

One Day State Level Conference

Attendees = 64

On March 22nd, 2025, the Conference Room at MSU Union Pavilion in Pratapgunj, Vadodara, buzzed with energy as The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda hosted the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan Workshop. The event was a vibrant gathering, filled with expert discussions, hands-on demonstrations, and enthusiastic community involvement, all aimed at forging pathways towards sustainable rural development under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan initiative.



Prof. Dhanesh Patel, Hon'ble I/c Vice Chancellor of The M.S. University of Baroda, illuminated the critical role of universities in linking academic research with real-world applications to uplift rural communities. His insights were shared after the ceremonial Deep Pragatya, underscoring the event's commitment to enlightenment and progress through knowledge.



Prof. Chaitanya Joshi, Director of GBRC and Gujarat President of Vigyan Gurjari, opened the series of talks with insights into the integration of traditional practices with modern science to enhance rural development effectively.

Prof. Sunita Nambiyar, who emphasized collaborative efforts between academia and the community for achieving sustainable development goals.



Mr. Vikas Vaze, CEO of Shroff Foundation, presented engaging case studies highlighting the importance of understanding rural needs for successful project planning and implementation, showcasing transformative impacts on community development.



At the conference, **Dr. Jai Pawar, Director of the Deepak Foundation,** emphasized the critical role of structured support in transforming rural development. She highlighted successful initiatives that have directly improved community health, education, and economic stability, demonstrating how targeted interventions can lead to sustainable growth in rural areas.

In his session, **Dr. Jitendra Gavali, Director of the Regional Community Science Centre Vadodara,** presented a comprehensive view on "The Right Approach to Tree Plantations." He emphasized the multifaceted benefits of trees, including their role in supporting biodiversity, regulating climate, and enhancing soil fertility. Dr. Gavali discussed practical strategies for integrating green belts into urban and industrial planning, detailing how these green spaces can act as critical buffers to mitigate pollution, enhance local aesthetics, and provide ecological stability in rapidly urbanizing areas. His presentation highlighted the importance of selecting appropriate species for green belts to maximize environmental and community benefits.



At the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan conference, **Mr. Rajesh Vaidya Head HR Silox India** presented their comprehensive CSR initiatives, emphasizing their deep commitment to environmental sustainability and community safety. He highlighted projects across diverse domains such as bio-diversity, community health, and education, showcasing how Silox India leverages its corporate resources to foster substantial and sustainable community impacts. These initiatives align closely with several UN Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating Silox India's strategic approach to CSR and its profound impact on both human and animal lives.



Professor TMV Suryanarayana, Director at the Water Resources Engineering and Management Institute, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, led an enlightening session on water conservation at the conference. He discussed the critical importance of managing water resources effectively, particularly in arid regions, emphasizing innovative techniques such as rainwater harvesting, soil conservation, and the use of small dams to enhance water availability. His presentation highlighted the pressing need for sustainable water practices to secure a reliable water supply for future generations.



The workshop concluded with a reflective valedictory session led by **Prof. Sunita Nambiyar UBA - Co Coordinator**, who summarized the day's discussions and underscored the actionable strategies developed for sustainable rural development. **Dr. Hemang Joshi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, served as the Chief Guest** and emphasized the ongoing need for innovation and commitment in addressing rural challenges. Prof. Bhavna Mehta, Head Faculty of Social Work and IAC, added her insights as the Guest of Honor, encouraging the practical application of the strategies discussed. A special acknowledgment was given to **Prof. Sunita Sharma UBA - Coordinator**, who participated in the entire conference online. Her involvement was pivotal in organizing and facilitating the program, and her contributions were instrumental in the success of the event. The session closed with a vote of thanks by Mr. Archit Sharma, UBA Manager, who expressed gratitude to all speakers, participants, and particularly to Prof. Sunita Sharma, for their valuable contributions and commitment.

