

Kisan and Machuara Mela

Organised by

**ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE), Mumbai and
ICAR-Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (ICAR-IASRI), New Delhi**

20-21 March, 2026 at ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai

Kisan and Machuara Mela was organized by ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE), Mumbai, and ICAR-Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (ICAR-IASRI) under the project “Kisan Sarathi 2.0: Enhancement, Operation, Maintenance and Support” supported and funded by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and Digital India Corporation (DIC), New Delhi.

This two-day event was held at ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, on 20 March 2026 for ICAR-CIFE staff and students, and on 21 March 2026 for fishermen, fisherwomen, fish vendors, fish farmers, and other stakeholders. The programme was designed to ensure active participation from both institutional members and grassroots communities, thereby encouraging knowledge exchange and strengthening the link between research, technology, and field-level application.

The event commenced with a welcome address by Dr. Arpita Sharma, Head and Principal Scientist, Fisheries Economics, Extension and Statistics Division, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai who warmly greeted the participants and provided a brief introduction and highlighting the significance of the Kisan Sarathi initiative.

This was followed by an informative session by Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, project PI “Kisan Sarathi 2.0: Enhancement, Operation, Maintenance and Support” from ICAR-IASRI, New Delhi who elaborated on the objectives, features, and benefits of the Kisan Sarathi platform.

Dr. N.P. Sahu, Director, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai addressed the gathering and emphasized the significance of such initiatives in empowering fish farmers and fishers through digital tools and scientific knowledge.

A total of 500 participants joined the two-day event, reflecting enthusiastic involvement. On the first day, 300 participants including staff, students, Senior Research Fellow (SRF), Young Professional (YP) from ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, Dr. Saju George, Principal Scientist from ICAR-CMFRI, Cochin, academicians from DY Patil University, New Mumbai and College of Fisheries, Ratnagiri, project team of “Kisan Sarathi 2.0: Enhancement, Operation, Maintenance and Support” from New Delhi led by Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Principal Investigator along with Shri Ankit Jain from Digital India Corporation (DIC) and Shri Sudhir Kumar, YP took part. Staff from ICAR-CIFE centres and nodal officers from ICAR fisheries institutes also continued their active online engagement, ensuring broad representation and knowledge sharing throughout the programme.

On the second day, 125 fishermen, fisherwomen, and fish farmers representing capture fisheries, reservoir fisheries, ornamental fish farming, fish vending, and fish processing from different coastal districts of Maharashtra namely Mumbai City, Mumbai Suburban, Raigad, Thane, and Palghar participated in the event. Alongside them, 75 participants joined, including the New Delhi team of “Kisan Sarathi 2.0: Enhancement, Operation, Maintenance and Support” led by Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Principal Investigator; Shri Ankit Jain from Digital India Corporation (DIC); Shri Sudhir Kumar, YP, staff from ICAR-CIFE and its centres; nodal officers from ICAR fisheries institutes; academicians from DY Patil College, Navi Mumbai and College of Fisheries, Ratnagiri.

Informative materials about the Kisan Sarathi app, portal, and comprehensive details about the Kisan Sarathi initiative in English, Marathi, and Hindi were distributed to all participants. These multilingual resources ensured that every stakeholder whether academicians, researchers, or members of the fishing community could easily understand and access the benefits of the Kisan Sarathi platform.

Along with the educational materials, participants received kit bag with information materials, water bottle, and cap prominently branded with the Kisan Sarathi and ICAR logos. This thoughtful distribution not only served practical needs during the event but also reinforced visibility, branding, and awareness of the Kisan Sarathi programme. The branding elements symbolized collective identity and commitment to digital empowerment in agriculture and fisheries, while the multilingual materials emphasized inclusivity and accessibility for diverse groups.

The initiative highlighted the importance of bridging technology with grassroots communities, ensuring that fishermen, fisherwomen, and fish farmers could connect with modern digital tools for knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and livelihood enhancement. By combining informative resources with symbolic branding, the event strengthened both awareness and adoption of Kisan Sarthi across academic, institutional, and fisher and fish farmers' community levels.

On the second day, the fisher representatives, Smt. Jyoti Rajesh Meher, Chairperson of the Maharashtra Rajya Machhimar Sahakari Sangh Maryadit, Mumbai highlighted the importance of digital platforms in empowering fishers by enhancing access to timely information, strengthening institutional linkages, and contributing to improved livelihoods and sustainable development of the fisheries sector. This was followed by an address from Shri. Ramdas Pandurang Sandhe, Chairperson, Mumbai Jila Machhimar Madhyavarti Sahakari Sangh Maryadit, Mumbai, who shared insights on the practical challenges faced by fishers and underscored the importance of initiatives like Kisan Sarthi 2.0 in bridging the gap between fishers and experts through timely advisory and digital support.

On both the days technical sessions were conducted, which included interactive discussions between participants and the “Kisan Sarathi 2.0: Enhancement, Operation, Maintenance and Support” project team from Delhi and Mumbai. Detailed information about the Kisan Sarthi mobile applications and various initiatives under the project were presented. Participants were given detailed insights into how these tools can be effectively utilized for agricultural and fisheries development. Additionally, the domains and sub-domains developed by ICAR-CIFE Mumbai project team specifically for the fisheries sector were explained. Live demonstration of the Kisan Sarathi portal was carried out. The session included step-by-step guidance on downloading the Kisan Sarathi mobile application from the Play Store, completing user registration, and raising queries through the portal. The various features of the Kisan Sarathi app were also demonstrated in detail, enabling participants to gain hands-on experience and a clear understanding of its functionalities and practical applications. Subsequently, the fisheries domains developed by ICAR-CIFE project team (Dr. Arpita Sharma, Head and Principal Scientist, FEES Division, Dr. Paromita Banerjee Sawant, Principal Scientist Aquaculture division, Dr. Sikendra Kumar, Senior Scientist, FNBP division, Dr. Sunil Nayak, Senior Scientist FGBT division and Dr. Saloni, Scientist, Rohtak

centre) were projected and feedback and valuable inputs on the Kisan Sarathi portal were collected from the participants to further improve its effectiveness and user experience.

The programme was conducted with multilingual engagement. Dr. Paromita Banerjee Sawant, Principal Scientist from the Aquaculture Division, presented in English and Hindi, while Research Scholar Shri. Bhalachandra Naik effectively compered the programme in Marathi.

Organising team from ICAR-CIFE, Dr. Arpita Sharma, Head and Principal Scientist, FEES Division, Dr. Paromita Banerjee Sawant, Principal Scientist Aquaculture division, Dr. Sikendra Kumar, Senior Scientist, FNPB division Dr. Sunil Nayak, Senior Scientist FGFBT division, Dr. Saloni Shivam, Scientist, Rohtak centre, Shri. Simant Kumar, Technical Officer, Shri. Nishant Kumar, SRF, Student coordinators Vijendra Kumar, Sweety Kumari, Rohit Kumar Srivastava, Shreya Kumari, Priya Kumari ensured smooth conduct of the event.

Formal vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Sunil Kumar Nayak, Senior Scientist, FGFBT division, ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, who expressed sincere thanks to Dr. N.P. Sahu, Director ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, all dignitaries, project team from IASRI and Digital India Corporation (DIC) New Delhi, all staff and students of ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, fishermen, fisherwomen, fish vendors, fish farmers and all participants for making the programme successful.

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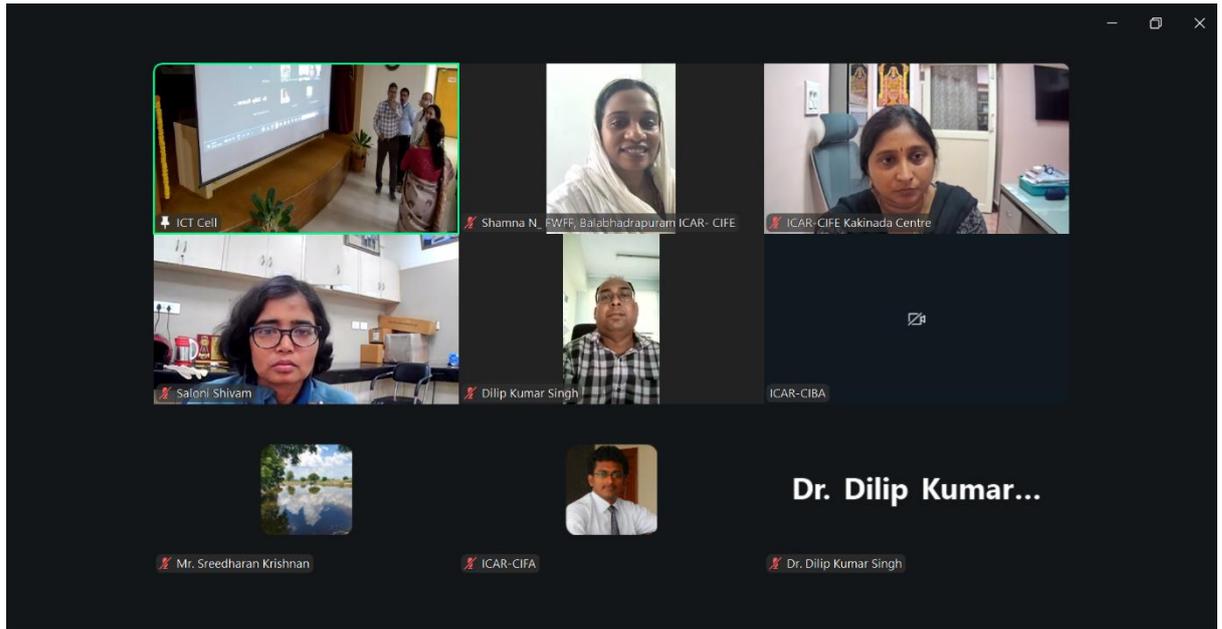












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