

OUAT Farmers' Fair – 2026 Celebrates Women Agriculture Entrepreneurs and Advanced Agriculture

Today's farmer is not just a farmer but an agri-entrepreneur- Dy CM Shri Singh Deo



Bhubaneswar, March 20, 2026: The Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) hosted the OUAT Farmers' Fair – 2026, focusing on "Women Agri-Entrepreneur." Deputy Chief Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Energy, Pro-Chancellor of OUAT Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo inaugurated the event, highlighting the transformation of traditional agriculture into smart agriculture, making farmers agri-entrepreneurs.

Dy CM Shri Singh Deo praised Odisha's production growth, thanking farmers for their contributions. FARD Minister Shri Gokulnand Mallick emphasized women's empowerment through mixed farming.

Commissioner-cum- Secretary of Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment Department Shri Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav said that developed agriculture is the cornerstone of developed India. 50 percent of its participants are women. OUAT Vice Chancellor Dr. Parvat Raul highlighted the success of OUAT. Dean Extension Professor Prasannajit Mishra, Professor Niranjan Panda was prominently present.

The fair honored women farmers, showcased innovations, and released books on agricultural technologies. Three books for the benefit of farmers, 'Chasira Sansar', 'Compendium on Agricultural Technologies', 'Cost of Cultivation of important crops' prepared by scientists of the university, were released. Similarly, various AICRP projects of OUAT were given achievement awards for excellent performance in various fields. With over 15 stalls and participation from various colleges, the event promoted agricultural entrepreneurship and advanced practices.

Odisha's Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife Recommends Six Vital Irrigation and Drinking Water Projects

Bhubaneswar, 20 March, 2026: The 12th meeting of the Standing Committee of the State Board for Wildlife was held today at the Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department's conference hall in Kharvel Bhawan, under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Forest, Environment & Climate Change and Labour & Employees State Insurance, Odisha, Shri Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia. This specialized com-

mittee operates under the mandate of Section 6(A) of the Wildlife (Protection) (Amendment) Act, 2022, which was established to ensure that matters concerning wildlife conservation and essential regional development are examined with greater frequency and technical rigor. During the session, the committee reviewed a total of six development proposals, three of which are centered on transformative irrigation

infrastructure. These projects, located within the Angul and Mayurbhanj districts, are designed to provide assured irrigation facilities to rural agricultural hubs. By stabilizing water access for local farmers, these initiatives are expected to serve as a cornerstone for the socio-economic upliftment of the surrounding village populations, bridging the gap between environmental stewardship and rural prosperity.



The remaining three proposals addressed the critical need for public health infrastructure through safe drinking water supply projects. These initiatives specifically target remote settlements located within the Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary, Simlipal Wildlife Sanctuary and the Chandaka Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary, as well as their adjoining villages. Following a period of detailed discussion and deliberation, the committee officially recommended all six proposals for approval by the Chairman of the State Board for Wildlife, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha. Once cleared by the Chief Minister, these projects will be forwarded to the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife, Government of India, for final consideration and onward transmission.

The meeting was attended by MLA (Bhatli) Shri Irasis Acharya, Principal Secretary, Forest, Environment and Climate Change department, Odisha, Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Sharma, PCCF and Head of Forest Force Dr. K. Murugesan, PCCF (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden Shri Prem Kumar Jha, along with other committee members of the council who participated in the discussions.

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1,174 kg of Pride: Odisha Sets Guinness Record for serving Largest Serving of Fermented Rice (Pakhala)



Bhubaneswar, 20/03/2026: Tourism Department has achieved a historic global milestone by securing a Guinness World Record for the Largest Serving of Fermented Rice (Pakhala), with an impressive total of 1,174 kilograms prepared and presented in a single vessel. This remarkable feat not only celebrates Odisha's rich culinary heritage but also brings international recognition to

Pakhala, an iconic traditional dish deeply embedded in the State's culture and everyday life. The achievement marks a significant moment in positioning Odisha's indigenous food traditions on the global map, showcasing how Pakhala Bhat has evolved from a humble local staple to a symbol of cultural pride with worldwide relevance.

Mutual Respect for Traditions Strengthens Nation, Says Governor at Bihar Foundation Day



Bhubaneswar, March 22: Odisha Governor Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati on Sunday emphasised that mutual respect for different traditions is key to strengthening national unity. He made these remarks while addressing the Commemoration of Bihar Foundation Day at New Abhisek Hall on the premises of Lok Bhavan. "When people come together

one nation enriched by many cultures." The Governor also emphasised the strong historical and cultural ties between Bihar and Odisha. He recalled the ancient links between Magadha and Kalinga, including the transformative impact of the Kalinga War, and noted that both regions were once part of the same administrative unit before becoming separate states, while continuing to

share mutual respect and common experiences. Describing Bihar's civilisational legacy, he said the state has been a centre of political power, intellectual advancement, and spiritual awakening. He cited Emperor Ashoka's transformation, Lord Buddha's enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Lord Mahavira's teachings, and the ancient Nalanda University as enduring symbols of Bihar's global contribution. He also highlighted Bihar's vibrant cultural traditions, including Madhubani paintings and festivals like Chhath, which reflect harmony between human life and nature. Welcoming people from Bihar residing in Odisha, the Governor appreciated their contribution to the state's development and cultural life. Stressing the importance of such exchanges, he said they strengthen inter-state relations and contribute to national integration. "India's strength lies in its unity amidst diversity. Such bonds will continue to guide us towards a stronger and more inclusive future," he added. The event also saw natives of Bihar, now living in Odisha, share their experiences, including ADG of Police (Law and Order) Sanjay Kumar, Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur, Accountant General, Odisha, Atul Prakash, and Assistant Welfare Commissioner Sanjeev Kumar Verma. Cultural programmes added colour to the celebrations. Commissioner-cum-Secretary to the Governor, Dr Roopa Roshan Sahoo, delivered the welcome address.

Festivals Strengthen Bonds, Inspire New Beginnings: Governor at Ugadi-Gudi Padwa Celebrations

Bhubaneswar, March 19: Governor Dr Hari Babu Kambhampati on Thursday highlighted the significance of festivals as occasions that renew the human spirit, strengthen social bonds, and promote harmony with nature, while calling for a collective commitment to unity and progress. Addressing the Ugadi and Gudi Padwa celebrations at New Abhisek Hall in Lok Bhavan, the Governor said such occasions go beyond cultural observances, serving as reminders to respect the environment and nurture the natural resources that sustain life. He added that these festivals inspire people to embrace new beginnings with positivity, gratitude, and determination. Welcoming members of the Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi communities, the Governor extended his greetings on their New Year celebrations and lauded their rich cultural traditions. First Lady Jayashree Kambhampati was also present on the occasion. Highlighting the significance of Ugadi, the Governor said the fes-



tival marks the beginning of the Telugu and Kannada New Year and symbolises the start of a new cycle of life. Referring to the traditional Ugadi Pachadi, he noted that its six flavours represent the varied experiences of life and convey the message of accepting all situations with balance and wisdom. On Gudi Padwa, he said the festival signifies renewal, prosperity, and victory, and is marked by the hoist-

ing of the 'Gudi', symbolising hope and auspiciousness. He added that, according to tradition, the day is also associated with the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana, symbolising the triumph of righteousness over evil. The festival, he said, also reflects the close relationship between humans and nature, as it is celebrated during the spring season. The Governor said celebrating festivals of different communities to-

gether strengthens mutual respect and reinforces national integration. He noted that India's strength lies in its unity in diversity and that such celebrations reflect the spirit of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat". Appreciating the contributions of Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi communities to Odisha's development across sectors such as education, industry, business, and public service, he said they have

become an integral part of the state's social and cultural fabric. Calling for a renewed commitment to harmony, inclusiveness, and collective progress, the Governor conveyed his best wishes for peace, prosperity, and happiness for all. Members of the Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi communities, including Usha Padhee, Additional Chief Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department; Anvesha Reddy, Commissioner of Excise; Aboli Sunil Narwane, Director of Industries; Yashwant Jethwa, Director of Vigilance; S. Praveen Kumar, IG of Police (Personnel); Dr Guda Sridevi, Pro Vice-Chancellor of C.V. Raman Global University; and Dr Satish Dhandole, Associate Professor, IIT Bhubaneswar, shared their experiences of living in Odisha. The programme also featured captivating cultural performances, adding vibrancy and colour to the celebrations. Commissioner-cum-Secretary to the Governor, Dr Roopa Roshan Sahu, delivered the welcome address.

Composite Competitiveness Awareness Workshop Strengthens MSME Ecosystem in Odisha



Bhubaneswar, March 17, 2026: A landmark Composite Competitiveness Awareness Workshop was successfully held today at MAYFAIR Convention in Bhubaneswar, bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, financial institutions, and over 200 MSME entrepreneurs to boost the growth and competitiveness of the sector. The event focused on enhancing competitiveness, improving access to credit, and strengthening market linkages for MSMEs. The workshop served as a vital platform for knowledge sharing, policy dissemination, and fostering collaboration to drive MSME growth in Odisha.

Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh, Additional Secretary, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, emphasized the need to reduce

payment cycles in public procurement to improve MSME cash flow and called for greater focus on investment and export growth.

Ankita Pandey, Director, Ministry of MSME, Government of India, underlined the role of RAMP in bridging policy and grassroots implementation, with a focus on capacity building, ZED certification, e-commerce integration, and dispute resolution through online mechanisms.

Delivering the keynote address, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, MSME Department, Government of Odisha, Rashmita Panda stressed the importance of digital platforms like TReDS and ONDC in addressing delayed payments and expanding market access for MSMEs.

In his welcome address, Joint Direc-

tor P. K. Gupta emphasized the importance of collaboration between the Centre and the State in ensuring effective implementation of MSME schemes and promoting inclusive economic growth.

Dr. Milan Sharma, Head of the National Project Management Unit, highlighted the objectives of the RAMP (Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance) initiative, a World Bank-supported programme aimed at improving MSME competitiveness and institutional co-ordination. He described the workshop as a key platform for awareness generation and stakeholder convergence.

The workshop also featured technical sessions on access to finance, delayed payment solutions, and sustainability, covering initiatives such as MSME Champions, National SC-ST Hub, and ESG practices. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Joint Secretary Praffula Kujur and Deputy Director Nitisha Mann, who appreciated the contributions of all stakeholders in making the programme a success.

The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, in collaboration with the MSME Department, Government of Odisha, and the MSME Development & Facilitation Office (MSME-DFO), Cuttack.

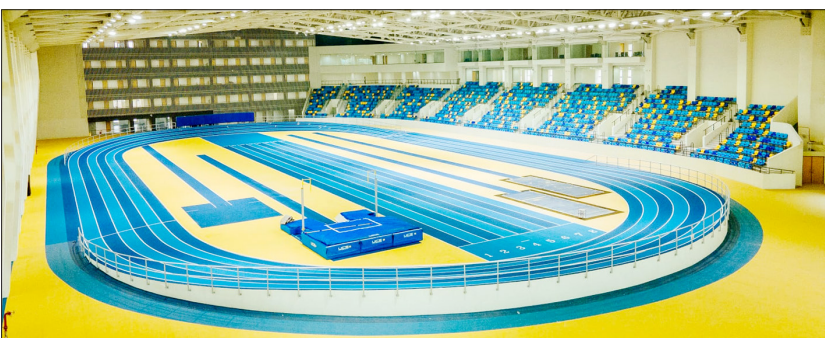
Odisha Govt Signs MoA to Revive Forgotten Foods and Neglected Crops



Food keeps the tradition alive, its protection is the protection of our tradition - Dy CM Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo

Bhubaneswar, March 19, 2026: The Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha, signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Watershed Support Service and Activities Network (WASSAN) as programme secretariat to revive forgotten foods and neglected crops in Odisha. The Rs 247.024 crore initiative aims to preserve and promote traditional crops and indigenous seed varieties in 25 biodiversity-rich blocks across 15 districts. Such as Gandhamardhan, Niyamgiri, Sunabeda, Satkosia, Gupteswar, Malyagiri and Similipal. The main objective of this program is to preserve and promote traditional crops and indigenous seed varieties that are disappearing from the current agriculture. The implementation period of the scheme is for the five years (2025-26 to 2029-30) with an outlay of Rs. 247. 024 Crore. Deputy Chief Minister Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo emphasized, "Food keeps the tradition alive, its protection is the protection of our tradition." The project will focus on conservation, documentation, and commercialization of neglected crops, benefiting local farmers and communities. Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Department, Shri Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav, Shri Kalunge Gorakh Waman, Director, Horticulture, Shri Subrat Kumar Panda, Director, Soil Conservation and Watershed Development, and Dr. Ganeshwar Jena, Additional Secretary was present during the MoA signing.

World Athletics awards championships to China, India and Kazakhstan



Bhubaneswar, March 19, 2026: Host city decisions reflect World Athletics' strategy to take major events to emerging markets and build on multi-year athletics journey through China. The World Athletics Council has selected Odisha in India and Astana in Kazakhstan to host the World Athletics Indoor Championships in 2028 and 2030, respectively. The events were awarded during the 240th World Athletics Council Meeting held in Toruń, Poland, ahead of the World Athletics Indoor Championships Ku-

jawy Pomorze 26. The awarding of the 2028 World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships to Hefei in China was also among the decisions made during the two-day meeting on Wednesday and Thursday (18-19 March). Welcoming the Council to the city of Toruń on the eve of the World Indoor Championships, World Athletics President Sebastian Coe said: "Poland is one of the heartlands of global athletics and one that has a long and distinguished athletics tradition, producing Olympic champions

and world record-holders across multiple disciplines over the past century. Poland continues to produce world-class athletes, many of whom will be competing here in Toruń over the long weekend. "In awarding the next two editions of this storied championships to Odisha and Astana, I am delighted that the World Indoors continues to go from strength to strength, captivating audiences around the world, and that our next two hosts reflect our strategy of taking our events to emerging markets.

Odisha Parab 2026 Inaugurated in Ahmedabad, Showcasing the Cultural and Tourism Wealth of Odisha

Bhubaneswar, 21/03/2026 : Odisha Deputy Chief Minister Smt. Pravati Parida, in the presence of Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Shri Harsh Rameshkumar Sanghavi, inaugurated Odisha Parab 2026 at the Gujarat University Convention & Exhibition Centre in Ahmedabad on Saturday, marking the commencement of a three-day cultural and tourism showcase.

Organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, in association with FICCI as the industry partner, the event is being held from March 21 to March 23, showcasing Odisha's rich heritage, vibrant traditions, handicrafts, handlooms, authentic cuisine and diverse tourism experiences, while strengthening cultural and people-to-people ties between Odisha and Gujarat. Odisha Parab 2026 is being organ-



ised with the support of the Odia Language, Literature & Culture Department, Handlooms, Textiles & Handicrafts Department, OR-MAS, and Mission Shakti. Addressing the gathering, Deputy CM Parida highlighted Odisha

Parab as a flagship cultural outreach initiative, positioning Odisha as an experiential destination that seamlessly blends heritage, spirituality, nature, cuisine and modern tourism infrastructure. Deputy CM Sanghavi emphasised

the importance of inter-state collaboration in tourism and appreciated Odisha's initiative in bringing its cultural richness to Gujarat, strengthening ties between the two states. The three-day event features a

curated exhibition of Odisha's arts, handicrafts, textiles and handlooms, live culinary showcases of authentic Odia cuisine, classical, folk and tribal cultural performances, and a dedicated tourism pavilion highlighting Odisha's key destinations and tourism products. It also includes B2B, G2B and diaspora interactions to deepen tourism and cultural partnerships. The event is open to the public and invites people in Ahmedabad to experience the spirit, stories and soul of Odisha.

The inaugural ceremony was also attended by Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner Banchanidhi Pani, Tourism Commissioner-cum-Secretary Balwant Singh, and Tourism Director Deepankar Mohapatra, along with tourism stakeholders, industry leaders, members of the Odia diaspora and invited guests.

The global energy team of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) visited Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Sh Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo



for energy transition set out in Odisha Vision 2036 & 2047.

Hon'ble Dy CM Shri Singh Deo expressed that the progressive initiatives of the government of Odisha in the energy sector such as Pumped Storage Policy, Renewal Energy Policy, Green Hydrogen Projects.

Hon'ble Dy CM also directed the team to focus on using cleaner energy and ensuring reliability of power across domestic, commercial and industrial users. Odisha's position as a leading state in energy needs to be further strengthened and must take into account emerging trends like nuclear and green hydrogen. The members who participated in the meeting were Mr. Vivek Agrawal, Country Director, India, Mr. Gareth Walsh, Global Director, Energy & Climate, Mr. Pierre Noel, Senior Advisor for Asia, Energy, and Mr. Amar Jyoti Mahapatra, Strategic Communications Adviser from the Tony Blair Institute. Dr. Debi Dutta Tripathy FA-cum-Special Secretary of the Energy Department briefed that a meeting of various partners of the Energy Department had been held along with the TBI Team for streamlined coordination so that the state is able to most effectively implement a cohesive and comprehensive energy strategy. A book on Men's One-day cricket world cup was gifted by Hon'ble Dy CM to all the members.

Bhubaneswar- 17/03/2026 The global energy team of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) visited Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Sh Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, today. During the meeting priorities and opportunities in the Energy Sector of Odisha were discussed. The TBI team, led by Mr. Vivek Agrawal, will prioritize streamlined coordination for effective implementation. TBI is working with the Energy Department, Odisha to develop an Energy Strategy aligning with the renewable energy targets

Odisha to Pioneer Futuristic City Gas Distribution Policy

Bhubaneswar, March 20, 2026: In a significant step towards strengthening urban utility infrastructure and promoting clean energy adoption, the Housing & Urban Development (H&UD) Department, Government of Odisha, has initiated the process for framing a comprehensive City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy.

A high-level consultative meeting in this regard was held today at Kharabela Bhawan under the chairpersonship of Smt Usha Padhee, Additional Chief Secretary, H&UD & Chairperson IDCO in collaboration with GAIL (India) Limited & IOCL. The meeting deliberated on a strategic roadmap for the expansion of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) across the State, with a focus on building a future-ready and citizen-centric policy framework aligned with the State's long-term development goals.

Chairing the meeting, Smt. Padhee emphasised the need for an aspirational yet practical policy architecture to support the rapid expansion of city gas distribution networks across urban Odisha. She highlighted that the proposed policy would play a pivotal role in enhancing access to clean, efficient and reliable energy, while contributing to sustainable urban development and improved service delivery. She further reiterated that the State is committed to designing a futuristic policy in the best interest of the public and the State, which will simplify processes, accelerate infrastructure rollout, and significantly enhance the ease of living for citizens across urban centres.

The deliberations focused on key components of the proposed policy, including

streamlining of permissions, rationalisation of licence fees, introduction of single-window clearance systems, and operationalisation of deemed approval mechanisms. Discussions also covered adoption frameworks, institutional coordination, and service delivery systems to ensure seamless implementation.

The initiative is being undertaken in close coordination with leading energy stakeholders such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited and GAIL, with the objective of leveraging technical expertise and ensuring efficient execution of city gas infrastructure projects across the State.

The proposed CGD policy is expected to facilitate faster rollout of PNG infrastructure, strengthen coordination between stakeholders, and position Odisha as a frontrunner in adopting clean and sustainable urban energy solutions.

Among others, Arindam Dakua, Director, Municipal Administration; Kirandeep Kaur Sahota, Commissioner, CMC; senior representatives from IOCL and GAIL; along with officers from IDCO and the Housing & Urban Development Department, including Shri Nihar Ranjan Behera, CGM, IDCO; Shri Ratnakar Sahu, Additional Commissioner, BMC; and Shri Suwendu Kumar Sahoo, Additional Secretary, H&UD, were present at the meeting held in the 3rd Floor Conference Hall of Kharabela Bhawan.

The collective inputs and expertise shared during the session are expected to shape a comprehensive, implementable, and forward-looking policy, aligned with Odisha's vision for a greener, more efficient, and future-ready urban landscape.





Pakhala Paraba 2026 Inaugurated; Two-Day Celebration of Odisha's Culinary Heritage Begins

Bhubaneswar, 19/03/2026: The two-day-long celebration of Pakhala Paraba was inaugurated today at Panthanivas, Bhubaneswar, marking a vibrant tribute to Odisha's rich culinary heritage. The inaugural session was addressed by Director, Department of Tourism, Shri Deepankar Mahapatra. The celebrations will continue tomorrow with the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi and Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Smt. Pravati Parida along with other dignitaries. The inaugural session set the tone for the discussions with insightful keynote addresses by Padmashree Dr. Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, Prof. Dr. Sitikantha Mishra, and Mr. Sandip Mukherjee, who highlighted the philosophy of sustainable eating, promotion of rice

diversity, and the relevance of traditional cuisine in the modern hospitality industry. A major highlight of the conference was the two thematic panel discussions, collectively exploring both the cultural roots and future potential of Odia cuisine. The first panel discussion on 'From Temple Kitchens to Home Hearths: The Cultural Roots of Odia Cuisine' featured Dr. Sudhansu Sekhar Patnaik, Mr. Debasish Patnaik, Mr. Biswanath Samantaray, and Mr. B. P. Tripathy, who reflected on the deep cultural, spiritual, and historical linkages of Odia food traditions. The second panel discussion on 'From

cal Tradition to Global Brand: Marketing Strategies for Odia Cuisine' saw participation from Prof. Tapan Kumar Panda, Prof. Priti Ranjan Sahoo, Ms. Ritu Patnaik, and Chef Abinas Nayak. The panel discussed branding, global positioning, and innovative marketing approaches to take Odia cuisine to international platforms. The conference also featured special presentations by eminent personalities including Mr. Sudarshan Sahoo, Dr. G.A. Kumar (Director, CRRI), Ms. Swosti Mishra, and Ms. Shabnam Afrin, alongside keynote addresses by Chef Manjit Singh Gill and Dr. Su-

Mund, further enriching the discourse. Interspersed with vibrant cultural performances such as Odissi, Sambalpuri, Tribal, and Gotipua dances, the event beautifully blended gastronomy with Odisha's rich cultural heritage. It is noteworthy that, as part of Pakhala Parba 2026, the Tourism Department is attempting to secure a Guinness World Record for the Largest Serving of Fermented Rice (Pakhala), taking Odisha's culinary heritage to the global stage. With 800-850 kg of Pakhala being prepared, the initiative highlights its nutritional value and agricultural richness. Organised in collaboration with the Robin Hood Army, the event will also ensure a strict zero-wastage policy, blending celebration with sustainability.

