

Bikaner hosts Maru Manthan, the desert forum from Feb 13



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Bikaner, February 11: Desert Resource Center, Urmul Group, is organising Maru Manthan, the desert forum amidst the sand dunes of Bajju, Bikaner, Rajasthan. The first of its kind forum for celebrating the uniqueness and emerging dynamics of hot and cold deserts around the world, the festival will be held on 13-14 February, 2021.

Anshul Ojha, Founder Director, Desert Research Center said, “As a festival, Maru Manthan will facilitate a space where desert communities, academics, civil society groups, policy makers and media gatekeepers will get together to share their experiences and celebrate their cultures. The festival, as a shared forum, will advance dialogue on innovations and alternatives around life in the desert and its relationship to desert ecology.”

Deserts are unique in their fabric and being. Maru Manthan is a vision to celebrate this uniqueness and provide a glimpse of the complexities that life among the sand dunes.

“With panel sessions, craft exhibits and inauguration of a camel milk center, this 2-day event pays tribute to the rhythm of life in the deserts and among desert dwellers. It is a homage to resilience, jubilations and innovations amidst living in a harsh environment with its challenges and scarcities”, Ojha said.

“As a space co-created with the desert communities from Rajasthan and elsewhere, Maru Manthan aims to collectively work towards enhancing an information regime and debate to help public policy around social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of life in the desert. The festival hopes to act as a catalyst in a change-making process in which desert communities are actively involved in decisions about their lives and their futures” Ojha added.

The key panelists include Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) representative in India Tomio Shichiri, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Ashok Dalwai.

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