

**31<sup>th</sup>ShodhYatra**  
**Date: 05<sup>th</sup>May to 12<sup>th</sup>May 2013**  
**Wardha, Maharashtra**

In order to reach the grassroots people and connect with them, a walk is organized by Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions (SRISTI), a voluntary organisation from Ahmedabad. This happens twice a year in rural areas in different geographical locations of the country, with support from the Honey Bee Network. The aim of this yatra, called the "ShodhYatra" is to felicitate local grassroots innovators, traditional knowledge holders, students with innovative ideas and people with significant contribution to the society in conserving bio-diversity, etc. at their door steps, in front of their community so that inspiration may be drawn by others. The marching group of Shodhyatris consists of scientists, innovators, villagers, students and professors who travel about 150 km over a period of seven-eight days, to convey the message of the network. Biodiversity and idea competitions are organized among children while recipe contests are organized among women in some of the villages (particularly with focus on such food recipes in which at least one less known or forgotten plant produce has been used).

ShodhYatra is a journey in search of knowledge, creativity and innovations at the grassroots. It is an attempt to reach out to the remotest part of the country with a firm belief that hardship and challenges of natural surroundings are the prime motivators of creativity and innovations. ShodhYatra aims at unearthing such traditional knowledge and grassroots innovations that have not only simplified the lives of men, women and farm laborers but have also significantly contributed towards the conservation of bio-diversity. It is a journey of mutual exchange and sharing of knowledge.

The following activities would be undertaken during the ShodhYatra:

- (1) Felicitation of local innovators and traditional knowledge holders.
- (2) Organizing traditional recipe competitions, biodiversity competitions to promote local Biodiversity and generate awareness about the same.
- (3) Knowing and understanding local issues and problems of villagers by conducting village meetings.
- (4) Sharing open source information available with SRISTI which may be of use to the local people.
- (5) Identification of centenarians, enterprising women and children, artisans, rural researchers and people contributing to the preservation of natural resources.
- (6) Preparations of a data register of local knowledge and local plant diversities.
- (7) Generating awareness about preservation of local spices and local biodiversity
- (8) Promoting low cost, less expensive and organic farming technologies.

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## (1) Identity Card

It is compulsory for every participant to have an identity proof like Voter ID, Driving License, Pan Card, etc. with themselves. Participants availing senior citizen benefits for travel by train need to carry their identity cards with them. Also, all ShodhYatris are requested to bring two passport size photographs; one for their ShodhYatra I-card and the other one as a back-up in case of any requirement.

## (2) Temperature

In May, it would be hot, summer season. The temperature during the yatra is expected to be 40-48 deg. max during day time and 3-5 degree lesser at night. ShodhYatra participants are expected to carry cotton clothes, caps and water bottles. During this period it will be hot; participants are requested to carry their necessary summer precautionary measures (umbrella, Glucose etc.) accordingly.

## (3) Lodging

Basic lodging facilities will be arranged in Village primary schools or community halls and all participants are expected to bring their own mats, sleeping bags or beddings. The place may not have electricity supply and possibly not enough windows and doors as well. The Yatris should be mentally prepared to clean the place themselves and share the available space. In case of non-availability of sufficient rooms, yatris may also have to sleep in the open ground/corridors; ladies and gents may have to share the available room/hall. At some places toilets may also not be available.

## (4) Basic necessities

Every participant should carry articles of their daily use viz. towel, toothbrush, soap, and utensils like plate, cup, glass, spoon etc should also be brought along. **No disposable glass or plates would be provided.** The ShodhYatris should also carry their camera, notebook, pen, a rope to hang their wet clothes, torch, matchbox, candles etc. Any personal medicines and dry food items may also be brought. The participants are especially requested to carry minimum possible luggage and carry their stuff in durable bags.

## (5) Food

Breakfast, tea, lunch and dinner will be prepared by local villagers and would be basic and vegetarian. However, if food is not available due to any unforeseen situation, ShodhYatris must be prepared mentally to cook food for themselves.

## (6) Expense during the travelling

The ShodhYatris have to bear all other expenses (travel, accommodation, food) incurred before and after the yatra. Any pick up or drop requested to be arranged by SRISTI (or any other requirement requested) would be charged as per actual and shared equally by the yatris availing the service. All payments made during the Yatra should be made in cash. SRISTI will not arrange any to and fro tickets from yatris native place to the destination.

## (7) During the Yatra: Points to note

Participants should be physically fit and mentally prepared to walk 15 to 18 km daily. In case a meeting or two in villages extends longer, yatra may continue in the late evening as well to reach the night halt place. An early start to the yatra in the morning may also be possible, which will be informed in the night before.

As the luggage of the ShodhYatris will be carried in a tractor trolley or a similar vehicle, it is requested to carry only a bag each avoiding unnecessary carriage. No facility of porter will be available and each ShodhYatri will have to load (in the morning before the yatra) and unload (at the night halt place in the evening) his luggage every day. No person would be allowed to travel on the accompanying vehicle except in an emergency or upon requirement. **If there are any doubts about your physical fitness, we advise you not to join the ShodhYatra.**

It is expected of the ShodhYatris not to walk with their friends or people known to them. This yatra gives an opportunity to all to interact and mingle with unknown people from different walks of life so one should make proper use of this opportunity. It will be pleasurable to walk with new friends, to talk to them and to learn with them and share ideas. **Please do not come with friends in picnic mood.**

All ShodhYatris are expected not to pollute the environment by throwing away empty wrappers of wafers, chocolates, etc and disposable cups, plates, water bottles or leftover food on the path, in villages and forests or elsewhere. Similarly, the lunch place and overnight stay place should be left clean.

To avoid any problems, like missing the route, mischief by unknown people, the ShodhYatris should try to walk together as a single group especially during evenings. All ShodhYatris should note down mobile/telephone number of ShodhYatra coordinators and local volunteers for use in case of an emergency.

It is **mandatory** for ShodhYatris to take prior permission from local people or farmers before plucking any flowers, or branches or root, fruit or bark etc. from anywhere. **Some places may be sacred and any such activity at such sacred groves is strictly prohibited.**

Also, rare species of the plants are precious to sustain local biodiversity so things must not be plucked or removed for either study or collection or out of curiosity.

**Consumption of tobacco, cigarette, alcohol/local toddy and any such item is strictly prohibited.**

During the yatra all participants are expected to carry some literature for dissemination (to be given by SRISTI) in their bags for distribution to the villagers.

Participants should take care of their belongings. Please also note that damage or loss of baggage will not be our responsibility.

All ShodhYatris are expected to follow the instructions and guidelines of the organizers or any other specifics given by local volunteers. **Anyone found guilty of not maintaining the decorum and violating the rules will be sent back immediately.**

#### **(8) Tackling emergency:**

The entire route has been planned and arrangements done. However, in case of any natural calamity or any other emergency, last minute changes may be done in the route or any planned activity. All ShodhYatris are expected to follow the advice of the ShodhYatra coordinators in such a situation.

Much of the route falls under local movements, all the ShodhYatris are expected to walk as a group and refrain from making any ideological, political statements, or discuss sensitive issues

of caste and religion, etc. within the group or outside. Our aim is to understand the life and culture of the people, explore the local biodiversity, discover and appreciate local creativity and mostly this should be the topic of discussion.

The coordinators/organizers will not be responsible in the event of any natural calamity or any other unforeseen situation beyond control.

**(9) Meeting:**

All ShodhYatra participants must remain present during the village meetings. The yatra coordinators will inform all the yatris about the next day's program the previous evening.

**(10) Registration Fee**

SRISTI welcomes the people who want to join the ShodhYatra with their family. In order to make arrangements for food, lodging and boarding, hiring and fuel charges of vehicle(s) for carrying luggage, generator etc., ShodhYatra participants have to deposit their contribution in advance. The amount mentioned below is for the entire ShodhYatra duration of eight days. In case, during the ShodhYatra any other necessary payment has to be made for anything arranged on the spot, the cost incurred would be shared equally by all and would be in addition to the below mentioned amount and collected there itself.

For farmers, tribes, artisans, mechanics and innovator/knowledge Holder	Rs. 1200/-
Students of the professional courses, teachers, professionals, servicemen, retired personnel etc. (This includes the 1 years subscription of Honey Bee / SujhBoojhaaspaaski)	Rs. 2000/-
N.R.I., foreigners and well-wishers (This includes the 1 years subscription of Honey Bee)	Rs. 5000/-

No refund claim would be entertained if any person desires to leave/ quit the ShodhYatramid way. Anyone wishing to participate even for a day or two needs to pay the total amount due for the entire ShodhYatra.

The money should be paid by Cheque, DD or MO (money order) in the name of "SRISTI" (SRISTI account Axis bank – 032010100012131, Vastrapur Branch, Ahmedabad) payable at Ahmedabad. Please send a Xerox of the deposit slip, and filled registration form; either by post / courier on SRISTI address or scan and email a copy to our email id (sristi100@gmail.com). Kindly remember to check the names, date, signature, amount, etc. of the cheque before sending it to SRISTI. The same should reach at least 30 days before the start of the ShodhYatra. It is necessary to make the follow-up to ensure the registration and amount deposited. The permission to join the ShodhYatra would be granted only after the receipt of signed registration forms with consent and the registration fees. SRISTI reserves the rights to allow or disallow any person to participate in the yatra.