted at Gandhi Maidan in Patna, lasting for fifteen days and attracting participants from almost all Indian states. Women entrepreneurs associated with JEEVIKA from Bihar's districts showcase their products, including handicrafts, traditional clothing, and delicious local cuisine.

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Lead Story : Bihar Saras Mela 2023



In the 2023 edition, the Bihar Saras Mela started with grandeur at Gyan Bhawan, Patna from 20th September – 27th September 2023, with its inauguration graced by Shri Shravan Kumar, Honorable Minister of Rural Development, Bihar Government. Dr. N. Sarwan Kumar, Secretary of the Rural Development Department, Bihar Government, also attended this significant event. The Bihar Saras Mela welcomed women entrepreneurs from 22 states, who proudly displayed their regional crafts, culture, flavors, and traditions. With 131 stalls, this event brought to light the artistic, cultural, and culinary treasures of our nation, representing the diverse and rich heritage

of India. Bihar's JEEVIKA self-help groups demonstrated the manufacturing and sale of a wide range of products, from handcrafted items to traditional foods.

The Bihar Saras Mela showcased a myriad of products:

- Sarees, suits, and fabrics of Khadi, Silk, Matka, Cotton, and Kosa.
- Home decor items such as handwoven rugs, lamps, and decorative items.
- Traditional toys, pottery, and local crafts.
- Exquisite garments and shawls from Kashmir.
- A variety of traditional cuisines, pickles, sweets, and other eateries.
- Natural dry flowers, Bonsai, and eco-friendly products.
- A wide range of products worth over millions.

Notable attractions included stalls from the Satat Jeevikoparjan Yoajan (Flagship Program by the Bihar Government for ultra-poor graduation) and JEEVIKA Didi Ki Rasoi where visitors savored pure and nutritious local dishes prepared by JEEVIKA Didis. Moreover, students received hands-on experience in business management by interacting with women entrepreneurs.

The Bihar Saras Mela provided a platform for self-help groups to transform their skills into flourishing businesses, driving rural empowerment, self-sufficiency, and women's empowerment. It was a grand spectacle that offered something for everyone, regardless of age.

The event maintained a clean and hygienic environment, with help and health desks readily available for visitors. To facilitate cashless transactions and promote the purchase of products, two customer service centers were operational at the venue, offering a convenient way for patrons to transact and deposit their purchases directly into the artisans'

Lead Story : Bihar Saras Mela 2023



accounts.

Bihar Saras Mela also saw participation from various states, including Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and of course, Bihar.

The Bihar Saras Mela was a captivating event that appealed to people of all ages. The 2023 edition surpassed its predecessors in terms of trade and visitor numbers. Let's take a look at the statistics:

- **Total Sales: INR 2,92,03,455/-**
- **Estimated Visitors: 2,91,497**

Notable top-selling artisans and their products:

- Odisha's Hajji Ali - Readymade and fabric clothing, earning INR 12,44,816.
- Bihar's Sariya - Sarees, dupattas, and suits, earning INR 8,50,577.
- Bihar's Nasibiya - Sadi and suits, earning INR 7,73,507.
- Uttar Pradesh's Alima - Bedsheets and garments, earning INR 7,57,702.
- Bihar's Vaishno - Blankets, sattu, and pickles, earning INR 7,03,506.

Bihar Saras Mela concluded with a grand closing ceremony on the evening of September 27th, 2023. The next edition, Saras Mela 2023, is scheduled to be held from December 15 to December 29, 2023, at Gandhi Maidan, Patna. This event is eagerly anticipated across the nation.

The Bihar Saras Mela is an emblem of rural empowerment, showcasing the remarkable skills and talents of self-help groups from various states, driving the vision of self-reliance, and becoming a major highlight in the national news and media coverage.

Poshan Maah : A Transformative Movement for Better Nutrition in Bihar



In the sprawling landscapes of Bihar, where agriculture and culture have been intertwined for generations, the significance of nutrition transcends mere sustenance—it defines the well-being of communities and the future of the state. In this context, the Poshan Maah initiative, under the able guidance of JEEVIKA, assumes a pivotal role in driving awareness and action to combat malnutrition and foster healthy dietary practices. This annual event, known as National Nutrition Month, is a dedicated effort to highlight the critical importance of nutrition and promote holistic health. In 2023, the theme "Suposhit Bharat, Sakshar Bharat, Sashakt Bharat"

holds profound relevance, particularly with the persistent challenges of wasted and stunted children and maternal malnutrition in Bihar.

Poshan Maah Initiatives in Bihar

During the Poshan Maah in Bihar, JEEVIKA takes a multi-pronged approach to address the complex issue of malnutrition. These initiatives include:

- **Exclusive Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding:** Promoting the essential practice of exclusive breastfeeding and introducing suitable complementary feeding to ensure the healthy growth and development of infants.
- **Swasth Balak Spardha (SBS):** Organizing competitions centered around children's health to raise awareness and engage communities in advocating for better health practices.
- **Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi:** Linking nutrition with education, emphasizing the profound impact of good nutrition on learning outcomes and cognitive development in children.
- **Improving Nutrition through Mission Life:** Implementing a mission-oriented approach to enhance nutrition-related practices and lifestyles, fostering a comprehensive and sustainable change.
- **Tribal-Focused Sensitization:** Tailoring initiatives specifically for tribal communities to address their unique nutritional needs and challenges, recognizing the cultural diversity of the state.
- **Test, Treat, Talk Anaemia:** A comprehensive program addressing anaemia through testing, treatment, and awareness-raising dialogues, aiming to combat this widespread issue.
- **General Sensitization Activities:** Conducting various awareness campaigns and activities to inform and educate the populace about essential nutritional practices and their long-term benefits.
- **Meri Mati Mera Desh:** A unique approach connecting soil health with the nation's well-being, emphasizing the intimate link between soil quality and food quality.

Programs & Initiatives

One of the foundational initiatives during Poshan Maah is the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of an infant's life provides crucial nutrients and antibodies for their development. It is a practice that significantly reduces the risk of malnutrition and related health issues. JEEViKA, through awareness campaigns, workshops, and community outreach, educates mothers about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. Additionally, they emphasize the introduction of



appropriate complementary foods after six months to continue providing essential nutrients for the child's growth. Swasth Balak Spardha, or the Health Child Competition, is a unique and engaging initiative aimed at raising awareness about children's health. This competition not only fosters a sense of excitement among children but also educates them and their families about the importance of maintaining good health. Children participate in various health-related activities and competitions, showcasing their understanding of healthy practices. Through SBS, JEEViKA encourages communities to take a proactive role in ensuring their children's well-being and nutrition, fostering a sense of collective responsibility.

The "Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi" initiative connects the dots between nutrition and education. It emphasizes that good nutrition is essential for better learning outcomes. Malnourished children often struggle with cognitive development, and this initiative highlights the significance of nutrition in enabling children to realize their full potential in school. By linking nutrition with education, JEEViKA encourages parents, teachers, and communities to support children's nutritional needs for improved academic performance. "Improving Nutrition through Mission Life" represents a comprehensive approach to promoting nutrition-related practices and lifestyles. It recognizes that nutrition is not just about food but encompasses a range of factors, including hygiene, sanitation, and health. This initiative encourages communities to adopt healthier habits, such as proper handwashing, sanitation, and regular health check-ups. By incorporating these practices into daily life, JEEViKA aims to create a holistic approach to nutrition that goes beyond just the food on the plate.

Recognizing the unique nutritional needs and challenges faced by tribal communities in Bihar, JEEViKA tailors specific initiatives to address these issues. These initiatives take into account the cultural diversity and dietary preferences of tribal communities. By collaborating closely with tribal leaders and community members, JEEViKA develops targeted approaches to improve nutrition in these areas, ensuring that no community is left behind. Anemia is a prevalent issue in Bihar, affecting both children and adults. It can lead to fatigue, weakness, and a range of health problems. To combat anemia, JEEViKA's "Test, Treat, Talk Anaemia" program is a comprehensive effort. It involves testing individuals for anemia, providing necessary treatment, and initiating dialogues about the importance of maintaining a diet rich in iron and other essential nutrients. By addressing anemia from multiple angles, JEEViKA aims to reduce its prevalence and the associated health problems.

Throughout Poshan Maah, JEEViKA conducts a wide range of general sensitization activities to reach the broader population. These activities include awareness campaigns, workshops, and community events. They serve as a platform to educate individuals and families about the importance of good nutrition and provide practical tips for maintaining a healthy diet. These activities also foster a sense of community involvement and responsibility in promoting nutrition. The "Meri Mati

Programs & Initiatives



"Mera Desh" initiative takes a unique approach by connecting soil health with the nation's well-being. It emphasizes the intricate relationship between soil quality and food quality. Healthy soil produces nutritious crops, and this initiative seeks to educate farmers and communities about sustainable agricultural practices that can improve both soil health and the nutritional value of the food they consume. This approach has a dual impact, not only promoting better nutrition but also sustainable farming practices.



One of the most noteworthy aspects of Poshan Maah in Bihar is the impressive participation and engagement it garners. The Jan Andolan portal - <https://poshanabhiyaan.gov.in/> (A web portal by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India, for tracking the activities undertaken during Poshan Abhiyaan across the nation) has witnessed an outstanding 4,043,362 entries (Highest in the country) from Bihar, which is a testament to the extensive involvement and interest in the program. Districts such as Gaya, Muzaffarpur, Begusarai, Bhojpur, Patna, and Rohtas have notably contributed significantly to this data. This indicates substantial engagement and activity within these regions, showcasing their dedication to combat malnutrition and promote better health practices.

Poshan Maah, guided by JEEVIKA, stands as a beacon of hope in Bihar, where the battle against malnutrition rages on. With its diverse range of initiatives and the enthusiastic participation of communities, it brings us one step closer to a healthier and stronger Bihar, where every child can grow up with the nutrition they need to thrive. In this mission, the people of Bihar are not just participants; they are the driving force for change. "Suposhit Bharat, Sakshar Bharat, Sashakt Bharat" is not just a theme; it is the vision for a brighter and more nourished future for all. As Poshan Maah unfolds, it carries the promise of a healthier and more prosperous Bihar, where every child and family can access the nutrition and health they deserve.

Transforming Lives

Transforming Lives through Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana

Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana, a transformative initiative, has been instrumental in bringing hope and dignity to households previously engaged in the liquor-making and toddy-tapping business. The scheme's primary goal is to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to these families, enabling them to lead dignified lives within their communities. This success story highlights the inspiring journey of Sita Didi, a resident of Bareja village in Manjhi block, Siwan.



Sita's life took a tragic turn when her husband, Harinandan Mahato, succumbed to the perils of excessive alcohol consumption, as he was engaged in the liquor-making trade. Left to fend for herself and her family, Sita embraced the opportunities offered by Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana. She decided to revive the traditional art of Sikki craft and ventured into opening a grocery shop.

In the fiscal year 2020-21, Sita became a beneficiary of the Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana, which provided her with crucial financial support amounting to Rs 37,000 to kickstart her livelihood. With this financial assistance, she successfully established her grocery shop. Today, Sita stands proudly as an independent entrepreneur, nurturing her two sons and two daughters with love and dignity. All her children are receiving quality education at local schools, ensuring a brighter future for them.

Sita Didi's journey doesn't stop there. She has further diversified her income by engaging in the art of crafting products from Khas (Khas grass, also known as vetiver or khus, is a perennial bunchgrass native to India. It's a tall herb with long, thin, and rigid leaves, can grow up to 1.5 meters high) and selling them in the market. By embracing this traditional craft business, she not only generates a substantial profit but also contributes to the cultural revival of her region. Sita skillfully creates various products using Sikki, such as beautiful Rakhis made from Khas, which she successfully markets. In the month of August alone, she earned a remarkable profit of Rs 21,000 from this business. Sita's unwavering dedication, hard work, and exceptional skills have not gone unnoticed. She is now actively involved in the Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana's stall at Saras Mela, proudly displaying her handcrafted products made from Kush. Her remarkable journey serves as a testament to the transformative power of the Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana, empowering individuals to reclaim their lives, sustain their families, and contribute to the preservation of their rich cultural heritage.

December

Calendar of Events

COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION

- ➔ JEEVIKA Health Help Desk
- ➔ Welcoming Augustine Tano Kouamé, Country Director India, The World Bank

सहरसा-सुपौल-मधेपुरा प्रभात

जीविका के ग्राम संगठनों को आवंटित किये गये पांच जलाशय जीविका दीदियों ने मत्स्य पालन में भी परचम लहराने को कसी कमर

प्रतिनिधि, सहरसा



मत्स्य पालन जीविका दीदी

जीविका स्वयं सहायता समूहों से जुड़े परिवारों को जीविकोपार्जन की दिशिका गतिविधियों से जोड़ कर उनकी आय को बढ़ाने के लिए निरंतर कार्य किया जा रहा है। जीविकोपार्जन गतिविधियों में जिले की जीविका दीदियों भी मत्स्य पालन के क्षेत्र में अपनी योगदान को प्रदर्शित कर रही हैं। प्रभात क्षेत्र से जुड़े अधिकतम परिवारों की सेजी-सेटी का मुख्य आधार कृषि है। ऐसे में वे परिवार कृषि के साथ-साथ मत्स्य पालन जैसी गतिविधियों को बखूबी अपना कर अपने आय में वृद्धि कर रही हैं। मत्स्य पालन से जुड़ी जीविका दीदियों के परिवार को रोजगार एवं आय वृद्धि के साथ-साथ सस्ते-सस्ते आवश्यकताओं की भी पूर्ति हो रही है। जन-जीवन-हरियाली अभियान के तहत जिले के 22 सार्वजनिक जलाशयों को जला प्रशासन द्वारा चिह्नित कर जीविका दीदियों को मत्स्य पालन कर आगवनी को बढ़ाने एवं जलाशयों को देखभाल करने के लिए जीविका के ग्राम संगठनों को आवंटित किया गया है। इन जलाशयों की देखभाल जीविका दीदियों द्वारा किया जा रहा है। इन जलाशयों को जीविका ग्राम संगठनों को पांच वर्षों के लिए आवंटित किया गया है। जीविका संप्रति ग्राम संगठनों को जलाशय आवंटित होने के बाद जीविका दीदियों

ने सहायी पालन करने का निर्णय लिया। माछों को उतारने पर जलवायु के लिए दीदियों के द्वारा मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह का गठन किया गया है। इन मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह से जुड़ी कर्म दीदियों ऐसी हैं, जो पहले भी मत्स्य पालन से जुड़ी रही हैं। मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह से जुड़ने से दीदियों को मत्स्य पालन के बारे में जानकारी बढ़ी है। दीदियों को मदद के लिए ग्राम संगठन ने मत्स्य मत्स्य पालन जीविका दीदी, सखी की नियुक्ति की है, जो ग्राम संगठन की मदद करके पालन एवं व्यापार में करती है। तथा सरकार ने जन जीवन हरियाली मिशन के तहत प्रोत्साहित तालाबों का रख-खाव जीविका संप्रति ग्राम संगठनों से कराने का मंत्री मंडलव्य निर्णय लिया है। इसके तहत नवसृजित एवं जीवोद्धार किये गये सार्वजनिक तालाबों का रख-खाव



Empowering Women Through Skill and Self-Reliance: The Story of Mrs. Savitri Devi

The Jeevika Didis, who have emerged from the rural landscapes of Bihar to gain national recognition, stand as living examples of women's empowerment and self-reliance. Among these remarkable women is Savitri Devi, hailing from the Jhanjharpur block of Madhubani. Savitri is a proud member of the Bhagwati Jeevika Women's Self Help Group, and she is making significant strides in showcasing her handmade products at various stalls.

Savitri Devi's collection is a testament to her skill and creativity, featuring an array of items such as bangles, jhumkas, decorative sticks, roti boxes, pen stands, tissue boxes, fish figurines, tortoiseshells, and coasters – all intricately crafted from coins. Her journey of presenting these unique creations began at the Saras Mela back in 2014, and she has since expanded her horizons by participating in craft fairs at the national level, hosted in various states across the country.

Savitri shares her inspiring story of transformation since joining Jeevika, emphasizing how her skillset has found a broader market and garnered well-deserved recognition. What was once a talent confined to the walls of her home has now achieved international acclaim through the livelihood support provided by Jeevika. The crafts and artifacts made from coins are not only gaining recognition but also yielding profits through sales. Savitri Devi's journey is a shining example of how empowering women and nurturing their skills can lead to remarkable self-reliance and success.

जीविका के मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी ने सिलाई सह प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का किया उद्घाटन कठिन परिश्रम व लगन से कुछ भी हासिल किया जा सकता है : राहुल



सिलाई सह प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का उद्घाटन करते मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी राहुल कुमार



जीविका दीदियों के साथ मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी व अन्य कर्मी

मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी ने सिलाई सह प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का उद्घाटन किया। जीविका के ग्राम संगठनों को आवंटित किया गया है। इन जलाशयों की देखभाल जीविका दीदियों द्वारा किया जा रहा है। इन जलाशयों को जीविका ग्राम संगठनों को पांच वर्षों के लिए आवंटित किया गया है। जीविका संप्रति ग्राम संगठनों को जलाशय आवंटित होने के बाद जीविका दीदियों ने सहायी पालन करने का निर्णय लिया। माछों को उतारने पर जलवायु के लिए दीदियों के द्वारा मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह का गठन किया गया है। इन मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह से जुड़ी कर्म दीदियों ऐसी हैं, जो पहले भी मत्स्य पालन से जुड़ी रही हैं। मत्स्य उत्पादन समूह से जुड़ने से दीदियों को मत्स्य पालन के बारे में जानकारी बढ़ी है। दीदियों को मदद के लिए ग्राम संगठन ने मत्स्य मत्स्य पालन जीविका दीदी, सखी की नियुक्ति की है, जो ग्राम संगठन की मदद करके पालन एवं व्यापार में करती है। तथा सरकार ने जन जीवन हरियाली मिशन के तहत प्रोत्साहित तालाबों का रख-खाव जीविका संप्रति ग्राम संगठनों से कराने का मंत्री मंडलव्य निर्णय लिया है। इसके तहत नवसृजित एवं जीवोद्धार किये गये सार्वजनिक तालाबों का रख-खाव