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Ajeevika Saras Mela opened with a big note attracted a mammoth crowd

New Delhi: SARAS Ajeevika Mela is an initiative under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY – NRLM). The objective of the initiative is to bring the rural women SHGs – Self Help Groups under one platform. This is to help them show – case their

Jharkhand, Ilkal sarees from Karnataka, Chanderi sarees and Bagh print sarees from Madhya Pradesh, Paithani and silksarees from Maharashtra, Tasar and Banda sarees from Odisha, Kanchipuram sarees from Tamil Nadu, Pochampalli sarees from Telangana, Silk sarees from Uttar Pradesh,

Pashmina sarees from Uttrakhand, Katha stitched sarees, Batik print, Tenth and Baluchari sarees from West Bengal.

Handicraft, jewellery and home décor water hyacinth handbags and yoga mats from Assam, pearl jewellery from Andhra Pradesh, lac bangles from Bihar, Madhubani painting, Sikki crafts from Bihar, bell metal products from Chhattisgarh; mud mirror work and Dori

programmatic interventions such as - Patrakar Didi (rural women journalists), BC Sakhi (women banking correspondent) and a live performance by all SHG women's musical troupes Chendamalam from Kerala, Ghoomar from

Rajasthan, tribal dance and nukkad natak from Jharkhand, Cheraw (Bamboo dance) from Mizoram and Gidda from Punjab, as an integrated approach towards women empowerment, would also be show-cased.



The Minister of State for Rural Development, Sadhvi Niranjn Jyoti lighting the lamp to inaugurate the SARAS Ajeevika Mela-2019, at India Gate, in New Delhi on October 12, 2019. The Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Shri Amarjeet Sinha is also seen.

skills, sell their products and build linkages with buyers. Through the initiative the women will get exposure to understand the demand of urban customers.

The Mela is being organized by the CAPART – Council for Advancement of People's action and rural Technology, the marketing arm of the ministry of rural development. The Mela is to be organized in the lawns of India Gate between 10th October 2019 and 23rd October 2019. Over 200 stalls are to be set up. More than 500 SHG women from all over the country are participating. During the Mela the ministry has also planned to conduct workshops to sharpen the skills of the participating women in GST, marketing, e – marketing, product design, book keeping, etc.

Main attraction of the Mela in Handloom are the sarees Kalamkari (the ancient style of painting done on cotton or silk fabric. They are hand painted. Only natural dyes are used in the process. It involves 23 steps) from Andhra Pradesh, Cotton and silk sarees from Bihar, Kosa sarees from Chhattisgarh, Tasar silk and cotton sarees from

work from Gujarat; terracotta from Haryana, tribal jewellery from Jharkhand, Channapatna toys from Karnataka, Lamasa art products from Maharashtra, Sabai grass products, Patachitra on palm leave from Odisha, leather bags, wall hanging, lamp sheds from Telangana, home décor from Uttar Pradesh; Dokra craft, Sital patti and diversified products from West Bengal.

Natural food products natural spices and food products from Kerala, green products across states like spices, ginger, tea, pulses, rice, millets products, medical plants products, coffee, papad, apple jam, achar etc. would be available for sale.

Showstopper at the Mela would be the mouth-watering authentic delicacies from nearly 20 States, with a first of its kind food fest show-casing the diversity of India's ethnic cuisine, at the India Food Court, prepared and served by SHG members.

Another attraction of the Mela is the tamarind value chain from Jharkhand, portraying end-to-end journey right from plucking of tamarind, deseeding, cleaning and packaging to the final product on sale in the Demo Zone. Some of the



Experience Rural India's Unique Handicrafts at India Gate

SARAS AAJEEVIKA MELA

10th - 23rd October, 2019
India Gate Lawn, New Delhi
Time: 11:00 A.M. – 9.00 P.M.

Own the exquisite traditional art and handcrafted products made by rural women Self Help Groups and be a part of their success story.

A unique range of products on display and sale:
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Feast at the Ajeevika Food Court, India Gate Lawns....

The Ajeevika Saras Mela organized by the Ministry of Rural Development



Smt. R. Vimala, I.A.S.

at the India Gate Lawns has become the talk of the town in Delhi for more than one reason. Visits to the India Gate have become more colorful. And why not, when Delhiites have got the golden opportunity to witness the vibrancy of every state in India and take home their products or piece of art.

As a therapy, shopping never fails to uplift the mood of any individual. However feasting on good food does much more than that specially when we get to see and eat food which we have never neither heard of or got an opportunity to taste, even in the plush hotels of Delhi. The Ajeevika food court at the India Gate Lawns is certainly a gourmet's delight.

I had arrived from Mumbai for the inauguration of Ajeevika Saras on 12th October which happened to be Saturday, a day on which I fast. The aroma of various food items emerging from the food court made my mouth water and controlling my desire to eat was a challenge indeed. If not for the variety of juices and Nannari Special Sherbat from the stall by Kerala I would never have survived.

The next day on my visit with my father, brother and his family, I

more or less made up for the deprivation by gulping Thaleepith, Puranpoliche Mande, Misal Paav, Bhel and Batata Wada from Maharashtra. The 'assal' marathi flavour pepped my heart and gave me a good feeling. I had explored only Maharashtra food by now and was raring to discover food from other states. And so began my interesting journey in the Ajeevika food court.

I discovered that 18 states including Assam, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Goa, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra etc were participating.

The display board near the entrance skillfully informs the visitors about vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods available at the Ajeevika food court.

The well-known fares like Punjab's Makki di Roti and Sarson Da saag, Chole bhature or Rajasthan's Dal Halwa and Daal Baati Churma are there no doubt. Those who love to be safe with their food could also stick to Galauti Kebabs from Uttar Pradesh or the dosas from Karnataka.

My eyes however stopped at delicacies like Baajre ki Khichdi and coconut laddoos from Haryana. Being a vegetarian, Healthy Ragi momos from Jharkhand and Assam's - steamed Pitha and Mushroom special dishes as well as Sikkim's Sel roti caught my attention and their momos and chow mein are also popular. Tripura's Awan Bhutai is another delight.

Bihar's Litti Chokha reminded of my trip to Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh on election duty as observer where I had savoured this tasty dish for the

first time.

For the non-vegetarians there is a whole host of variety. To begin with Kerala's herbal chicken has become a favourite along with Chemeen fish curry. Goa's Chicken Xacuti and the Goan fish were attracting customers. Of course one can never get over the Hyderabad Dum Biryani from Telangana.

Uttarakhand groups are making Mandua Roti, Kafli, and Jhangore ki kheer.

Chattisgarh had Farah Chilla, Angakar Roti.

Thankfully for the groups from Telangana, Karnataka and Kerala it has become possible to realise that not only Idli Dosa but a variety of dishes were available in South India.

So Andhrapradesh has Pootharakulu, a rolled sweet and Sunnundallu, and Karnataka has Puliogare and Masoppu a green leafy vegetable made with daal.

I had to return to Mumbai today and not wanting to lose the opportunity I guzzled on Garadu Chaat, made from Yam, (Jimmy Kand or Suran) and Jalebis from Madhya Pradesh. Wanting to do justice to my home state Maharashtra, discarding my concerns on overeating, I also devoured a Zhunka Bhakri and Batata Wada.

My stomach may have been full but my heart was not satiated. Maharashtra has a variety of dishes like Thaalipeeth, Puranpoliche

Maande, Misal Paav and Paavbhaji.

The best part of the food festival are the earthly prices at which they are available. It is possible to eat a variety of food under one roof and that too without burning a hole in your pocket.

The Ajeevika Food Court managed by Kudumbashree is a sheer delight when it comes to management since it maintains the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene for cooking in the cooking area. Every person entering the cooking area wears a cap and apron and washes his or her hands. The drainage pipe line, the tap water provided for the same are well-planned. The cutlery used for serving is spick and span. The plates

used for serving are biodegradable and made by SHGs from Assam. The water dispensing machines help in avoiding indiscriminate use of plastic.

The Ajeevika Saras and Food Festival will be continuing at the India Gate Lawns till 23rd October. So pick up your shopping bags and once you have done with the Diwali shopping indulge your taste buds at the Ajeevika Food Court. I am sure like me, you will only come back for more....

Source: vimshine.blogspot.com

Smt. R. Vimala, I.A.S. is CEO- MSR-LM - Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission.

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Stall participants from Maharashtra

SHG NAME: SANSKRUTI CONTACT PERSON: UMA RAJENDRA NIKAM & SUNANDA ASHOK PHARANDE PHONE: 9637601801 ADDRESS: SATARA PRODUCT PROFILE: FOOD PRODUCTS (SPICES)	SHG NAME: DASHA MA CONTACT PERSON: MEENA PATIL & NITABAI PAWAR PHONE: 9404573408 ADDRESS: NANDURBAR PRODUCT PROFILE: FOOD PRODUCTS (ROASTED FOODS, GIR COW GHEE)
SHG NAME: VAISHNAVI CONTACT PERSON: VARSHA LANJEWAR & CHAYATAI LANJEWAR PHONE: 9765630504 ADDRESS: CHANDRAPUR PRODUCT PROFILE: FOOD PRODUCTS (BLACK RICE, RED RICE, PULSES)	SHG NAME: UDYOGINI CONTACT PERSON: LAXMI SHINDE GAYATRI BURE PHONE: 9326021362 ADDRESS: WARDHA PRODUCT PROFILE: FOOD PRODUCTS
SHG NAME: SHRI GANESH CONTACT PERSON: URMILA BORADE MANGAL BADHE PHONE: 8380829335 ADDRESS: NASHIK PRODUCT PROFILE: PAITHANI SAREES	SHG NAME: YASHASHVI CONTACT PERSON: MANDA YOGIRAJ PARATE & SHOBHA D DHARMIK PHONE: 8888486573, 9373732979 ADDRESS: BHANDARA PRODUCT PROFILE: SILK MATERIALS
SHG NAME: HIRKANI CONTACT PERSON: RANJANA KUCHEKAR & NITIN KUCHEKAR PHONE: 9767175638 ADDRESS: PUNE PRODUCT PROFILE: GHONGADI (SHEEP WOOL) CARPETS, YOGA MAT, SHAWLS	SHG NAME: SHARDA CONTACT PERSON: MANDA RAMDAS KINEKAR & SHAMLATA BARSAGADE PHONE: 9423977819 ADDRESS: GADCHIROLI PRODUCT PROFILE: FASHION ACCESSORIES (BAGS AND PURSES)
SHG NAME: RENUKA CONTACT PERSON: VIMAL JADHAV & NARMADA JADHAV PHONE: 7498486415 ADDRESS: AURANGABAD PRODUCT PROFILE: TERACOTTA JEWELLERY	SHG NAME: RADHAKRISHNA CONTACT PERSON: ULKA SHARMA SULAKSHANA SURYAVANSHI PHONE: 9421530799 ADDRESS: DHULE PRODUCT PROFILE: LAMASA ART (JEWELLERY AND HOME DÉCOR)



Shobha Bhausahab Sable and team are from the Nashik district of Maharashtra serving authentic vegetarian foods like the famous Vada Pav, Puran poli, Modhak, Misal, Usal and variety of Rotis made up of lentils and flour. A visit to the stall be a rewarding experience.

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Voices from the visitors & exhibitors



An Indian Navy commander and family of the view that this is the true Indian exhibition displaying the culture and cuisine together with diversity.



A student and teacher together at the exhibition- had a load of shopping and happy to see the neatly organised stalls and the food court.



Sanket Shekhar - the very best Cuisine & culture show. All are under one roof



The theme of the India food court is unity in diversity in which there are participants' presence from 19 states across the nation and diverse culinary experience one will throughout the exhibition. There is overwhelming response to the food court as well as the other stalls. The magnitude of the exhibitions is such an enormous that there are 500 stalls fully integrated under one roof in an air conditioned environment.

Anita Baghel - Director Ministry of Rural Development Govt. of India



Pramod Jagtap a PHD student at IIT Delhi- I like the entire settings and look forward to visit again I have purchased two Paitani sarees. I am a foody and look forward to the food section.



Kiran Sharma - A keen catalyst to the women empowerment and runs an NGO. I am keen to get associated many SHGS.



Afanan a businessman from South Delhi - I am glad to see the much awaited food and the natural fragrance emitting from the stalls. I am eager to hope into the food court.

Ranjana Kuchekar & Nitin Kuchekar from Pune have come up with a unique Ghongadi (Sheep Wool carpets, Yoga mats & Shawls) to welcome the winter season. The sales is gaining a huge momentum.



Paithani is a variety of sari, named after the Paithan town in Aurangabad Maharashtra state put up a stall at the Mela is one catching up fast.



Super senior citizens are seen actively engaged in the Mela with great zeal.



Lamasa is a clay like substance, made by mixing and heating commonly available ingredients, such as corn flour. It is used to create flowers, figures and objects such as paper clips, pencil caps, napkin holders, decorative, jewelry and tumblers.

One of most fast selling products at a competitive rate structure made these artisans name and fame as well as money. The team is finding it difficult to match the demand supply. The team confirms that they did not go for any formal training to create this art.

#SARASmeinHUM.....Ajeevika Saras Mela at India Gate Lawns, New Delhi

New Delhi Saras, means excellent, the best, something very nice or beautiful. Ajeevika is NRLM's



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flagship programme promoting sustainable livelihoods through community based organizations. Ajeevika Saras is the signature event hosted by the Ministry of Rural Development, Rural Livelihoods Division and CAPART at the India Gate Lawns, New Delhi for marketing the products made by SHG women from all over India.

About eight years ago, the Ministry of Rural Development realised that lakhs of rural households remained under poverty due to social inhibitions and the lack of

opportunities. It therefore came up with a programme namely the National Rural Livelihoods Mission which brought in the concept of inclusive growth through social inclusion. This became the largest programme of poverty eradication through social development.

Financial inclusion, Economic Inclusion and Sustainable Livelihoods followed Social inclusion and became the four pillars of the mission. The scheme brought rural women into focus by creating self help groups of women to facilitate their empowerment. Till date more than six crore women all over India are a part of this mission which has grown by leaps and bounds during the last 5 years. It has led to the creation of entrepreneurs producing a variety of products ranging from food and food products to handicrafts and handlooms. Providing markets to them became the next important step leading to Saras Melas all

over the country.

Ajeevika Saras is the mother of all Saras Melas and provides a market at the national level to all SHGs. This time in its renewed avatar at the India Gate Lawns, the Ajeevika Saras proudly presents the fruits of labour of the SHGs from the twenty-nine states and nine union territories of India. So from Tamil Nadu in the south to Uttarkhand and Jammu and Kashmir in the North, from Gujarat and Maharashtra in the west to West Bengal and Orissa in the east, and the seven sisters of the North-east one will find exclusive products from every state and union territory at the Ajeevika Saras Mela.

From connoisseurs of art to lovers of textile, from health food freaks to organic shoppers Ajeevika Saras is a haven which unfolds itself in all its glory. It has 500 stalls in the two air-conditioned halls. There are interesting add ons like the puppet show,

magic show, one-man music orchestra, kids play zone, street food stalls. Meticulously planned with sufficient space for easy movement the organizers have been very thoughtful and even made arrangements of a feeding room for lactating mothers. As I meandered through the stalls I realised that Diwali shopping could never have been more easy and interesting.

There are host of mouthwatering delicacies from every state of the country at the Ajeevika Food Court to energize you after shopping The interesting and authentic cuisines made with a generous dose of love by the SHG women from every state is a delight for gourmet lovers. So shop till you drop and eat till you burp.

The cultural shows planned in the evenings are another highlight. The inauguration of the Saras at the hands of the Hon'ble Minister of State of Rural Develop-

ment, Saadhvi Niranjan Jyoti in the presence of Hon'ble Secretary for Rural Development, Mr. Amarjeet Sinha, Additional Secretary, Ms. Alka Upadhyay, and Joint Secretary, Ms. Leena Johri reached a crescendo with performances by SHG women of Mizoram doing the Cheraw, Bamboo dance. The energetic Singhi Chham or the Lion Dance of Sikkim left us mesmerised and transported us to a different world.

As Additional Secretary, Ms. Alka Upadhyay, rightly pointed out this is an exhibition which everyone could identify oneself with and feel it is their own. So come to Ajeevika Saras and rediscover yourself , #SARASmeinHUM, you will have so much to explore....

Source: vimshine.blogspot.com
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Special attraction from the State of Maharashtra



Pranoti Padamake Bhosle Ratnagiri Rajapur, Maharashtra is a pioneer in non vegetarian food prepared in the typical Maharashtrian style with a pinch of special masala invented by her. She is happy that from the day one she is getting good orders and the specialised fish items are in great demand. Often she runs out of stock on an average she makes a billing of Rs. 35000.

The Varsha Lanjewar headed Vaishnavi SHG is with an innovation to provide baked pulsus for healthy and nutritious food for snack or main course.



Udyogini an SHG headed by Laxmi Shinde are pioneered in the food produces supply and largely focus on Papads and easy to fry and eat type of products. Have exhausted the stock and waiting for the new lot to come. Overall experience is extremely well.

The Sanskruti SHG is focus on food products, specialised into spices, the team assures that they use only organic products, hence the sale is at its peak. Team thanked the organisers for the error free arrangements.



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