

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2058
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 05th AUGUST, 2026

Livelihood opportunities for Irula tribal community

2058. Shri Constandine Ravindran:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has formulated programmes for promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities for the Irula tribal community in Tamil Nadu through beekeeping, mangrove-based enterprises, non-timber forest produce and other nature-based economic activities;
- (b) the details of financial assistance, skill development, entrepreneurship training and marketing support provided by Government to Irula tribal families for honey production, value addition, branding and income generation; and
- (c) the initiatives introduced by Government in collaboration with research institutions, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation (TRIFED), State agencies and self-help groups to strengthen tribal livelihoods linked to mangrove ecosystems?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (TRIBAL AFFAIRS)
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

(a) to (c): The Government promotes sustainable livelihood opportunities for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), including the Irula tribal community in Tamil Nadu, through the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN). Under the scheme, TRIFED has sanctioned 37 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) in 7 districts of Tamil Nadu – Tirupathur, Chengalpattu, Namakkal, Ariyalur, The Nilgiris, Tiruvannamalai and Coimbatore – with a total sanctioned amount of Rs. 120.15 lakh, of which Rs. 60.08 lakh has been released, associating 2,403 beneficiaries. Of these, 34 VDVKs cover 2,135 beneficiaries belonging to the Irula tribal community (district-wise details at **Annexure-I**). These VDVKs support value addition and marketing of locally available Minor Forest Produce (MFP) – including wild honey, spices, cashew, broom sticks, herbs, tamarind and soap nut – collected by the Irula community, which is sold through local markets, fairs and exhibitions. Value-added products worth Rs. 75.89 lakh have been sold by Irula beneficiaries.

Annexure-I

Annexure-I as referred to in reply to part (a) to (c) of RSUQ No. 2058 for answer on 05.08.2026 regarding Livelihood opportunities for Irula tribal community

Tamil Nadu District-wise Details of Irula Tribal Community under PM-JANMAN

Sl. No.	District	Tribe	No. of VDVks Sanctioned	No. of Beneficiaries	Sanctioned Fund (Rs. in Lakh)	Released Fund (Rs. in Lakh)	Product chosen for Value Addition	Sales (Rs. in Lakh)
1	Tirupathur	Irula	2	134	6.70	3.35	Honey & Tamarind	0.29
2	Chengalpattu	Irula	2	107	5.35	2.67	Herbs	1.46
3	The Nilgiris	Irula	3	360	18.00	9.00	Honey & Spices	61.79
4	Namakkal	Irula	4	240	12.00	6.00	Palm leaves	0.36
5	Ariyalur	Irula	5	261	13.05	6.53	Raw Cashew	11.31
6	Tiruvannamalai	Irula	8	449	22.45	11.22	Honey, Forest Yam & Tamarind	0.21
7	Coimbatore	Irula	10	584	29.20	14.60	Broom Stick, Honey, Soap Nut & Tamarind	0.47
Total			34	2,135	106.75	53.375		75.89
