

STRC NEWSLETTER

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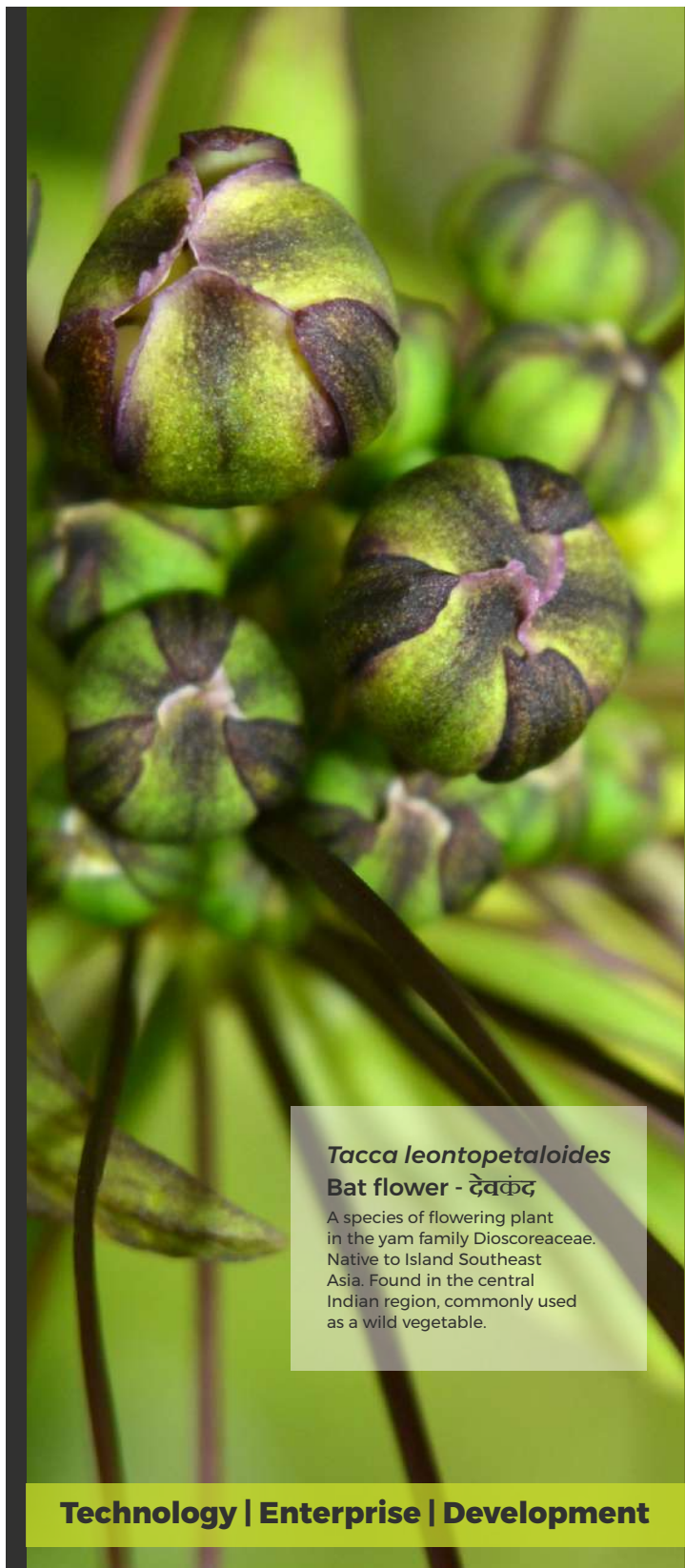
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Tacca leontopetaloides
Bat flower - देवकंद

A species of flowering plant in the yam family Dioscoreaceae. Native to Island Southeast Asia. Found in the central Indian region, commonly used as a wild vegetable.

Technology | Enterprise | Development



**Science & Technology Resource Centre
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli**

A centre of excellence for sustainable value creation, conceived and funded by Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Govt. of Maharashtra.

STRC is a registered society 'Science & Technology Resource Centre Foundation Gadchiroli' under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860).

From the CPO's Desk >>>

An idea to Establish a STRC Centre of Excellence for Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicinal Knowledge in Gadchiroli

The eastern vidarbha region of Maharashtra has a rich diversity of medicinal and aromatic plant resource and a history of traditional medicinal knowledge which has remained relatively under-explored. Commercially and medicinally important plant resource along with traditional medicinal knowledge holds the potential to positively influence the economy at multiple levels and also help develop a knowledge repository.

Referring to the Foundation of Revitalization of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), Bengaluru database, 960 species of medicinal plants are traded out in Maharashtra, of which 178 are traded in high volumes. These species by their major source of supply reveals that 21 species are obtained from temperate forests and 70 species are from tropical forests in the state and as many as 48 species out of 70 species are found in the forests of Maharashtra, especially in the Gadchiroli region. Gradually threatening conservation concerns of important medicinal plants can be dealt with raising medicinal plant in nurseries, through in-situ / ex-situ conservation and plantation and scientific documentation of traditional medicinal knowledge. Considering this, Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) is weighing on an idea to establish a centre of excellence for medicinal plants and traditional medicinal knowledge in Gadchiroli.

This centre would have an overarching mandate of applicable R&D, digital documentation of traditional knowledge including conservation, preservation and scientific evidence-based validation. In this effort, a Vaidu Clinic for live treatment demonstration in the University premises and development of a comprehensive Vaidu Directory of local Traditional Healers (THs) have been initiated.

Our experience with the National Academy of Sciences India (NASI) supported Indigenous Medicinal Knowledge (IMK) project has led us to explore and scientifically document over 200 important medicinal plants and consolidate traditional healing practices of over 100 Traditional Healers. We have also published a checklist of important Medicinal Plants (Phase I) and a Traditional Healers' Directory (Preliminary). In the coming future STRC would take these efforts forward in a more comprehensive manner and would focus on how these Traditional Healers (THs) and their healing practices can get evidence-based validation and due recognition.



Shri Ashis Gharai

Chief Program Officer & Head, Science & Technology resource Centre, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

Conceived and funded by Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission (RGSTC), Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra, Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) is an autonomous institute established in concurrence with Gondwana University, Gadchiroli. STRC is entrusted with generating livelihood opportunities by deploying appropriate science and technology, particularly for the under-served tribal communities of the Gadchiroli region since 2014. As a centre of excellence for sustainable value creation, STRC is leveraging local resources, relevant knowledge and appropriate technologies for human capacity development. STRC acts as a catalyst to science and technology based development of the region and as a bridge between knowledge activities of the University and enhanced livelihoods in the neighborhood.

Article

STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay

A unique university platform to promote Traditional Healers and Healing Practices

India has a very rich tradition of herbal medicines used in treating various ailments. Forest dependent tribal communities practice different types of traditional healing practices. Govt. of India, in the year 2014, constituted an exclusive Ministry of AYUSH with a vision of reviving the profound knowledge of our ancient systems of medicine and ensuring growth and development of the AYUSH systems of healthcare. Historically, the traditional healers have not been given the due importance and wider recognition beyond their locality. The traditional legitimacy which the lineage offers, reinforces the thought; older the practitioner, richer the knowledge and stronger the following. These healers typically do not demand monetary compensation for consultation, rather they accept whatever is given to them. Moreover, in absence of an established system for wider acceptance or recognition and lack of rewarding opportunities, there has been a gradual loss of interest in inheriting the knowledge or taking it up as a profession among the younger generation.

Considering the importance of traditional healing, role of traditional healers in the society and its impact on the local communities, Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) initiated digital documentation of traditional medicinal knowledge through platforms such as Vaidu Sammelan and one to one interactions. As an outcome of the Indigenous Medicinal Knowledge (IMK) project supported by National Academy of Sciences India (NASI), Govt. of India, STRC came up with a Vaidu Directory; a handbook of local traditional healers and their healing practices. These efforts led to a series of open discussions leading to better rapport with the local traditional healers which gave birth to the idea of a Vaidu Chiktshalay. Vaidu Chiktshalay; a unique university platform to promote Traditional Healers and Healing Practices. This platform promotes both locally renowned and lesser-known Traditional Healers and their traditional healing practices among local communities. Started in 2022, STRC Vaidya Chikitsalay, a two-days a week OPD has begun to gain popularity among local residents and communities from adjacent talukas.

Such initiatives with greater institutional support may help conserving indigenous medicinal knowledge, popularising the traditional healing practices and provide due recognition to the local traditional healers.



Ashish Bhojar

Jr. Scientific Officer,
Science & Technology Resource Centre,
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

What's Making News >>>



Summer Workshop 2023 on Bamboo Furniture Making at National Institute of Design (NID), Bengaluru

Three representative staff from Science & Technology Resource Centre (STRC) were given an opportunity to participate at the 5 day introductory training on 'Bamboo Furniture Making' organised by National Institute of Design (NID), Bengaluru during 5th to 9th June 2023. Shri V. Giriraj, CEO, Maharashtra Bamboo Promotion Foundation (MBPF) was kind enough to extend all financial support to STRC for the purpose.

The said workshop was organised with the objective to provide an overview about bamboo as material, its properties for furniture making and to provide an overview about various tools / machines and working technique in bamboo work under the expert guidance of Prof. C. S. Susanth. During the workshop the participant were introduced to bamboo as a material for furniture making and to basic tools, machines and processes.

STRC representatives enthusiastically participated in the workshop along with a group of participants from various parts of the country. The hands-on experience allowed participants to apply the knowledge acquired during the sessions. Having access to a well equipped production workshop our team was able to design and develop some innovative bamboo furniture items. Learning from the workshop is now being utilized to create a range of bamboo furniture at the Model Production Unit (MPU) of STRC.

STRC has also taken up Bamboo as a Structural Material and related construction activities such as bamboo polyhouse, sit-outs and bamboo sheds etc. into its product portfolio. More such opportunities along with technical guidance from experts like Prof. C. S. Susanth, NID, Bengaluru would go a long way in helping STRC shape up its future in bamboo sector.





‘Centre for Janjati Studies’; A Collaborative initiative by ICSSR and NCST, New Delhi, Govt. of India

The Janjatis (Scheduled Tribes) of India have their own specific origin stories (jati puranas), their own deities, and their own rituals and festivals. These stories, deities and rituals reflect their core strengths, commitments and beliefs. They also have their own glorious histories that includes several revered heroes, saints and kings. They also often have their own dialects. They are the carriers of specific, and valuable, skills and technologies.

In a joint initiative by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, Govt. of India and National Council of Schedule Tribes (NCST), New Delhi, Govt. of India, it has been decided to establish ‘Center for Janjatis Studies’ in select universities across the country. In this context a consultation meeting was organised at ICSSR, New Delhi during 5th and 6th June 2023. Vice Chancellors from universities across the country were invited to participate in the said meeting to discuss further and develop a conceptual understanding and to design a road map for establishment of an exclusive ‘Centre for Janjatis Studies (CJSs)’ at their respective institutes.

The primary objective of the CJSs is to Study and document

1. All aspects of the land and people of a specific Janjati in a specified area
2. A specific historical event, a historical personage, vegetation, craft, technology or a specific issue of current relevance, etc., associated with a specific Janjati in a particular region.

Shri Ashis Gharai, Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli and Dr. Naresh Madavi, Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli accompanied the Hon’ble Vice Chancellor, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli Dr. Prashant Bokare, to the consultation meeting. While Shri Gharai presented the case of STRC’s efforts with regard to conservation, promotion and digital documentation of indigenous medicinal knowledge and traditional healing practices in form of a ‘Vaidu Directory’ and the ‘Vaidy Chikitsalay’, Dr. Madavi presented a unique university effort; the ‘EKAL Gramsabha’ project for capacity building of gramsabha, at the meeting which were highly appreciated by all the participants.

Innovative Informal ways of Knowledge Sharing; STRC's Initiative to connect with Local Marginal Farmers



STRC is working on developing multiple platforms of knowledge sharing through scientific action oriented modules. One such initiative, Farmers' Open School (FOS) aims to disseminate hands-on knowledge through series of focused group sessions on Advance Agronomy Practices from sowing to harvesting.

STRC is actively engaged in creating various platforms for knowledge sharing through scientific and action-oriented modules. Among these initiatives is the Farmers' Open School (FOS), which is dedicated to disseminating hands-on knowledge on Advanced Agronomy Practices, from sowing to harvesting, through focused group sessions. Currently, five schools have been established in three blocks Gadchiroli district across, namely; Talodhi and Maller Mal in Chamorshi Taluka, Usegaon in Gadchiroli, and Potgaon and Kinhala in Wadsa. Each of these schools are registered under FOS and consists of a group of twenty farmers actively participating in the program.

STRC has taken the first step of implementation by initiating Module-I on 'Seed Treatment' for better germination. The objective of this module is to raise awareness among farmers about the importance of seed treatment in paddy cultivation. During the sessions Subject Matter Specialists (SMSs) from KVK are engaged to deliver expert knowledge and demonstration to the batch of farmers. Farmers were exposed to different seed treatment techniques, such as salt treatment, seed treatment with insecticides / fungicides / bio-fungicides, which can improve seed germination, protect against diseases and pests, and enhance crop establishment. Subsequent batches of farmer will be trained with the same module and related SOPs as part of the Module-I.



Glimpses of the Month >>>

Interaction with Dr. Anand Bang, SEARCH, Chatgaon

On his advise, Chief Program Officer and Head STRC along with his team visited SEARCH, Chatgaon, Gadchiroli (MS) to meet Dr. Anand Bang to discuss regarding scope of collaboration with various development agencies working in Gadchiroli region.



Dr. Anand Bang not only extended his support for our initiatives but also provided helpful advice on how to develop successful collaborations with other

pioneering institutions working in Gadchiroli. Dr. Bang specifically emphasised on the significance of growth in the aquaculture, education, bamboo, and various other sectors that hold enormous potential for advancement in Gadchiroli. STRC look forward to make significant development partnerships in future.

STRC at the Annual Jamun and Amba Mahotsav - 2023



STRC was invited to be the part of the Amba Mahotsav held on 30th May and subsequently, Jamun Mahotsav on 17th June 2023 which were organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sonapur, Gadchiroli. Amba Mahotsav 2023, an annual affair organized to raise awareness on mango cultivation and to inspire local farmers to consider mango farming as a viable option for sustainable livelihood generation. On the occasion of Jamun Mahotsav, Dr.

Sharad Gadakh, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Panjabrao Deshmukh Agricultural University, Akola inaugurated 'Agricultural Service Center' at KVK, Sonapur-Gadchiroli. While addressing the participants Dr. Gadakh asserted that jamun is naturally produced in the district, however, since jamun is short-lived, it needs to be processed and value added for increased shelf-life, and self-help groups should be to empowered to set up Jamun based processing industries.

Visits of Eminent Personalities and Experts >>>

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Dr. Rajendra Singh

STRC had the honor to briefly host **Ramon Magsaysay awardee Dr. Rajendra Singh**, popularly known as the **Waterman of India** during his visit to the university with regard to a consultation meeting on river conservation. He expressed his willingness to know STRC's efforts in the Science & Technology centric development sector in the Gadchiroli region. Dr. Singh visited STRC's Model Production Unit and engaged in an insightful discussion with Shri Ashis Gharai, Chief Program Officer and Head-STRC and team.

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Shri. Bhupender Yadav, Union Cabinet Minister of Labour and Employment, Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India visited Gondwana University, Gadchiroli to hold a discussion with stakeholders of the EKAL Gramsabha project, jointly executed by Gondwana University Gadchiroli and the District Administration and representative of Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram led by Shri Girish Kuber.

Shri Ashis Gharai, Chief Program Officer & Head, STRC presented STRC's work especially in Indigenous Medicinal Knowledge and its conservation. The Minister took note of the work carried out by STRC and provided valuable suggestions to strengthen on-going efforts. Other eminent persons Shri Ashok Nete, MP, Gadchiroli-Chimur Lok Sabha P, Dr. Devrao Holi, MLA, Gadchiroli Legislative Assembly Consti. amongst others were present during the meeting.



Shri. Bhupender Yadav

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Dr. Namdev Usendi

Dr. Namdev Usendi, Former MLA visited to STRC Model Production Unit (MPU). During his visit, he enquired about the assembly line of STRC's Model Production Unit and took a keen interest in the cadre of skilled human resources working here. The bamboo diploma students had the privilege of interacting with Dr. Usendi. His visit also served as an opportunity to discuss potential collaborations, specifically for his upcoming bamboo tiles factory at MIDC Gadchiroli.