



Ministry of Rural Development Brings National SARAS Mela 2026 to Vijayawada for the First Time outside Delhi-NCR, in Collaboration with Andhra Pradesh Government

National SARAS Mela 2026 to Bring 1,500+ Women Entrepreneurs from 30+ States and UTs to Vijayawada

Hon'ble President of India H.E. Smt. Droupadi Murmu to Inaugurate National SARAS Mela 2026 in Vijayawada on 15 October

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Vijayawada, 12 October 2026: Vijayawada is set to become a vibrant showcase of India's rural enterprise and women-led entrepreneurship as the **Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, in collaboration with the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Andhra Pradesh, brings the first National SARAS Mela 2026 to the city.**



Scheduled from **13 to 31 October 2026** at **Punnami Ghat, Vijayawada**, the Mela will bring together 1500+ women from Self-Help Groups across **30+ States and Union Territories**, creating a platform where rural enterprises, traditional crafts, regional cuisines and entrepreneurial stories come together. The event will be inaugurated by the Hon'ble President of India, H.E Smt. Droupadi Murmu.

विजयवाड़ा, बस 1 दिन का इंतजार और! 🛍️ ✨ हस्तशिल्प व हथकरघा उत्पादों, स्वादिष्ट व्यंजनों और सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रमों का महासंगम सरस आजीविका मेला होने वाला है शुरू आइए #Swadeshi और आत्मनिर्भरता के इस उत्सव का मिलकर मनाएं जश्न #MoRD #DAYNRLM #SarasMeinHum #SarasAajeevikaMela #SarasAajeevikaMela2026 #SarasVijayawada #WomenEmpowerment #LakhpatiDidi

— Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India (@MoRD_GoI) October 12, 2026

The inauguration ceremony will be attended by Shri S. Abdul Nazeer, Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh, and Shri Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, with Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Rural Development, and Shri Konidala Pawan Kalyan, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, joins them, along with Union Ministers of State Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani (Rural Development and Communications), Shri Kamlesh Paswan (Rural Development) and Shri Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma (Heavy Industries and Steel). The Government of Andhra Pradesh is further represented by Shri Kondapalli Srinivas, Minister of MSME, SERP,

NRI Empowerment and Relations, and Shri Satya Kumar Yadav, Minister of Health, Family Welfare and Medical Education, with Shri Kesineni Sivanadh, Member of Parliament, including Shri Rohit Kansal, IAS, Secretary, Department of Rural Development. Their presence underlines the importance of strengthening rural livelihoods, promoting women-led entrepreneurship and creating sustainable market opportunities for Self-Help Group (SHG) women.

Aligned with the Government of India's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) and the Prime Minister's vision of creating 6 crore Lakhpati Didis by 2029, the Mela, along with SARAS Aajeevika Gallery and the eSARAS digital platform, provides women entrepreneurs with opportunities to showcase their traditional crafts, access wider markets and connect with consumers across India and beyond. These initiatives help women from rural areas to transform their skills into sustainable enterprises, strengthen their incomes and achieve financial independence.

The National SARAS Mela begins on 13th October with a formal inauguration on 15th October at 11:30 AM and takes place alongside the Dasara Sharannavaratri Utsavams and Vijayawada Utsav 2.0.

Visitors can look forward to regional artistry including Phulkari from Punjab, Pashmina from Jammu & Kashmir, Ikat and Telia textiles from Telangana, and Paunchei from Mizoram, alongside intricate handicrafts such as Meenakari, Dokra, brasswork, woodcraft, traditional paintings, alongside regional delicacies and home-style cuisines from across the country. The Mela works as a marketplace where women from Self-Help groups sell directly to customers, build buyer connections and take their products to wider markets, including through the eSARAS platform.

A significant focus of the Mela will be the **Lakhpati Didi Pavilion**, which will bring alive the journey of women moving from skills and collective participation towards enterprise, market access, sustainable income supported by institutions to enable socio-economic empowerment. The pavilion will also allow visitors to hear directly from the women behind these journeys.

The collaboration also extends beyond showcasing products. Through the **Knowledge Pavilion**, participating women will interact with corporates, industry experts and organisations in areas including branding, marketing, packaging, business development and market expansion. The **Convergence Pavilion** will further connect women with relevant government departments, ministries and institutions supporting the growth of their enterprises.

Visitors can experience live craft demonstrations at the **Demo Pavilion**, watching handlooms being woven and handicrafts taking shape before their eyes, discover regional cuisines and enjoy cultural programmes celebrating the strength and entrepreneurial spirit of rural India. Standing tall at National SARAS Mela 2026, will be a 16-foot signature installation, called "SHAKTI - The Spirit of Lakhpati Didi" symbolising the collective power of millions of women who are preserving India's rich craftsmanship while transforming their skills into livelihoods, independence and prosperity. This first National SARAS Mela is supported by various government partners including NABARD and NIRDPR. The food court will bring together delicacies across the country through 50 food stalls.

At its heart, the National SARAS Mela is about the **women behind every product, craft and enterprise**, and the journey from *skill to enterprise, enterprise to market, and market to sustainable livelihood*.

Prabhat Upadhyay

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