



The Bhil Adivasis' Traditional Modes of Ecosystem Restoration

A lecture delivered by Dr. Rahul Banerjee

As part of the lecture series titled 'Dialogues on Development', the Baha'i Chair for Studies in Development at Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore is pleased to announce a lecture delivered online by Dr. Rahul Banerjee, Social Activist and Development Researcher on Wednesday, 3 January 2024 from 3 pm to 4.15 pm on the theme 'The Bhil Adivasis' Traditional Modes of Ecosystem Restoration'. Those interested in participating in the lecture may register at the following link: <https://forms.gle/CpDnQLU7o1JRYbQYA>

Abstract of the lecture:

The Bhil Adivasis worship nature as the life giver. Their Gods are the stones, trees and crops that make it possible for them to survive in the forested hills. They have over the centuries developed communitarian measures for preserving and restoring their ecosystems. The members of the Bhil Adivasi mass organisation Khedut Mazdoor Chetna Sangath have over the past four decades since 1983 conserved forests over 13000 hectares in 70 villages in Alirajpur district of Madhya Pradesh and also done soil and water conservation work in thousands of hectares. This massive ecosystem restoration work is of immense importance in the context of the three grave crises of climate change, water stress and soil degradation that the country is currently facing and so needs to be publicised widely.

About the speaker:

Rahul Banerjee a Distinguished Alumnus Awardee of IIT Kharagpur (B.Tech in Civil Eng) and a Doctorate from CEPT University Ahmedabad (Environmental Planning and Management) is a social activist and development researcher. He works along with the Bhil Adivasis to synthesise their traditional knowledge with modern skills and contribute to equitable and sustainable development as architects of their own future. Through the organisations Khedut Mazdoor Chetna Sangath, a trade union, Dhas Gramin Vikas Kendra, a public trust which won the Times of India Social Impact Award in 2011 and Mahila Jagat Lihaaz Samiti, a registered society, he has participated in promoting and preserving the indigenous knowledge, livelihoods and culture of the Bhil community and countered its internal patriarchy over a period of four decades using mass mobilisation, policy advocacy, media advocacy, project implementation, research and legal action.