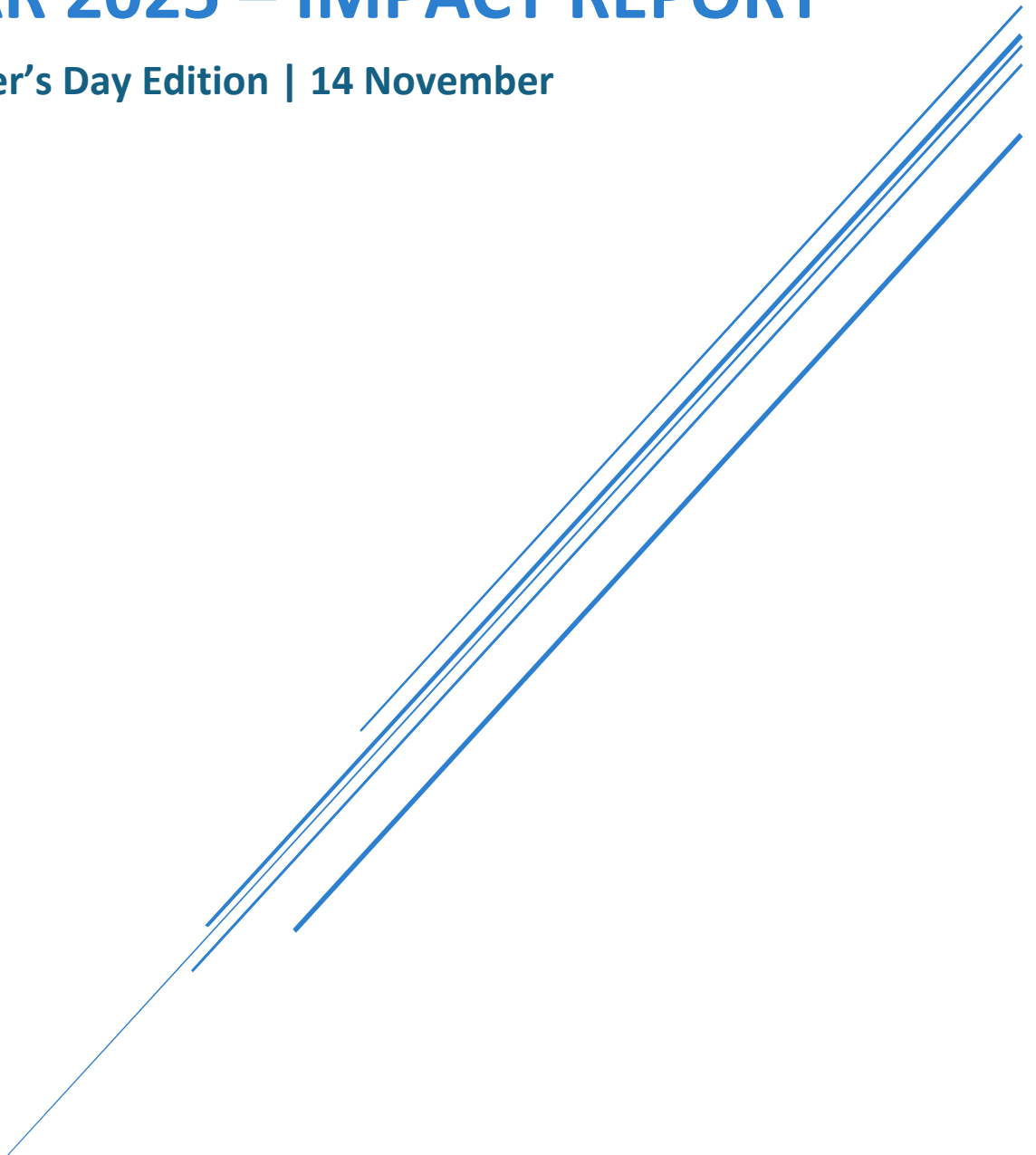




SAAR 2025 – IMPACT REPORT

Founder's Day Edition | 14 November



Development Office

Contents

1. SAAR 2025: Concept, Purpose and Vision.....	2
2. SHODH: Innovation and Technology Showcase.....	2
3. SWAPN: Arts, Empathy and Learning	4
4. SAARANSH: Leadership Dialogues for Social Change	5
4.1. Role of CSR and Philanthropy in Developing Higher Education in Tier-2 & Tier-3 Cities.....	6
4.2. Decoding Tech for Good in Higher Education.....	7
4.3. CSR and Building Risk-Tolerant Capital Pools for Social Innovation	8
5. SAMVAAD	9
6. Additional Founder’s Day Showcases	10
6.1. ACIC–BMU Foundation: Mera Business Stalls	10
6.2. Management Fair	11
7. Media Coverage & PR Amplification	12
8. Umeed Fund & Wall of Hope	12
SAAR 2025: Reflections and Way Forward	13

1. SAAR 2025: Concept, Purpose and Vision

SAAR—Showcase of Action, Achievement and Reflection—made its inaugural debut as part of the 2025 Founder’s Day celebrations at BML Munjal University. Designed as a tribute to the legacy and values of Padma Bhushan Late Dr. Brijmohan Lall Munjal, SAAR brought together the University’s diverse intellectual, creative, and innovative strengths across four anchor components: SHODH, SWAPN, SAARANSH, and SAMVAAD.

The first edition of SAAR was envisioned not merely as an exhibition of student work but as a campus-wide narrative that connected innovation, reflection, research, governance, and community engagement. Throughout the day, students, faculty, alumni, industry leaders, and external visitors experienced an ecosystem where engineering prototypes, social science installations, policy dialogues, and entrepreneurial products coexisted in a shared environment.

Complementing these pillars were two additional Founder’s Day showcases—the Mera Business Stalls, implemented by the ACIC–BMU Foundation, and the Management Fair, which highlighted the entrepreneurial, creative, and business abilities of BMU students. Together, these components demonstrated the University’s commitment to experiential learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, social responsibility, and leadership development.



2. SHODH: Innovation and Technology Showcase

SHODH served as a dynamic platform where the engineering community of BMU presented applied research, technological prototypes, and product development work across seven major domains: Deep Tech, Energy and Environment, FinTech, Health Tech, EduTech, Mobility and Transport, and Smart Automation. The exhibition was structured to mirror real-world innovation environments, enabling students and researchers to pitch their work, receive technical feedback, and engage in discussions on feasibility and scaling.

The 2025 edition of SHODH was **powered by the ACIC–BMU Foundation**, with support from **MeitY Startup Hub, AIM NITI Aayog, and the Startup India Seed Fund**, whose contributions strengthened the visibility and positioning of the showcase. Their collective commitment to nurturing innovation and early-stage technological development aligned with SHODH’s objective of enabling students and researchers to prototype, test, and refine solutions grounded in real-world application.

The SHODH showcase featured **9 student projects**, **6 faculty-led projects**, **2 research scholar projects**, and **11 startup displays** affiliated with or incubated at BMU. These contributions drew engagement from approximately **30 visitors from within the BML community** and **10–12 external visitors**. The diversity of participation created an intellectually rich environment, blending early-stage student ideas with more mature faculty-led research and industry-facing startup models.



Throughout the exhibition, external experts—including senior engineers and startup founders—conducted deep technical reviews. They examined aspects such as design integrity, innovation potential, technological feasibility, and opportunities for industry collaboration. Several prototypes were critically validated, opening conversations around potential technology transfer avenues and even early recruitment prospects for BMU students working in emerging domains.

While the event generated considerable interaction, the limited time available to external experts constrained the depth of feedback for the wide thematic range presented. Additionally, the adjacency of an MBA exhibition space reduced footfall clarity and affected the visibility of certain engineering displays. A key learning that emerged from this experience was the need to organise future SHODH showcases around **theme-specific expert review panels** and to consolidate displays into a single, high-visibility space to maintain focused engagement.

SHODH demonstrated the strength of BMU's engineering pedagogy and its capacity to cultivate solutions that are both academically rigorous and aligned with real-world technological needs.



3. SWAPN: Arts, Empathy and Learning

SWAPN represented the liberal studies ethos of BMU by foregrounding artistic expression, emotional reflection, and community-engaged learning. The showcase centred on the theme of **mental health**, treating it not as a peripheral concern but as an essential part of learning, identity, and campus life.

At the heart of SWAPN were the immersive installations created by second-year students drawing from their experiences at Bodh School, Alwar. Paintings, hand-made visual materials, poetry installations, and spatial extensions of their field observations transformed the E2 area into an environment of reflection, empathy, and stillness. These installations allowed students to translate fieldwork into lived narratives that visitors could experience rather than simply observe.



A striking element of SWAPN was the sculpture “Mirrors of Us,” created by Dr. Pranav Trigunayat, depicting a human body holding its own head. Visitors responded to this piece with handwritten reflections touching upon themes of burnout, identity, emotional pressure, and self-recognition. Over the course of the event, more than **90 reflective notes** were collected.

SWAPN also featured booths by the **Centre for Child and Youth Transition (CCYT)** and the **Community Transitions Research Centre (CTRC)**, which presented their work through brochures, infographics, and research narratives. Across the installations, booths, and interactive elements, the SWAPN showcase engaged **over 200 visitors**, distributed more than **50 informational brochures**, and involved **30 student contributors** and **nine faculty members** in design, curation, and facilitation.



Despite being in a quieter section of campus, the showcase drew deep engagement and sustained visitor interaction. Senior leadership—including the President, Vice Chancellor, and Registrar—spent time exploring the installations and offered strong commendations for the creativity, sensitivity, and academic depth demonstrated.

The main challenges were lower spontaneous footfall due to placement and the absence of the annual auction, which traditionally attracts movement. These informed recommendations for future editions: to position SWAPN within higher-traffic zones, reinstate a community-engagement feature like the auction, and incorporate guided walkthroughs and scheduled performances to enhance visitor engagement.

4. SAARANSH: Leadership Dialogues for Social Change

SAARANSH brought together senior leaders and decision-makers from India's largest CSR organisations, philanthropic institutions, technology-driven enterprises, and social innovation ecosystems. Each of the three panel discussions reflected pressing national and global themes, enabling students, faculty, and guests to engage with complex issues at the intersection of education, society, and industry.

BMU's convening ability was strongly demonstrated through the presence of CSR heads, foundation leaders, CEOs, senior partners, and sectoral experts representing companies with some of the largest CSR

budgets in India. Their participation reinforced BMU's growing reputation as a credible space for cross-sector dialogues.

4.1. Role of CSR and Philanthropy in Developing Higher Education in Tier-2 & Tier-3 Cities

The session was moderated by **Mr. Akshay Ahuja**, Lead – CSR, Hero MotoCorp Limited (CSR outlay ₹73.89 crore, FY 2023–24). With extensive experience across education, health, livelihoods and environment, he framed the discussion by outlining India's ₹35,000 crore national CSR corpus and emphasised the substantial 30 percent allocation to education.

The panel featured three distinguished leaders with deep expertise in academia–industry partnerships, multi-sector programme development, and CSR strategy:

- **Dr. Vartika Singh**, Additional Director, ASSOCHAM Foundation for CSR, a development sector professional with seventeen years of experience in strategic programme design, resource mobilisation, and nationwide CSR initiatives in education, health, sustainability, and skilling.
- **Mr. Sumit Chauhan**, Head – CSR, Mphasis (Mphasis F1 Foundation), who brings fifteen years of expertise in technology-led social investment across AI, quantum computing, inclusive education, and future-skilling, with a CSR portfolio of ₹35.47 crore (FY 2023–24).
- **Ms. Pritika Chand**, Head – CSR, Jindal Stainless Group (CSR outlay ₹63.60 crore), with nineteen years of experience leading large-scale programmes in women's empowerment, education, environment, and rural development across India.



Together, the panelists highlighted the structural barriers faced by students from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, particularly limited exposure, opportunities, and access to emerging sectors. They emphasised how CSR partnerships can help academic institutions close these opportunity gaps through aligned investments in skilling, technology adoption, and cross-sector collaboration.

BMU's own MoU with ICICI Foundation was referenced as an example of targeted partnership-building that strengthens experiential learning opportunities in renewable energy and future technologies. Panelists also shared real-world insights including ASSOCHAM's role in enabling student participation in national-level conferences, Mphasis Foundation's investments in inclusive technology education, and Jindal Stainless Foundation's work on integrated community development.

The discussion concluded that long-term CSR impact requires strategic partner selection, alignment with institutional vision, and sustained collaboration to deliver inclusive and scalable educational outcomes.

4.2. Decoding Tech for Good in Higher Education

The second panel examined how AI, automation, and digital infrastructure are reshaping access and equity in higher education. Speakers underscored that although AI as a technology is not new, its rapid commercial availability has expanded its relevance across learning, governance, and social impact.

The panel included:

- **Ms. Deepa Nagraj**, Global Head – Communications, ESG and Innovation Ecosystem, Mphasis (CSR outlay ₹35.47 crore), who leads global communication strategy, university partnerships, and ESG-linked innovation.
- **Mr. Irfan Bashir Shah**, Co-founder and CEO, DaanVeda, an AI-powered fundraising intelligence platform supporting nonprofit growth and digital transformation.
- **Ms. Mamta Saikia**, Educationist and Development Consultant, former CEO – Bharti Airtel Foundation, recognised for leading education programmes that reached seven million learners and for conceptualising TheTeacherApp.
- **Mr. Ashutosh Burnwal**, Founder and CEO, Buddy4Study, India's largest education funding platform enabling scholarship access for over one crore students.



The speakers encouraged students to identify one meaningful problem to solve, build resilience in their entrepreneurial journeys, document and patent innovations, and approach failures as integral to the innovation process. They highlighted how AI can bridge language and access barriers and help democratise learning, especially for underrepresented communities.

Key recommendations emerging from the panel included integrating AI awareness into foundational curricula, establishing structured mentorship channels, strengthening university–industry technology ecosystems, and launching an annual BMU “Tech for Good Challenge” to promote socially meaningful innovation.

4.3. CSR and Building Risk-Tolerant Capital Pools for Social Innovation

This session brought together some of India’s most influential CSR leaders, offering a high-level perspective on how corporations can move beyond compliance-driven philanthropy to build risk-tolerant, innovation-friendly CSR investments. Moderated by Professor Davinder Singh, CEO, ACIC–BMU Foundation, the discussion examined the evolution of CSR, the changing expectations of corporate social investment, and the opportunities for academic institutions to collaborate meaningfully with industry.

The panel included:

- **Ms. Sakina Baker**, Head – CSR, Bosch Limited and Bosch India Foundation
- **Ms. Aarti Mohan**, Co-founder and Partner, Sattva Consulting
- **Ms. Charu Chadha**, Independent Advisor; formerly Meta and Omidyar Network India
- **Mr. Sandeep Kumar**, Chief Operating Officer, ONGC Foundation
- **Mr. Uttam Lal**, Director (Personnel), NHPC Limited



Across the discussion, panelists underscored that CSR is increasingly viewed as a lever for shared value creation, enabling corporations to invest in community wellbeing while strengthening institutional trust and long-term organisational credibility. Speakers emphasised that sustained, theme-based investment—particularly in education, health, nutrition, and gender equity—creates deeper and more durable impact than short-term funding cycles.

Panelists highlighted that academic institutions have significant untapped potential to position themselves as CSR research and innovation partners. Institutions like BMU can access CSR-backed opportunities by presenting well-articulated research agendas, demonstrating governance strength, and engaging with companies through ongoing dialogue rather than one-off proposals. Opportunities include CSR-funded research, technology pilots, community-based initiatives, and sectoral studies aligned with national development priorities.

The discussion also brought attention to the need for risk-tolerant CSR capital, especially in areas such as civic technology, digital inclusion, and social innovation—domains where experimentation is essential but often underfunded. Drawing from their organisational experiences, panelists shared examples spanning skilling, nature conservation, gender-focused programmes, and public–private development models.

The session reaffirmed that India’s CSR ecosystem is entering a phase where industry–academia collaboration can drive scalable, evidence-backed social transformation. Universities like BMU have a clear opportunity to become knowledge partners, research collaborators, and innovation testbeds supporting the next generation of socially impactful CSR investments.

This panel traced the evolution of CSR from traditional philanthropy to structured, theme-based investments mandated by legislation. Speakers drew from their organisational experiences—including large-scale health and nutrition programs, girl-child education initiatives, and collaborations with premier public institutions—to highlight how CSR becomes mutually beneficial for corporations and communities.

They also underscored the opportunities available to academic institutions like BMU to engage in socially significant research backed by corporate funding. Academic institutions can meaningfully position themselves by presenting well-articulated research proposals, sustaining dialogue with CSR teams, and identifying areas of shared value.

5. SAMVAAD

SAMVAAD, curated by the School of Law, opened Founder’s Day with a reflective dialogue on India’s evolving role in a rapidly shifting global landscape. The session explored whether India is best understood as part of the Third World, a Middle Power, or a nation occupying a hybrid identity at a time of geopolitical realignments.

The conversation unfolded across three thematic axes: diplomacy, political thought, and regulatory architecture. Discussions addressed India’s commitment to global equity, its balancing act between development and climate justice, its contributions to global political thought, and the perceptions of foreign and domestic investors toward India’s regulatory landscape.

Moderated by Professor Prabhakar Singh, the panel featured distinguished speakers including Mr. Shyam Saran, Mr. Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Mr. Bharat Anand. Their contributions illuminated the philosophical, diplomatic, and regulatory dimensions of India’s global engagement and invited participants to consider India’s responsibilities and aspirations in an interconnected world.



6. Additional Founder's Day Showcases

6.1. ACIC–BMU Foundation: Mera Business Stalls

The Mera Business Program showcased the entrepreneurial journeys of ten women micro-entrepreneurs representing centres from Dehradun, Haridwar, Alwar, and neighbouring regions. Their products included crochet items, masalas, decorative thalis, compost goods, suits, snacks, amla candy, and cakes.

Participants earned between ₹2,000 and ₹6,000 during the event, demonstrating the practical impact of the Mera Business Program's capacity-building interventions. The stalls offered the entrepreneurs not only financial returns but also a valuable platform for visibility, confidence-building, and engagement with diverse audiences.



6.2. Management Fair

The Management Fair presented nearly 40 projects developed by 230 students of the MBA 2025–27 batch. The event captured BMU's pedagogy of experiential learning, with students presenting their ideas using models, mock-ups, prototypes, and business model charts. The fair drew participation from 100 faculty members and 100 visitors, offering opportunities for students to receive feedback from mentors and founders.

The visit by the leadership team added visibility and enthusiasm, reinforcing the importance of student innovation within the broader Founder's Day celebrations.



7. Media Coverage & PR Amplification

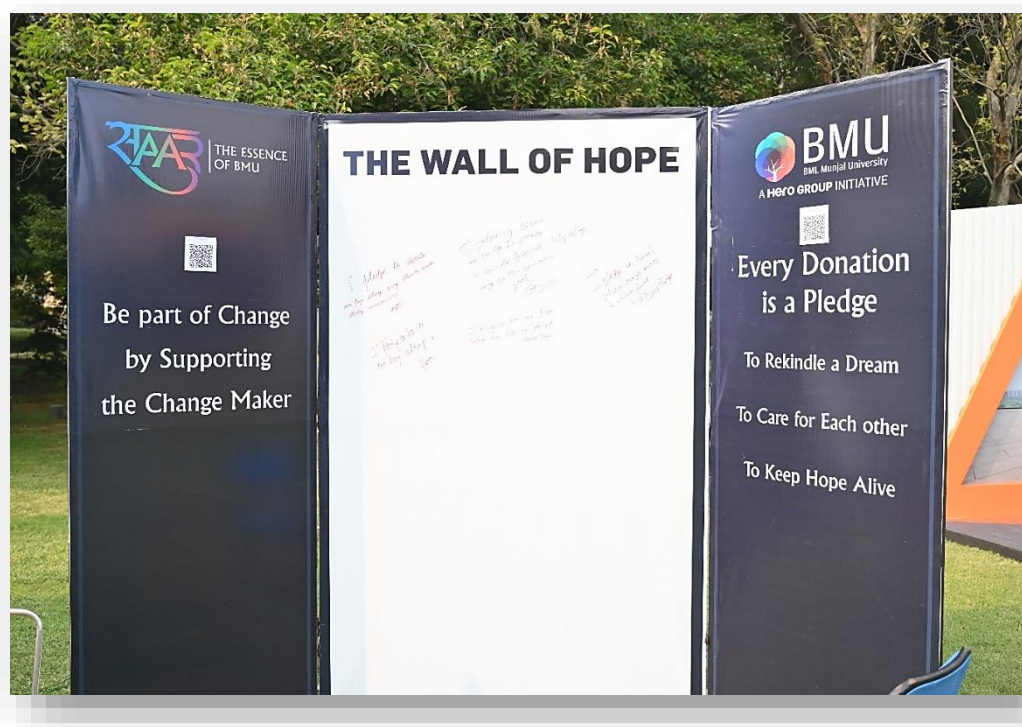
The first edition of SAAR generated substantial media attention, with 17 media impressions across regional and national outlets, including Punjab Kesari, India Education Diary, Virat Vaibhav, Sahara Express, and Dainik Savera. The coverage reached an estimated audience of 19,07,000, ensuring visibility for the strategic outcomes and partnerships announced during SAAR.

An exclusive pre-event interview with India Today featuring the Director, Development Office positioned SAAR as a forward-looking initiative that embodies BMU's interdisciplinary strengths and its emphasis on educational innovation.

8. Umeed Fund & Wall of Hope

As part of the Founder's Day celebrations, BML Munjal University launched the Umeed Fund, an emergency support mechanism rooted in the founder's vision that education must be a force for equity, resilience, and collective transformation. The fund reflects the University's commitment to ensuring that no student or staff member loses momentum in their academic or professional journey because of an unexpected crisis or personal setback.

Designed to offer swift, confidential, and need-based assistance, the Umeed Fund embodies the compassion and solidarity that define the BMU community. It represents a shared promise that every individual's potential will be protected, and no dream will be derailed by circumstances beyond their control.



To mark the launch, BMU introduced the **Wall of Hope**, a participatory space that invited the community to stand in support of one another. Several members of the BMU staff voluntarily pledged to contribute a portion of their salaries through recurring and one-time commitments. Collectively, these contributions

have resulted in an **approximate pledged amount of ₹15 lakh**, forming a strong foundation for the Fund's long-term sustainability.

Alongside the Wall of Hope, the Art Auction and Bake Sale enabled broader campus participation, turning acts of creativity and collaboration into meaningful contributions for peers in need. Each pledge, bid, and gesture of support reinforced the University's belief that education cannot be isolated from empathy, and that community resilience is strengthened when people come together with shared purpose.

The launch of the Umeed Fund reaffirmed BMU's mission to educate for equity within and empower for impact beyond. It stands as a testament to the founder's enduring ethos: that hope must never be passive, and that as a community, we have both the responsibility and the power to keep futures alive.

SAAR 2025: Reflections and Way Forward

SAAR 2025 established a powerful foundation for what promises to become a defining annual tradition at BMU. The event demonstrated the University's ability to bring together academic rigour, creative expression, technological innovation, and social responsibility. The participation of senior CSR heads, foundation leaders, founders, and distinguished scholars reaffirmed BMU's growing capacity to convene national-level conversations.

The integration of SHODH, SWAPN, SAARANSH, SAMVAAD, the Mera Business stalls, and the Management Fair created a holistic celebration of learning, reflection, innovation, and community impact. This blend of components offered a model for future editions of SAAR, reinforcing BMU's commitment to nurturing leaders who are reflective, innovative, socially conscious, and globally aware.