

At Social Alpha, we are in the middle of a great experiment, and everything will remain a work-in-progress.

This edition begins with a story of scientific excellence. Dr Anjana Badrinarayanan's work reminds us that breakthroughs do not happen overnight; they are built on years of careful observation, questioning, and a willingness to persist even when answers are slow to appear. Her recognition is a quiet but powerful affirmation of what disciplined science can unlock for all of us.

The stories that follow, from pilots finding their way into public systems to start-ups shaping better outcomes in agriculture, space, waste and urban sustainability, reflect a similar journey. Progress is rarely linear. But when innovators, governments, communities and partners stay committed to what is still unfinished, change becomes real, durable and shared.

Thank you for reading this edition. As always, we're grateful for your partnership and curiosity as we continue supporting science and innovation with purpose.

The Scientist Redefining Genome Stability

Dr Anjana Badrinarayanan, a leading molecular biologist and co-founder of Microbeworks Scientific, has been awarded the Infosys Prize 2025 in Life Sciences. A Clarendon Scholar at Oxford, Human Frontiers Fellow at MIT, and now Associate Professor at the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), she has built a research program recognised for its clarity and technical innovation. Her contributions have previously been recognised through distinctions such as the Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP) Career Development Award and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) Wellcome India Alliance Fellowship.

The prize this year recognises her pioneering contributions to understanding how cells repair DNA damage and maintain genome stability, a foundational question in biology with wide-ranging implications for health, evolution, and microbial behaviour. Using live-cell imaging and microfluidics-based microscopy developed in her laboratory, she has captured the dynamics of DNA repair in real time, revealing how specific proteins coordinate this intricate process. Her research has shown that mutations can occur even in non-dividing cells, reshaping long-held assumptions about microbial evolution and antibiotic resistance.

Her body of work stands as a powerful example of the scientific depth and a reminder of how fundamental science continues to shape new ideas, new capabilities, and the scientific ventures emerging from India's growing deep-tech ecosystem.



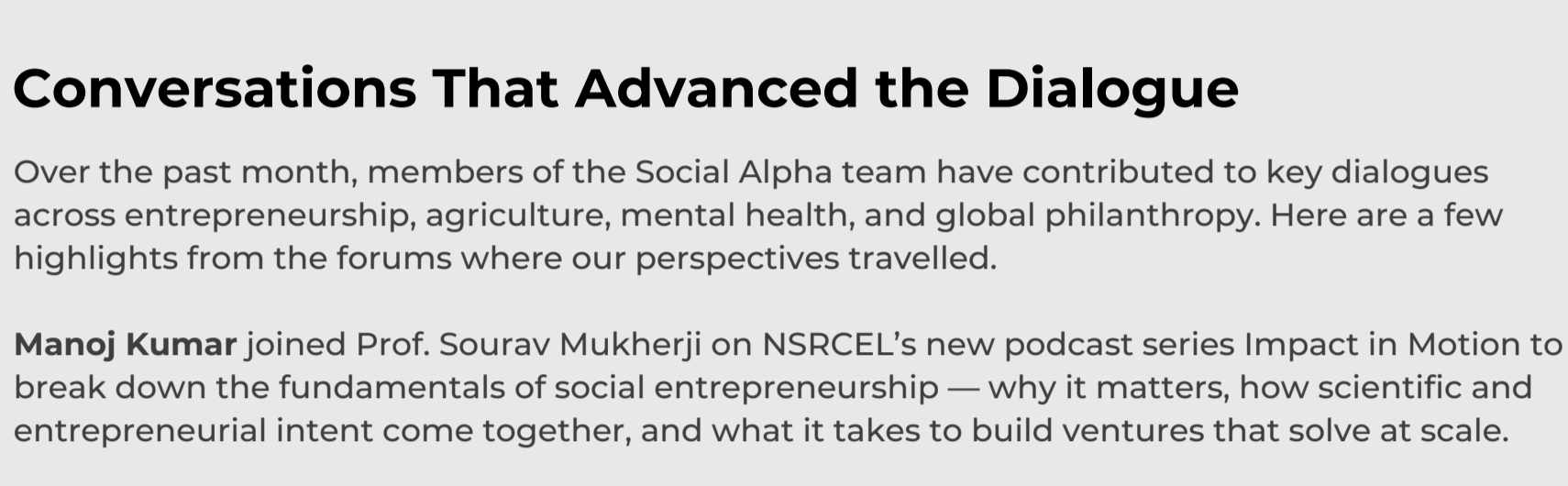
DR ANJANA BADRINARAYANAN, Co-Founder, Microbeworks Scientific

[Read more](#)

CENTRE STAGE

From Pilot to District Rollout: Gadchiroli Moves Forward

Sustain Plus has signed an MoU with the Gadchiroli district administration, formalising a partnership that enables us to scale proven technologies through existing government schemes. Facilitated by Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis, the agreement brings together the Agriculture Department, Zilla Parishad, and MSEDCL, marking a significant step in strengthening energy access and irrigation infrastructure for rural communities.



MONTHLY SCOOP

Conversations That Advanced the Dialogue

Over the past month, members of the Social Alpha team have contributed to key dialogues across entrepreneurship, agriculture, mental health, and global philanthropy. Here are a few highlights from the forums where our perspectives travelled.

Manoj Kumar joined Prof. Sourav Mukherji on NSRCEL's new podcast series *Impact in Motion* to break down the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship — why it matters, how scientific and entrepreneurial intent come together, and what it takes to build ventures that solve at scale.

To listen to the episode [Click here](#)



At the India Land Development Conference in Ahmedabad, **Ganesh Neelam** reflected on women-led solar livelihoods and farmer-centric agrovoltaics.

At Manotsava, the National Mental Health Festival, **Manaswini Pai** spoke about the role of equity, context, and collaboration in the design of digital mental health tools.



Onkar Pandey engaged with industry stakeholders on what drives agritech adoption on the ground, while **Ratish Charan** joined the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)'s national workshop in Udaipur on agriculture and livestock entrepreneurship.



At Impact Week in Malmö, **Shaily Shah** joined a panel on strengthening global innovation ecosystems, highlighting why patient capital and collaborative intent are essential to move deep-science solutions from lab to community.



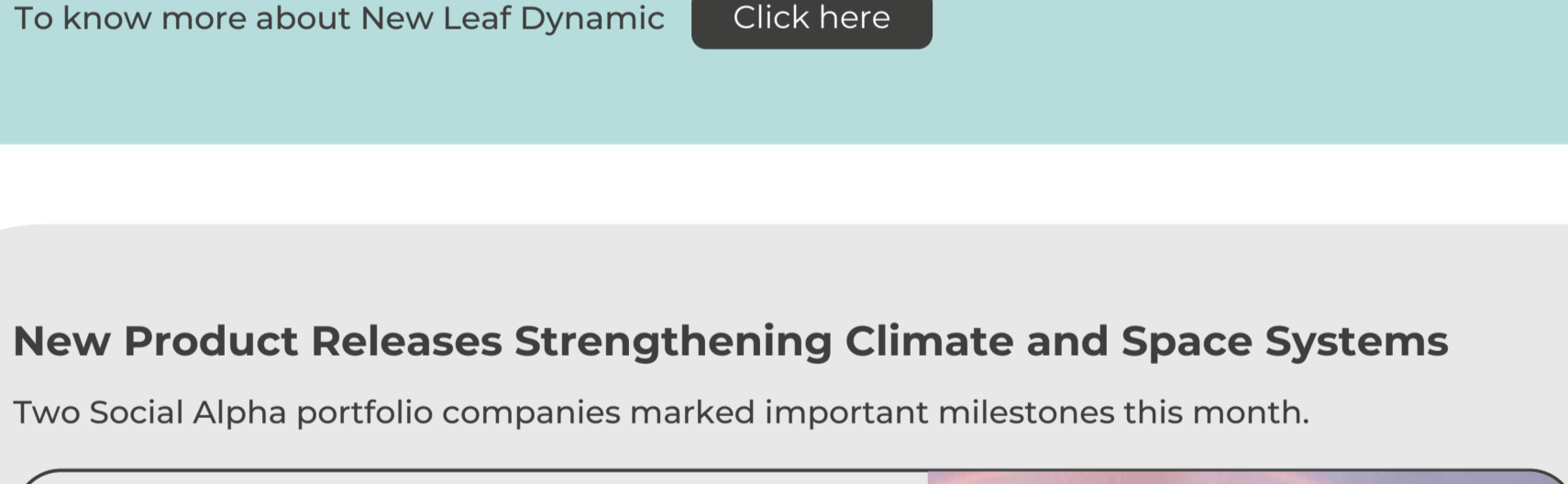
Across these forums, a shared theme stood out — progress is collective, and meaningful innovation demands humility, rigour and partnership.

Adapting Mechanisation to Climate-Stressed Terrains

Stepupify, a Social Alpha portfolio company, recently demonstrated its battery-operated maize sheller for farmers in hilly regions, where the physical effort of moving produce up and down slopes significantly constrains productivity. The portable design allows maize to be shelled directly at the point of harvest, reducing drudgery and cutting post-harvest losses in areas that are often off-grid and hard to mechanise.

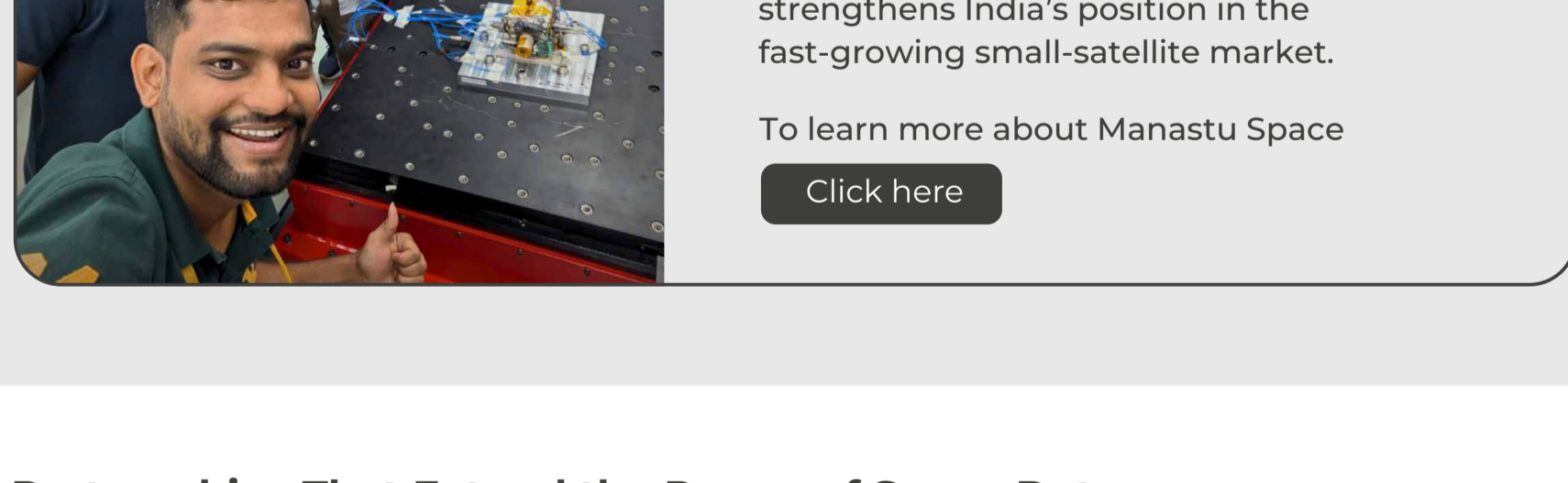
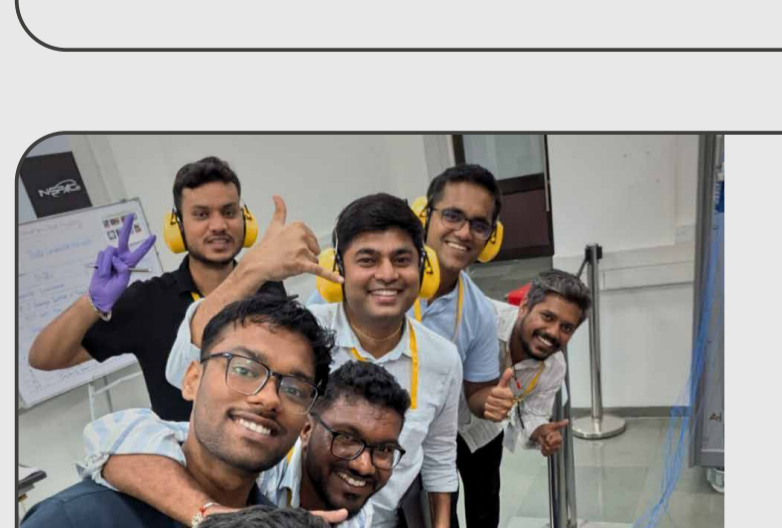
The scattered terrain revealed a strong interest in compact, mobile tools that can operate in scattered, steep terrains where conventional farm machinery is impractical. This points to a broader insight: climate-smart agriculture in such geographies depends on solutions that are not only efficient but also designed to travel with the farmer.

As climate variability sharpens these constraints, lightweight, battery-powered technologies like Stepupify's offer a glimpse of how accessible mechanisation can strengthen resilience for smallholders farming at the last mile.



Advancing Sustainable Urban Systems in Trivandrum

Four Social Alpha portfolio innovations were recently deployed in Trivandrum, Kerala under the One Local Government One Idea (OLOI) – Innovation in Sustainable Urban Transition program, each inaugurated by the Honourable Mayor of Trivandrum. The deployments include Accelero's e-carts for 15 Haritha Karma Sena workers to support plastic-waste collection; Tellus Habitat's 15 KLD and Lambert Water's 20 KLD sewage-treatment systems at Vizhinjam Harbour, providing safe sanitation for 110 families who previously had no means of sewage treatment; and Albatross's energy-efficient liquid desiccant cooling system installed at the Trivandrum Corporation office. Together, these solutions strengthen waste management, sanitation, and sustainable cooling in the city.

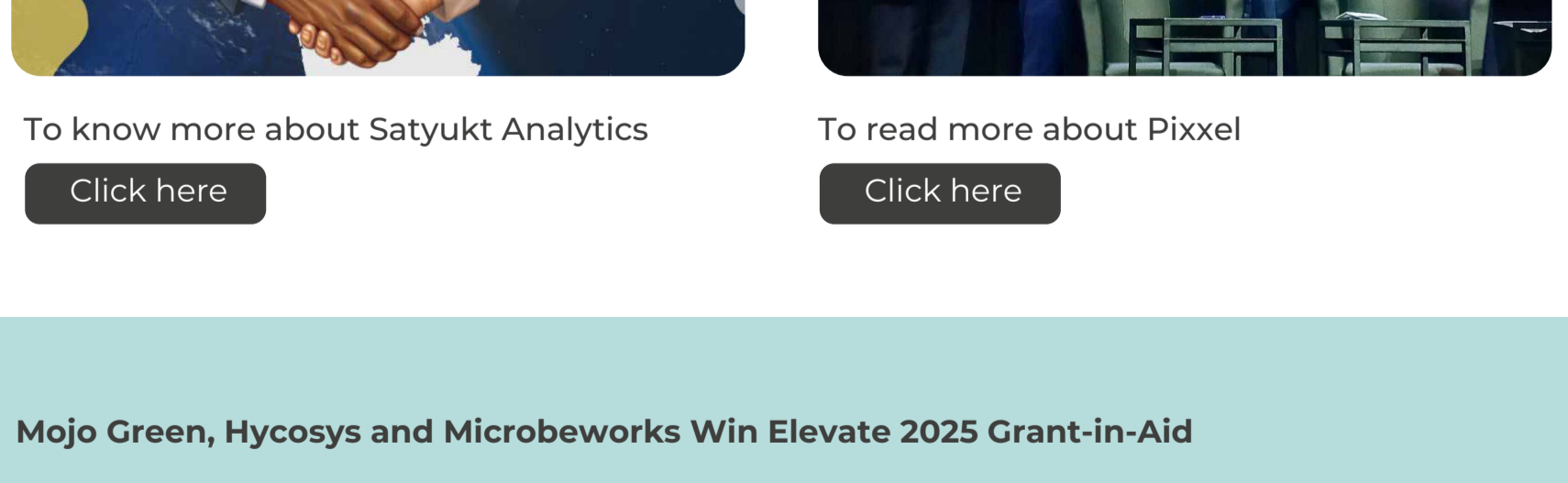


START-UP SHOUT-OUT

New Leaf Dynamic Secures First State Tender for Biomass Cooling

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has issued its first tender for biomass-based cooling chambers to New Leaf Dynamic. Three units have been approved for a pilot in Gorakhpur, with two additional deployments planned for Varanasi and Ghaziabad. If successful, the model is expected to be scaled across the state, marking a significant opportunity for decentralised, low-carbon cooling in fresh-produce markets.

To know more about New Leaf Dynamic [Click here](#)

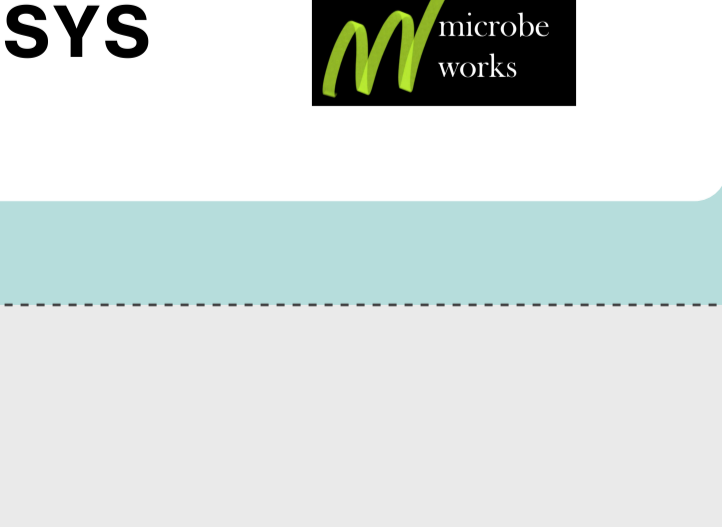


New Product Releases Strengthening Climate and Space Systems

Two Social Alpha portfolio companies marked important milestones this month.

Takachar announced commercial availability of the Takavator 1000, a compact, field-ready system for converting crop and forest residues into biochar. The new model offers ten times the throughput of its earlier version and has already been tested in deployments processing more than 20,000 tonnes of biomass annually, helping reduce open burning and enabling low-carbon rural livelihoods.

To read more about Takachar [Click here](#)



Manastu Space introduced Sharanga, a next-generation propulsion system for small satellites. Designed to be lightweight, precise and compatible with CubeSats, Sharanga has been successfully tested at the IN-SPACE facility in Ahmedabad. It demonstrates Manastu's capability to move quickly from research to flight-ready technology and strengthens India's position in the fast-growing small-satellite market.

To learn more about Manastu Space [Click here](#)

Partnerships That Extend the Power of Space Data

Two portfolio companies entered partnerships this month that broaden the use of satellite-enabled insights across sectors and geographies.

Satyukt Analytics has partnered with ESY LYF India to extend satellite-based decision-support tools to farmers and agri-businesses across Karnataka, strengthening access to timely, data-driven farm intelligence.

Pixel signed an MoU with the Cyprus Space Exploration Organisation (CSEO) to apply hyperspectral imaging for environmental monitoring and policy efforts in Cyprus, demonstrating how high-resolution space data can support national planning and sustainability goals.



To know more about Satyukt Analytics [Click here](#)



To read more about Pixel [Click here](#)

Mojo Green, Hycosys and Microbeworks Win Elevate 2025 Grant-in-Aid

Three Social Alpha portfolio start-ups, Mojo Green, Hycosys and Microbeworks, have been selected for Elevate 2025, the Government of Karnataka's flagship grant-in-aid program for early-stage innovators. Run by the Department of Electronics, IT and BT, Elevate 2025 will support them with funding and mentorship to accelerate product development and market entry. Selected companies receive a one-time grant of up to ₹50 lakh to advance prototyping, validation, and scale-up.

IN THE MEDIA

The Swaminathan Plan to Fix India's Air Pollution

To watch the episode [Click here](#)

RECV Environmental Solutions: From IS33 Start-up of the Month to Pioneer in Resource Recovery from Waste

To read the article [Click here](#)

What Will it Take for India to Lead On Deep Tech and the Global Space Race?

To read the article [Click here](#)

Ep 18: What is Retail Fundraising? The Opportunity (1/2) | Raahi Explainer ft. Dhaval Udani, Danamojo

To watch the episode [Click here](#)

At Social Alpha, we are on a mission to drive Economic Growth, Social Justice and Climate Action through the power of Entrepreneurship and Market-creating Innovations.

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