

## Bhuiyan Jimmewari aur Jatan





## MESSAGE FROM HONORABLE VICE CHANCELLOR MGUVV :

A Vision for Community-Centered Transformation

Dr. Ravi R. Saxena, Vice Chancellor of MGUVV - horticulture university in Chhattisgarh, delivered the address that anchored the day's events with wisdom and foresight. In his remarks, he lauded the grassroots spirit of Bhuiyan - Jimmewari aur Jatan, acknowledging the invaluable role of community-led innovation in driving sustainable change.

#### **Key Insights**

"As academicians and scientists, we often theorize from labs and classrooms, but real innovation is happening in the fields of Kabirdham, led by the very hands that till the land." This event exemplifies how institutions, communities, and government can come together to restore both landscapes and livelihoods. Dr. Saxena emphasized the urgent need to bridge the gap between technological advancements and rural realities. He called for training rural youth and women as paraprofessionals, leveraging university resources to build local capacity. He stressed that transformation is not solely the result of policy but the cumulative impact of learning, leadership, and local ownership.'

#### **Encouragement for Grassroots Initiatives**

He concluded with a note of encouragement: "Agricon and Samerth are showing us that when grassroots organizations lead with empathy and expertise, they become the true engines of development. Today, we witnessed not just hope – but a working model of how restoration, innovation, and inclusion can go hand in hand."

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#### **Messages from :**

"Bhuiyan - Jimmewari aur Jatan was a testament to the power of community, culture, and collaboration. As we reflect on the journey of our farmers and women leaders, we realize that sustainable change doesn't come from outside—it grows from within. This event reminded us that innovation doesn't require sophisticated labs—it can sprout from rural fields, fueled by local knowledge and care. We at CAS are committed to walking hand-in-hand with our communities to build a greener, more inclusive tomorrow." Mr. Manas Banerjee,

Secretary, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti (CAS)



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The vision of Bhuiyan aligns closely with our mission at Commonland – to restore landscapes through the 4 Returns: Inspiration, Social Capital, Natural Capital, and Financial Capital. Seeing communities take ownership of their land, voices, and future is deeply inspiring. The spirit of responsibility and persistent effort, reflected in 'Jimmewari aur Jatan', shows us that global goals of restoration are achievable only when local communities lead the way. It's a privilege for Commonland to support such meaningful, community-rooted action."

Mrs. Harma Rademaker, Commonlands Foundation, Netherlands

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"At Samerth, we have always believed in the strength and wisdom of communities. Bhuiyan was not just a celebration, it was a moment of realization that restoration is not an external intervention, but a collective inner strength. Watching women speak with confidence, farmers showcasing their innovations, and youth taking pride in their culture gave us a glimpse into a future shaped by courage and compassion. This journey of 'Jimmewari aur Jatan' is only the beginning—and we are proud to walk it together."

Mrs. Gazala Paul, Managing Trustee, Samerth Charitable Trust

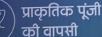
## A DAY OF COLLECTIVE ACTION AND CELEBRATION

Kabirdham witnessed an extraordinary confluence of tradition, innovation, and community empowerment at the event "Bhuiyan - Jimmewari aur Jatan" (Responsibility and Care). Jointly hosted by Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti (CAS) and Samerth Charitable Trust, this vibrant gathering brought together over 400 individuals – including farmers, women leaders, youth, experts, artists, and development practitioners – in a celebration that was as reflective as it was forward-looking.

While Bhuiyan was the focal point of the event, the day also coincided with International Women's Day, adding a meaningful layer of celebration to honor the immense contributions of rural women in agriculture, environment, and community building. The dual significance of the day – rooted in action and recognition – made the occasion even |

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## **A GROUNDING MESSAGE:** The Spirit of 'Koshish'

Mr. Krishna Shrinivasan, State Lead of Samerth Charitable Trust, commenced the event with a heartfelt message on the importance of collective responsibility. He reminded the gathering that while promises may fade, consistent effort ('koshish') is what transforms lives and landscapes. His words resonated deeply: "We are here not because we're waiting for change, but because we are the ones who will create it."

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## **THROUGH THEIR EYES:** Visual Testimonies from PRERAK

Ms. Akansha Choudhary, Programme Coordinator at Samerth, introduced the audience to the powerful storytelling initiative, PRERAK. For over a month, the team engaged more than 800 participants from 30 villages to document their realities and perspectives through photography. The resulting 1,500 images weren't just snapshots; they were collective memories and aspirations – capturing the essence of four returns: Inspiration, Natural Return, Social Return, and Financial Return.

PRERAK played a pivotal role in demystifying and grounding the concept of the 4 Returns for local communities. By inviting them to visually interpret and engage with these abstract ideas through their own lived experiences, PRERAK enabled villagers to see how their everyday actions contribute to broader goals of sustainability and restoration. It served as a powerful pedagogical tool, blending creativity, reflection, and participation to deepen understanding and ownership of landscape restoration.

Images of barren fields sat alongside lush green patches, weathered hands sowing seeds next to proud women holding saplings. This photo exhibition transcended language, communicating the silent yet powerful voices of resilience and agency from the ground.



## **KAVIR LAB:** A Model for Ground-Up Innovation

"Namaste, Jai Johar! Today isn't just Women's Day — it's a day of change," declared Ms. Manisha Motwani, program coordinator CAS - as she introduced the KAVIR Lab. "The lab is not just a facility — it's a transformative ecosystem for bio-inputs production and community empowerment."

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Built on two foundational pillars the Bio-inputs Lab and the Participatory Action Lab - KAVIR Lab empowers local farmers, particularly women, to produce organic inputs using microbial solutions. Manisha narrated the inspiring journey of 50 KAVIR Sakhis - women who overcame hesitation and embraced science with open arms. They are now skilled in handling microbial cultures and creating natural alternatives to chemical fertilizers, fostering both ecological and economic resilience.

The Participatory Action Lab, meanwhile, functions as a dynamic space where farmers meet to troubleshoot problems, innovate solutions, and learn from each other's experiences. AND A key component integrated into this space is Social and Behavior Change (SBC), which fosters critical entrenched social dialoque on norms and practices affecting agriculture, health, environment, and gender equity. Through participatory tools like community mapping, role plays, and open dialogues, the lab promotes reflection and collective decision-making, enabling communities to adopt sustainable practices not just in their fields but in their daily lives as well.

## **CULTURE AS RESISTANCE:** Baiga Nritya and Connection to Land

The rhythmic drumming and dancing of the Palak Baiga Nritya Group served as a potent reminder of the deep-rooted connection between tribal communities and nature. Their performance was more than just an artistic expression – it was a declaration of identity and resistance, a visual embodiment of ancestral wisdom and spiritual harmony with the land.

Each beat of the drum echoed centuries of co-existence with forests and rivers, each twirl conveyed the story of survival through changing seasons, and every coordinated movement carried forward the collective memory of the Baiga tribe. By performing their traditional dance on this platform, the group affirmed their cultural sovereignty and emphasized the importance of safeguarding indigenous heritage as a pathway to ecological restoration.

In a world increasingly distanced from its roots, their performance became an act of resistance – against erasure, marginalization, and environmental degradation. It reminded the audience that culture is not static or ceremonial; it is alive, adaptive, and crucial in nurturing the values that underpin sustainable living. The Baiga dance stood as a living testimony that cultural expression can powerfully influence movements for environmental justice, land rights, and community resilience.

## **TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEYS:** The Community's Voice

The event featured a powerful storytelling session titled "Voices of Change, "which brought to the fore heartfelt narratives of ordinary individuals who have become extraordinary change-makers through collective strength, learning, and resilience.

Omprakash Chandrakar, a smallholder farmer, shared how "KAVIR" became a bridge that connected him to vital knowledge, peers, and new farming techniques. "Earlier, we worked alone, isolated in our struggles. But through the KAVIR Kisan group, we now share ideas and grow together like a family."

Kunti Bai, speaking from the stage for the first time in her life, described how she and a group of village women took initiative to start a nursery. "We didn't know how to begin, but we learned together. Today, it's more than just plants – it's our symbol of self-reliance."

Fagni Meshram, part of the Maa Saraswati Self-Help Group, recalled their humble beginnings with a few goats. Today, with 18 goats and a vision for breeding, she proudly declared, "We're no longer just farmers. We're entrepreneurs."

Sunita Chandravanshi emphasized frugality as a path to empowerment. "I began a kitchen garden, and soon other women joined. We realized that saving money through homegrown food is as powerful as earning it."



Kunti Bai

Sunita Chandravanshi

**Omprakash Chandrakar** 

Fagni Meshram

Vijay Merawi expressed how his perspective shifted through the KAVIR initiative. "I used to think hard work would always go unnoticed. But knowledge and support helped me realize I could lead change – not just for myself, but for my entire village."

Ballu Singh Baiga envisioned a return to traditional livelihoods through lac cultivation. "This isn't just income – it's about reviving our culture and becoming self-sufficient as Baiga people." Dukalha Chandravanshi explained how his mindset around agriculture transformed. "Earlier I followed what I was taught. Now, with improved techniques, my field thrives – and so does my confidence."

Bhagwat Chandrakar connected soil health to human well-being. "Healthy land means healthy people. What we grow is what we become."

Each narrative offered a rich tapestry of change – not just material improvements, but psychological empowerment, identity, and agency. These were not stories of aid, but of awakening – proof that when communities are given space, knowledge, and trust, they become architects of their own future of how information, support, and self-belief could trigger lasting change.



Dukalha Chandravanshi

**Ballu Singh Baiga** 

Vijay Merawi

**Bhagwat Chandrakar** 

## ISHA JHAWAR'S ENTREPRENEURIAL INSPIRATION

Young entrepreneur Isha Jhawar, founder of Repeat Gud, reflected on how the COVID-19 pandemic compelled her to rethink food systems. Her business was born out of necessity – to reconnect with traditional, healthier foods. She spoke candidly about her struggles, from facing self-doubt to navigating government systems, and emphasized the importance of innovation rooted in cultural wisdom.

"Innovation isn't about building something new – it's also about improving what already exists," she concluded, urging youth to find purpose in solving existing problems.





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## **PANEL DISCUSSIONS:**

### Tapping into Collective Intelligence Voices from the Panelists

Each panelist left the audience with a resonant message:

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The forest is our identity, our economy, and our future - it's time we see it as our responsibility too.

Mr. Shashi Kumar, DFO Kabirdham





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Let's reconnect our children with nature, early restoration starts with love and learning.

Mr. Shekhar Kolipaka, Landscape Developer

Real change comes when we Convene, Catalyze, and Converge – communities must lead with clarity and collaboration.

Mr. Abhishek Singh, SBC Specialist, UNICEF





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Our land doesn't need chemicals, it needs care – and farmers already have all it takes to heal it.

Dr. Sanket Thakur, Agricultural Scientist and Organic Farming Practitioner

Let's combine grassroots wisdom with engineering innovations to scale sustainable solutions.

Dr. Govardhan Bhatt, Asst. Professor, NIT Raipur



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Technology is the bridge – but people are the drivers. Precision agriculture must be accessible, affordable, and human-centered.

Mr. Vishnu Vaibhav Dwivedi, CTO Innovation & Tehnology Foundation, IIT Bhialai



# THE EVENT FEATURED THREE CRITICAL PANEL DISCUSSIONS:

#### Panel 1: Connecting with the Ecosystem

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Moderated by Mr. Manas Banerjee and Mr. Krishna Shrinivasan, this session brought together Mr. Shashi Kumar, Mr. Shekhar Kolipaka, and Mr. Abhishek Singh. The discussions addressed challenges such as youth engagement, knowledge convergence, and building sustainable agricultural ecosystems.

#### Highlights included:

o framework – Convene, Catalyze, Converge – to drive community movements.

- Examples of ecotourism as a livelihood option through homestays and birdwatching in **शिल्डा बुर्धकड्** डिवीजनल फ़ॉरेस्ट ऑफ़िसर, लैंडस्केप डेवलपर इंडिया, सामाजिक व्यवहार परिवर्तन

- Calls to revive interest in indigenous products like Bodla honey and reduce forest fires through community collaboration.

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#### Panel 2: Technology and Sustainability

Panelists Dr. Ravi R. Saxena, Dr. Sanket Thakur, Dr. Govardhan Bhatt, and Mr. Vishnu Vaibhav Dwivedi discussed the intersection of technology, traditional knowledge, and natural resource conservation.

Key takeaways:

- The urgent need for para-professional training at panchayat level.
- Promotion of direct sowing and biogas use.

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- Introduction of Ar and IoT-based soil sensors for precision agriculture. चीफ प्रौद्योगिक ऑफिस्मर स्थित इंजीनियरिंग विभाग, एवं अध्येयता, मध्यरत दर्शन
- En phasis on human data and behavioral change as cornerstones of effective technology integration.

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**डॉ. गोवर्धन भट्ट** असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर, सिकिल इंजीनियरिंग विभाग, एक्साईटी राष्ट्रपर

**डॉ. संकेत ठाकुर** प्रसिद्ध कृषि वैज्ञानिक एवं अध्येयता, मध्यरत दर्शन

## Panel 3: Community Development and support from Government Departments

Moderated by Team members of CAS & Samerth – Mr. Deepak Bagri and Mr. Deepak Biswas, this session focused on sustaining community efforts beyond project timelines. This panel featured Dr. B.P. Tripathi (Senior Scientist, KVK Kawardha), Smt. Kritika Singh (CDPO, Dashrangpur), and Dr. N. Sarang (Associate Professor, College of Fishery).

**Insights included:** 

- Training women through Anganwadi as agricultural mobilizers.

- Promoting fisheries as viable alternative livelihoods with government support.

- Advocating for community ownership of knowledge as the key to sustainability. बरिन्द वैनानिक, कषि महाविद्यालय कवीर्थ्यामा महाविद्यालय कवीर्थ्यामा

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## **CULTURAL PERFORMANCES:**

**Celebrating Women's Voices** 

The stage came alive with color, emotion, and power as the young girls from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Awasiy Vidyalaya performed a breathtaking dance drama. It wasn't just a cultural segment it was an evocative tribute to the strength, resilience, and untold sacrifices of women.

Through expressive choreography and deeply symbolic storytelling, the girls portrayed the many avatars of women in their communities: caregivers, farmers, educators, decision-makers, and warriors of change.

Their performance took the audience through a journey from dawn to dusk, from sowing seeds to cooking meals, from nurturing families to standing at the frontlines of environmental protection. Each movement and gesture echoed the theme that women are not only participants in rural life – they are its pillars. The girls, many of whom are first-generation learners, confidently took the stage and embodied the power of generations of women who came before them. Their dance transcended art and became a call to recognize women not just as contributors, but as leaders of restoration and regeneration. The applause that followed was not just for their talent, but for the stories they carried of invisible labor, quiet strength, and emerging leadership.

This performance perfectly mirrored the spirit of Bhuiyan a space where women's voices were not only heard but gloriously celebrated. It served as a living reminder that when we empower girls today, we empower entire communities for generations to come. Young girls

> staged a powerful dance-drama portraying the everyday heroism of rural women. From nurturing families to leading farming initiatives, their performance mirrored the spirit of Bhuiyan resilience, transformation, and leadership.

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## **LEARNING IN ACTION:** Thematic Stalls and Engagement Zones

The event was enriched with interactive experiences designed to turn learning into actio

#### **PRERAK Photo Exhibition**:

Celebrating community storytellers and visual learners.

Swap the Roles: A Gender Perspective: Activities where men cooked and women used tools, deconstructing gender stereotypes. **Invisible Allies:** Know Your Microbes: Microscopic soil world displays highlighting the role of beneficial microbes.

The Carbon Coin: Turning Emissions into Earnings: Gamified introduction to carbon credits and sustainable farming incentives.

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Mind Matters: Mental Health & Well-being: Mental health awareness activities using games, art, and reflection.

Kavir Kisan: Harvesting Change: Before-and-after displays showing the tangible impacts of collective farming.

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#### **Nurturing Young Minds:**

Eco-based activities, STEM water testing, and tribal art to encourage sustainability from a young age.

#### **Natural Resource**

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#### **Management and Human**

Values: Sustainable Land, Water, and Livelihood Practices, communities harmonizing natural resource management.

## **CLOSING REFLECTIONS:**

A Commitment to the Future

Mr. Rajnish Awasthi, President of CAS, concluded the event with a powerful and heartfelt reflection that captured the essence of Bhuiyan - Jimmewari aur Jatan.

"What we witnessed today is more than a gathering – it is a movement. From the stories of transformation to the innovations led by women and youth, from the cultural tributes to the knowledge shared in panel discussions – every moment was a reaffirmation of our shared commitment to responsibility and care.

As President of Agricon, I am deeply humbled and proud of the way our communities have come together. This event is proof that when the spirit of 'Jimmewari aur Jatan' is embraced, the possibilities are endless. Let us carry this spirit forward – not just in our fields and forests, but in our everyday actions. Because true change begins when we believe in our people, our land, and our ability to nurture both."

Mr. Awasthi closed the event with a heartfelt vote of thanks: "Today, we didn't just talk – we built something. A foundation of solidarity, action, and hope."



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## **CONCLUSION:** Bhuiyan as a Movement

"Bhuiyan - Jimmewari aur Jatan" transcended the bounds of an event – it became a living movement. Grounded in local wisdom, energized by innovation, and fueled by collective action, it provided a roadmap for sustainable development rooted in justice, equality, and ecological balance.

As the sun set over Kabirdham, what remained was not just memories, but a palpable shift – a belief that the future of the land lies in the hands of those who care for it the most: its people.



## **MEDIA COVERAGE:**

**FH** epaper.haribhoomi.com Raipur Sanskardhani Bhoomi - 10 Mar 2025 - Page 6

## भुइयां जिम्मेवारी व जतन कार्यक्रम का आयोजन सतत कृषि और पर्यावरण संरक्षण पर हुआ व्यापक संवाद



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छत्तीसगढ एग्रीकॉन समिति और समर्थ चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से आयोजित भुइयां जिम्मेवारी और जतन कार्यक्रम का सफल आयोजन श्याम पैलेस, कवर्धा में हआ। इस आयोजन में चार सौ से अधिक लोगों की भागीदारी रही। कार्यक्रम का मुख्य उद्देश्य 4 रिटर्न्स फ्रेमवर्क के तहत समुदाय नेतृत्व और समावेशी भूदृश्य पुनर्स्थापन (लैंडस्केप रेस्टोरेशन) पर संवाद को प्रोत्साहित करना था।

कार्यक्रम में कृषि, पर्यावरण और सामाजिक क्षेत्रों के कई प्रतिष्ठित विशेषज्ञ एवं अतिथि उपस्थित थें। इनमें प्रमुख रूप से डॉ आर रवि सक्सेना (कुलपति एमजीयूवीवी),

शशि कुमार (डीएफओ, कवर्धा), विष्णू वैभव द्विवेदी (सीटीओ, आईआईटी भिलाई), डॉ गोवर्धन भट्ट (सहायक प्रोफेसर, एनआईटी रायपुर), अभिषेक सिंह (एसबीसी विशेषज्ञ, यूनिसेफ), डॉ एन सारंग (एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर, फिशरीज कॉलेज कवर्धा), अखिलेश दुबे (सहायक कृषि निदेशक, कवर्धा), डॉ शुभा बनर्जी (सहायक प्रोफेसर, आईजीकेवी), हरमा राडेमेकर और शेखर कोलिपाका (कॉमनलैंड, नीदरलैंड्स), ईशा झावर (सीईओ, रिपीट गुड) और डॉ संकेत ठाकुर (कृषि वैज्ञानिक एवं शोधकर्ता) शामिल थे। कार्यक्रम में सतत कृषि, जल एवं पर्यावरण संरक्षण, महिला सशक्तिकरण और सामुदायिक विकास जैसे महत्वपूर्ण विषयों पर और सामुदायिक भागीदारी की पैनल चर्चाएं आयोजित की गईं। विशेषज्ञों ने टिकाऊ कृषि, जलवायु अनुकूलन, कार्बन क्रेडिट और सामुदायिक नेतृत्व पर चर्चा की। कार्यक्रम के अंत में डॉ. रवि आर. सक्सेना ने अपने समापन भाषण में सतत कृषि, महिला संशक्तिकरण

आवश्यकता को रेखांकित किया। रजनीश अवस्थी (अध्यक्ष, छत्तीसगढ एग्रीकान समिति) ने सभी प्रतिभागियों और अतिथियों का धन्यवाद ज्ञापन किया। कार्यक्रम का संचालन कविता लांझी और दीपाली ने किया।

#### कवीर लैब का उद्घाटन जैव-इनपुट उत्पादन में नवाचार की दिशा में बडा कदम

कार्यक्रम के बौरान कवीर लैब का उदघाटन किया गया. जो जैव-इनपट उत्पादन के लिए एक बायोटेकोलॉजी लैब, बायोफर्टिलाइजर उत्पादन प्रशिक्षण केंद्र, मुदा परीक्षण प्रयोगशाला और व्यवहार प्रयोग शाला को मिलाकर तैयार की गई है। यह लेब किसानों को जैविक खेती से जोडने, मुढा स्वास्थ्य में सुधार और कृषि पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को मजबूत करने के लिए नवाचार और ज्ञान प्रसार का एक महत्वपूर्ण केंद्र बनेगी।

#### बैगा नृत्य और परिवर्तन की कहानियां बनीं आकर्षण का केंद्र

कार्यक्रम में पलक बैगा नृत्य समूह द्वारा पारंपरिक बैगा नृत्य प्रस्तुत किया गया, जिसने आदिवासी समुदायों के प्रकृति से गहरे जुडाव को दर्शाया। इसके बाद ओमप्रकाश चंद्रांकर, कुंती बाई, फगनी मसराम, सुनीता चंद्रवंशी, विजय मेरावी, ढुकलहा चंद्रवशी, बल्लू सिंह बैगा और भागवत चंद्राकर ने अपनी परिवर्तनकारी कहानियां साझा कीं, जो 4 रिटर्न्स मॉडल के प्रभाव को दर्शाती हैं।

#### महिला सशक्तिकरण पर विशेष प्रस्तुति

कार्यक्रम के दौरान कस्तूरबा आदिवासी विद्यालय कवर्धा की छात्राओं द्वारा महिला संश्वितकरण पर आधारित गृत्य नाटिक प्रस्तुत को गई। इस प्रस्तुति ने वामीण महिलाओं को सामाजिक और आर्थिक भागोदारी को उजागर किया।







