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15 October 2026 · APPSC GROUP 1

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Paper-IV · SARAS Mela and DAY-NRLM

CORRECTED EDITION | Updated through 15 October 2026, 3:15 pm IST

1 National SARAS Mela Moves Outside NCR to Vijayawada

Paper-IV | Prelims + Mains | SARAS Mela and DAY-NRLM

Rural livelihoods, women-led enterprise and market access: the National SARAS Mela in Andhra Pradesh

The Hindu

Syllabus — Group-1 Mains Paper IV - Rural livelihoods, Self Help Groups and women empowerment programmes in Andhra Pradesh
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In a first, Vijayawada to host National SARAS Mela

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate the National Sale of Articles of Rural Artisans Society' (SARAS) Mela on Thursday at Punnami Ghat in Vijayawada as part of the Dasara festivities. It has moved out of the National Capital Region for the first time since its inception in 1999 and will be hosted in Vijayawada.

Explaining the reason behind the move, the Director of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development, Mohalsree said, "Vijayawada lights up during Dasara with a huge devotee turnout, and the exhibition needs a lot of footfalls so that a maximum number of Self Help Group women benefit."

The Andhra Pradesh government has been very forthcoming in hosting the mela in Vijayawada, she added.

Over 600 stalls

Over 600 stalls have been set up, which will display handloom sarees, stoles, scarves, and other apparel and handicrafts.

Usually, 500 to 1,000 women take part in such melas, and this time, the number has risen beyond 1,500, Dr. Mohalsree said, adding that they are expecting a humongous response from Vijayawada.

"We have seen that people here value their heritage, and so, we hope that people will arrive here in large numbers and support the women," she said.

Besides, a food court has been set up with around 50 stalls where people can taste delicacies from various States.

WHY IN NEWS

National SARAS Mela 2026 is being held at Punnami Ghat, Vijayawada, from 13 to 31 October. President Droupadi Murmu attended the event on 15 October. This is the first **National SARAS Mela outside Delhi-NCR**, not the first SARAS fair outside that region.

Corrected edition: updated through the PIB release of 15 October 2026, 3:15 pm IST. The newspaper clipping above is the original morning report.

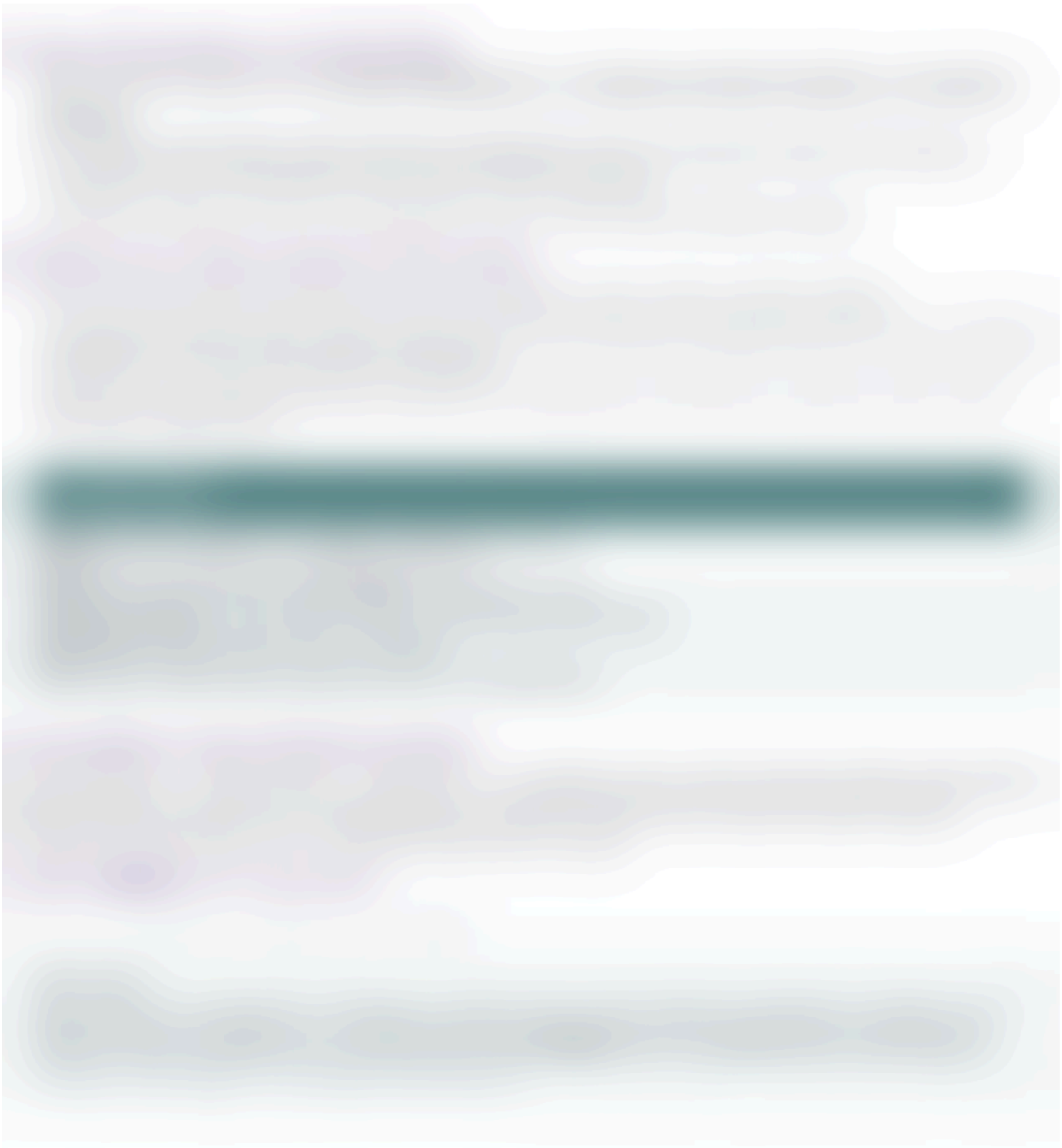
What SARAS Mela Is and Why It Matters

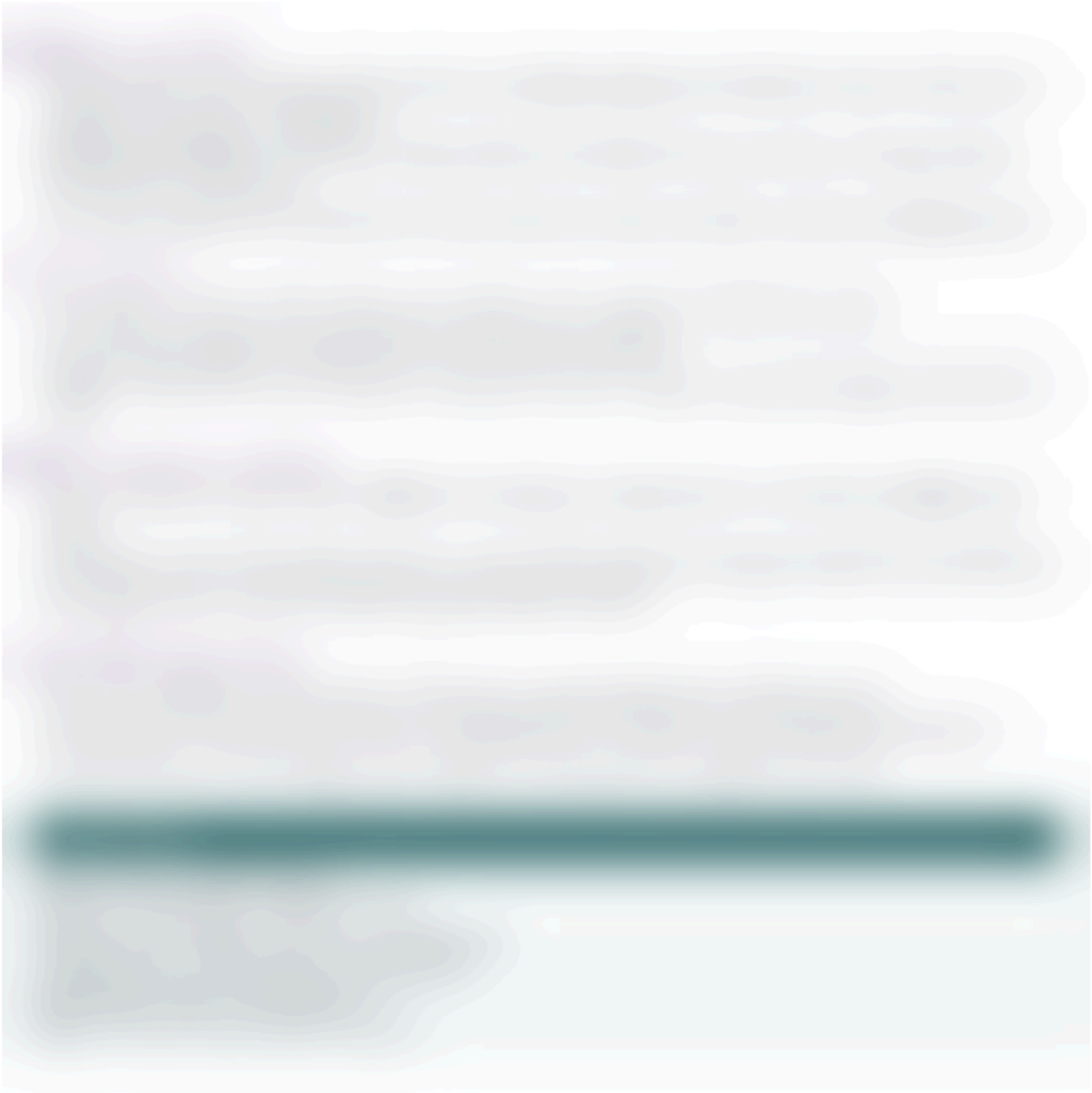
- SARAS expands to Sale of Articles of Rural Artisans. The Ministry of Rural Development promotes SHG products and rural market access under DAY-NRLM.
- SARAS exhibitions date to **1999**. Regional SARAS fairs have also been held outside Delhi-NCR; avoid the incorrect claim that every SARAS fair was held in NCR.
- Handlooms and handicrafts connect rural producers directly with buyers. The announced food court has **50 stalls**.

Why Vijayawada Matters

- The fair coincides with Dasara celebrations and Vijayawada Utsav 2.0, creating an opportunity to reach festival visitors.
- The Union Ministry of Rural Development and Andhra Pradesh's SERP collaborate on the event.
- For exam answers, link location and visitor demand to market access, but do not treat higher footfall as proof of higher net income.
- Branding, packaging, repeat buyers and reliable delivery determine whether a short fair creates lasting business.

Sources: PIB, 12 October 2026 (Release 2322458); 15 October 2026 (2323813). Historical context: PIB, "Making Marketing Avenues available to Rural Artisans" (relid 1495). Full source links on page 5.







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Ashok Nagar, Tirumala Complex, Jawahar Nagar, Hyderabad 500020 · 91000 06330 · 91000 06335

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