



# JEEViKA NEWSLETTER

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*From CEO's Desk,*

*Wishing you a  
Happy New Year  
2023 and  
blessed year ahead.*

Rahul Kumar  
Chief Executive Officer  
BRLPS

## JEEViKA SARAS MELA 2022 Gandhi Maidan

Since 2014, JEEViKA orchestrates Bihar Saras Mela to promote rural crafts and artisans to reunite traditional cultures and encourage vanishing artefacts by providing a common realm for their marketing and brand building. JEEViKA's multi-functional collaborative approach towards merchandising regional handicrafts has brought cardinal reform in revolutionizing rural Bihar. This has helped in the diversification of economic activities, under an umbrella brand – JEEViKA. With the increase in the demand for handicrafts, food products and apparels among the urban population, Bihar Saras Mela ensures authenticity and purity direct to the customers.



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JEEVIKA's women entrepreneurs played a vital role in the overall economic development of the state. Bihar Saras Mela provides and promotes rural industries facilitating self-employment, resulting in a wider dispersal of economic and industrial activities by utilizing local resources and promoting the talents of JEEVIKA's women entrepreneurs.

The very first day more than 50 thousand people visited the fair. JEEVIKA's women entrepreneurs were highly appreciated for their products and services which includes rural crafts, artefacts, products and local delicacies. Apart from these, the Customer Service Points run by JEEVIKA's Banking Correspondents, JEEVIKA Didi ki Nursery, JEEVIKA Didi ki Rasoi, Shilpgram, Madhugram, JEEVIKA didi ki Pustakalaya (Library) were special centres of attraction.



A total of 513 stalls were displayed by the rural artisans, of which 213 stalls were associated with the self-help groups, 145 from Swarozgaris (Self-employed entrepreneurs), 69 from the SRLMs of other states as well as food. Apart from these, there were 47 stalls in the zone from various departments, institutions and banks, where visitors were made aware of the various schemes and programs.

Rural artisans and entrepreneurs from 24 states of the country including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana West-Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Bihar participated in Bihar Saras Mela and presented their crafts, products, traditions, culture and cuisine. Apart from these, coinage and Makhana from Mithilanchal in Bihar, captivating silk apparel from Bhagalpur, durries and carpets from Kaimur, Lahtis and bangles from Muzaffarpur, shell artefacts from East Champaran as well as bamboo products from Katihar were displayed in the fair. Home decoration products, utensils made of bronze and brass metal from Patna district, crozier art from Bhojpur, leather products from Darbhanga and Madhepura, beautiful sarees made of mulberry silk from

## Lead Story : Saras Mela 2023



Purnia, stone carving art and wooden artifacts from Gaya district, decorative products, Bhagalpur's sheared rice and bangles drenched the visitors with their beauty and fragrance.

JEEVIKA with the Art & culture department has collaboratively organized cultural events every evening which constitute folk songs, dance, culture and traditions. These events were organized on a large scale. Folk artistes, ghazal singers, Sufi singers and students have enthralled the crowd with their performances. Along with shopping, people also got acquainted with the cultural heritage. Artists revived the extinct folk culture with their presentation under the aegis of the Art Culture and Youth Department.

A public awareness campaign was launched by the Women and Child Development Corporation for the eradication of social evils through songs and music. Presentations were carried out on child-marriage and dowry eradication and gender-based violence under the public awareness program.

JEEVIKA's staffs and their families also attracted the attention of the audience with their acting and singing. Youth Festival was organized under the aegis of Management Institute DMI and Red FM. Apart from this, folk songs and folk dances were also presented by Nayan Foundation and Jack Music Team and Kavi Sammelan by Nehwa Sansthan.

From other states, Special Boutique and Chanderi print sarees from Madhya Pradesh, garam masala and wooden home Decor products from Andhra Pradesh, Sawai grass furnishings and apparels from Odisha, bed sheets decorated with applique art from Haryana, Kutchi art costumes from the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, pottery, herbal medicines made by artisans from tribal tribes from Jharkhand, as well as exotic Adiva jewelry and other jute products sold well. Assam Bamboo products from Punjab, Phulkari art apparel from Punjab, Handmade apparel from





Sikkim, Beautiful artificial flowers made from date palm leaves from West Bengal, Stone and bamboo products, Bed sheets with appliqué work from Telangana, handmade clothes for kids products made of jute and leather, attractive salwar-suits and sarees from Chhattisgarh brought this Saras Mela to life. Wooden furniture, sofas, beds, tables, swings from Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Bhadohi's carpets and doormats were other attractions.

The 2022<sup>nd</sup> edition of Saras was unique in its own way.



JEEViKA has established zero-waste Management system in the Saras Mela premises. In collaboration with the Municipal Corporation, Patna JEEViKA has disseminated the information regarding the waste management and cleanliness, in different forms which include "Neki Ki Dewar, Utensil Bank, Bag Bank and Swachhata Ki Pathshala". JEEViKA had set-up a waste processing plant for the waste-disposal and its processing.

Visitors across the state have praised the cleanliness and management of the fair premises. JEEViKA also had arranged for the provisions of disaster management, with the support of the district administration and police. The Saras Mela premises and each stall were being monitored by CCTV cameras. The Help Center continued to provide assistance to visitors and stall holders. Proper arrangements were made for the security and parking of vehicles.

Saras 2022 had a unique juncture of handicrafts, folk art and culture, where we saw many colors of different states of our country on a single canvas. The purpose of Saras was to promote traditional products and the members of the self-help groups associated with them in the modern market. 2022<sup>nd</sup> edition of Saras had generated a total sale of Rs. 16,56,09,991, which is the highest of all time.

## Programmes and Initiatives

J-WIRES (JEEVIKA Women Initiative Renewable Energy and Solutions Pvt. Ltd.), a JEEVIKA's initiative to combat climate change. J-WIRES is instilling solar and renewable energy for the last four years now, to support and cater to the energy requirements of rural communities. JEEVIKA and its community institutions have successfully implemented the Solar Urja through Localization for Sustainability (SOULS) project of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, wherein 17.69 lakh solar study lamps were distributed among school going children.

In this project, JEEVIKA has trained more than 200 members as Solar *Didis* to assemble electric components into a solar lamp and lead the distribution of lamps among rural children. These skilled Solar *Didis* associated with JEEVIKA are also trained to ensure the repair and maintenance of solar lamps for 3 years. After the project ended in 2020, these Solar *Didis* transformed their businesses into Solar Marts (S-Marts), where they started selling various solar and renewable energy products in rural communities.

Kanti Devi, a Technician in J-WIRES Pvt Ltd. and a member of Gayatri JEEVIKA Self Help Group in Amas village, Dhubhi block of Gaya District has been trained to



provide technical aid to the rural community on renewal energy. After successful completion of training, twenty-five members formed *Nari Shakti Mahila Producer Group* in Gopalpur, Gaya. As per the task division, twelve members are involved in assembling the parts of Solar lamps and rest in the sales. These electric efficient bulbs have a year warranty, costing Rs 100 each. On successful completion of production members earn Rs 12 per bulb and honorarium of Rs 4500 per month. This project is running in several districts of Bihar to develop solar eco-system across the state.

Bulb, JUGUNU, BLDC Fan, Emergency bulb, tube bulbs, IDES system (Solar chulha), DRE are the different energy efficient products manufactured by the members, powering livelihood technologies in rural Bihar.



## Inauguration of Bag Cluster Unit in Bela Industrial Area, Muzaffarpur



On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022, JEEViKA has collaboratively achieved a milestone with its entry into manufacturing sector. Bag Cluster at Bela Industrial area, Mushahari, Muzaffarpur was inaugurated by Shri. Aamir Subhani, Chief Secretary, GoB in the gracious presence of Shri. Sandip Poundrik, Principal Secretary, Department of Industries, Shri Balamurugan D, Secretary, Rural Development Department, Shri Pankaj Dixit, Director, Department of Industries, and other dignitaries. The dignitaries interacted with entrepreneurs, workers and highlighted the need for an ecosystem building around the Cluster to enable strengthening of this one of its kind model.

With the financial support from the Department of Industries, 39 women entrepreneurs(all SHG members)



has been provided with 5 lakhs grant and 5 lakhs interest free loans under the Bihar Government's scheme - Mukhyamantri Udyami Yojana. JEEViKA in convergence with BIADA, DIC, and HighSpirit, has strengthened the capacities of the Bag entrepreneurs by providing 4 days training of Enterprise Development Plan (EDP), 2 Days training on Business Development, and 7 days On-job training. Apart from this, JEEViKA with technical support from Chandragupt Institute of Management, Patna and Department of Industries has also provided 10 days EDP training to the entrepreneurs to augment their productive outputs. Also JEEViKA has introduced vehicle entrepreneurs to provide transportation support to the workers.

This new venture will provide an immense opportunities to these 39 entrepreneurs who would employ 1170 sewing workers associated with JEEViKA to enhance their socio-economic stature. The bag cluster is anticipated to evolve as an economic zone, employing over 1200 women directly and creating other service sector avenues like transportation for commuting the entrepreneurs and serving workers to the workshop, canteen services and crèche services. Over 5000 youths would be thus employed in the service sector in the zone.

## Transforming Lives



Sikki Grass craft is a handicraft which is made using a special type of grass known as Sikki found in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Sudama Devi, a member of Saraswati JEEVIKA Self Help Group from Sitamarhi has mastered the art and has converted her skill into business of Sikki Art since 2012. She is not only generating livelihood for her family but also imparting this skill with her SHG group members and they are also generating livelihood through Sikki Art.

Sudama Devi had this skill but was unable to scale it due to lack of capital. After becoming a member of JEEVIKA's Self Help Group she got wings to her dream. She received financial support of Rs 10,000 in the form of loan from her SHG, the money was used to buy raw materials which includes Sikki sticks which costs Rs 50 per bundle. The stick is then colored using colour powder which is mixed with boiling water for around twenty to thirty minutes. Sikki sticks are then soaked into it for absorbing colors. It is then dried in two steps, first in shade for five to six hours and then in sunlight till it's completely dried.

She has been participating in Bihar Saras Mela and other crafts fair in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Chandigarh, Punjab and Haryana where her products are liked and bought by many visitors. In the Bihar Saras, December 2022, her daily average income was around seven thousand rupees. From her experience she shares that her annual earnings from Saras and other Fairs ranges between 50,000-60,000 rupees. Apart from fairs her products are sold in local markets and also in Nepal. Traders and tourists from neighboring districts also purchase her Sikki products. By selling the products in local market she earns upto 8000-10000 rupees per month.

Along with Sikki which was a traditional art form, she also experimented her hands along with the SHGs members in making products made of Cardboards and ply boards. The art on these is done using wooden dust, mud, wet newspapers and sparkle which is later painted and decorated to give a finished look. Making home decorative products from these waste or reusable products they are also recycling the waste generated in homes. All her family members are also involved in this activity.

Apart from making these products she is also training the youths and women in her locality and in other states about Sikki Art. Till now she has trained more than 3000 trainees which is also a source of income for her family. The training varies from seven to Ninety days depending on the skills and type of trainee. Per day she earns Rs 1000 as a trainer. She is promoting this Art and her Skill of Sikki and spreading this in younger generation.

## February

Calendar of Events

### COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION

- Republic Day 2023
- Bihar Samadhan Yatra

# 'Plastic-free' Saras Mela thrown open to Patnaites

## 489 Stalls Set Up At Gandhi Maidan

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Patna: Altogether 489 stalls have been set up at the Bihar Saras Mela which was thrown open to the public at Gandhi Maidan in the state capital on Thursday. The Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society, also known as JEEVIKA, has organised the 15-day fair, which will conclude on December 29.

Of the 489 stalls, 195 belong to the members of various self-help groups affiliated with JEEVIKA. The remaining stalls have been erected by the entrepreneurs from other states. Rural development department minister Shrawan Kumar, who attended the fair and



Visitors at Saras Mela in Patna on Thursday

so features a baby feeding corner and a crèche where infants can be cared for and fed.

The CEO of JEEVIKA, Rahul Kumar, said, "Saras Mela is not new to the people of Bihar. It has become a household name today because it has something for everyone, including children, adults, art lovers, and students."

He added, "The absence of plastic is one of Saras Mela's most intriguing characteristics. To protect the environment, every entrepreneur will use jute bags instead of plastic ones. This small but significant action could have a far-reaching effect on reducing environmental pollution."

Meanwhile, women entrepreneurs who have set up stalls at Saras Mela thanked JEEVIKA for providing them with a platform to exhibit their skills to the world.

Sangeeta Devi, an entrepreneur from Madhubani, asserted, "I used to be confined to the four walls of my house, but now I am an entrepreneur. I will be eternally grateful to JEEVIKA."

### 15-DAY FAIR

interacted with the entrepreneurs, said, "The visitors will not be disappointed, as all products sold here are of the highest quality. The fair assists small entrepreneurs and JEEVIKA didis in establishing their identities and moving forward with confidence."

At this year's Saras Mela, which is based on the theme 'Empowerment through Entrepreneurship', visitors can choose from a wide selection of handicrafts, clothing, and home décor items. It has a food court where people can indulge in flavourful Bihari cuisine. Children can have fun in a kids' zone while art connoisseurs can enjoy folk art performances every day. The fair al-



**B**ank Sakhi Sushma providing banking services to underbanked Sushma Devi lives in Kako block of Jehanabad district. Sushma got married at the age of 18 years. However, her interest and determination towards study was supported by her husband and in-laws and she completed Masters in Arts (MA).

Sushma joined Chameli JEEVIKA self-help group (SHG) and in a couple of month time of her joining she got to know from her weekly SHG meeting about a vacancy of Bank Sakhi in Shakti VO. The role of Bank Sakhi excited Sushma and she applied for the position. After interview, she got selected to work as Bank Sakhi and was tagged with Dakshin Bihar Gramin Bank (DBGB).

Sushma received INR 75,000 of which INR 50,000 came as a zero-interest loan and INR 25,000 came as a grant given in certain instalments from Shakti VO. After her selection as Bank Sakhi, Sushma received three days of training from Indian Institute of Banking and Finance in Arwal district. It has been more than three years and Sushma has been able to carry the responsibility of Bank Sakhi very well. As Bank Sakhi, her daily transaction ranges from INR 2.5 Lakhs – INR 4 Lakh. Her services included savings bank account, insurance services such as -PMJJBY, PMSBY, PMAY, Suraksha yojana. She also does fixed deposit and recurring deposit for the DBGB bank.

Sushma earns commission from the bank based on the transactions done in a month. On an average she earns INR 12,000-INR 16,000 in a month.

Sushma says "JEEVIKA came as a life-changer for me, it gave me a platform from which I could get role of Bank Sakhi, which has transformed my life from home-maker to a working woman. Every day, I feel I am doing something meaningful and it gives me pride and purpose, all of which could have never happened if I haven't joined Chameli SHG".