SARAS Mela is an initiative by the DeendayalAntyodayaYojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India with an objective to bring the rural women SHG members formed under DAY-NRLM, in one platform to showcase their skills, sell and build linkages with potential market players. SARAS Mela not only provides a platform to these SHG women, but it also provides a national level exposure to understand the demand and taste of the urban customers in metros. The SARAS IITF Mela is been organized by Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) along with DAY-NRLM, MoRD.

Over 20 years now, SARAS has evolved as a brand and has brought wide range of products handcrafted by the Self Help Group of DAY-NRLM. The SARAS-IITF Mela 2019 at PragatiMaidan, New Delhi is being organized by the Ministry of Rural Development from 14th to 27th November, 2019. 240 artisans from different states are showcasing wide range of curated collection of products like handicrafts, handlooms and natural food products in 120 stalls at Hall No.7 (F, G & H).

Each stall, each product and each of the participating rural SHG women has a story to share their experience. It is a part of the effort of the Ministry of Rural Development to provide direct and fair linkage to the skilled rural women groups of India to opportune market, making them avail evenhanded exchange for their skill and hard work.

The SARAS IITF 2019 has been inugurated by Chief Guest Shri. Narendra Singh Tomar, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of India o 18th November, 2019. Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, Minister of State for Rural Development, Government of India also participated as Special Guest. Secretary Rural Development Shri Amarjeet Sinha, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secreatries and Directors of Rural Development Ministry and officials from ITPO alsoparticipated in the inaugural function SARAS IITF 2019.

SARAS-IITF 2019 displays a large variety of handloom and handicraft items made by SHG members of DAY-NRLM, MoRD across States. Some of the special attractions in SARAS-IITF 2019, PragatiMaidan this year are natural food items, handicraft and handloom. Details of the products displayed this year are mentioned below:

i. Natural food items: gram-flour, rice, cashew nut, organic pulses from Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand; spices and coffee from Kerala; tea leaves from Sikkim, organic vegetables and spices from Uttrakhand; medicinal herbs, rice and honey from Uttar Pradesh and *mahualadoo* from Chhattisgarh etc.
ii. Handicraft: bamboo art and water hyacinth products from Assam; Madhubani paintings and Sikki craft from Bihar; candles, soap, wooden name plates from Chhattisgarh; wooden toys, decorative items from Goa and Gujarat; metal art, terracotta item, artifacts from Haryana; artificial flower art from North East; jewelry from Karnataka; footware from Maharashtra and Rajasthan; *sabai* handicrafts, brass item, golden grass products and Odisha; lac bangles from Bihar; jute hand bags from West Bengal.
iii. Handloom: Silk saree, cotton saree, handloom cloth, cotton suit from Odisha, Bihar and Chhattisgarh; bedsheets from Uttar Pradesh; Kantha Stiches sarees and dress materials of West Bengal; exclusive sarees of Telangana and Kerala; woolen and *pashima* shawls of Jammu & Kashmir; dress materials, woolen shawls and jackets from Uttarakhand, woolen shawls from Himachal Pradesh; hand crafted *jutties* and *mojeries*, leather items of Rajasthan; leather lamp sheds, painting and wood craft of Andhra Pradesh.