

VAN DHAN FOR JAAN AND JAHAN: THE STORY OF SHAHAPUR'S KATKARI TRIBE

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of STs, SCs, and OBCs - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

Mumbai, May 24, 2020

What can come out of a group of a few dedicated boys led by an able leader and enabling support from government organisations? A lot, apparently.

This has been proved yet again, by “Adivasi Ekatmik Samajik Sanstha” of Shahapur in Thane, which markets Giloy and other products. Giloy is a medicinal plant with huge demand from pharmaceutical companies.

The journey started when Sunil Pawar, a youth from Katkari () community, and his team of 10 -12 friends started facilitating various works of Katkari tribals at revenue offices in his native place. Katkari is one of the 75 [Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups](#), as per the classification by Ministry of Home Affairs.

There are certain tribal communities who use a pre-agricultural level of technology, face stagnant or declining population growth, and are equipped with only an extremely low level of literacy and a subsistence level of economy. 75 such groups of tribals in 18 States and one Union Territory have been identified and categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

Sunil Pawar, a young lad and his friends started this enterprise of selling giloy in local markets. A good samaritan in the form of Shri Arun Pansare saw their efforts and offered them a place to start their office. Once they started working from an office situated near the market area, more tribals came to know about it and started joining them.



Sunil Pawar meanwhile came across an advertisement of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana run by [TRIFED](#), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India in association with Nodal Agency - ST Welfare Department, Govt. of Maharashtra.



Sunil approached them for help which he readily received and soon the demand for giloy picked up. Called in Ayurveda, giloy is used in medicines which treat various kinds of fever (viral fever, malaria, etc.) as well as diabetes. It is used in extract form, powder form or cream.

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“Not confining ourselves to local market and pharma companies, we plan to take giloy to far away markets with the help of big retail chains like D-Mart. We have created [a website](#) too. Online sale is happening through it during lockdown period. Government is forthcoming in issuing passes to us so that produce can be transported and sold without hindrance”, Shri Pawar said.

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Efforts were made by Adivasi Ekatmik Samajik Sanstha, Shahapur co-ordinated by Sunil to not only expand

the market for the produce but also to diversify into other forest products. They have started collecting and selling the 7 types of Samidha (sacrificial offerings made mostly of wood) which are offered in the holy fire during the performance of Puja.

“Shabari Adivasi Vitta Vikas Mahamandal plans to train these SHGs in establishing backward and forward linkages for their produce. In backward linkages, we will train tribals about how to pick giloy without affecting its long-term availability, this way it will be available for a longer period and they will also be taught about plantation of the same. In forward linkages, we will train them to process the giloy into making different products which will fetch better price for them,” said Shri Nitin Patil, Managing Director of the Shabari Adivasi Vitta Mahamandal under Government of Maharashtra.



[Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana](#) provides working capital for these SHGs. So they don't have to sell their produce in distress, moreover they can immediately pay tribals for produce they have picked up, this greatly helps tribals in having steady income, Shri Patil informed.

PS:

Youth from Maharashtra desirous of undertaking Adivasi Ekatmik Samajik Sanstha - like activity can contact Ms. Rutuja Pangaonkar on 8879585123 for guidance and assistance.

Background

Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) is a retail marketing led value addition plan for Minor Forest Produce (MFP), meant for forest-based tribes to optimize the tribal income, locally. Under the program, MFP-based tribal groups / enterprises of around 300 members are formed for collection, value addition, packaging

& marketing of Minor Forest Produces (MFPs).

These tribal enterprises will be in the form of Van Dhan SHGs which will be a group of 15-20 members and such 15 SHG groups will further be federated into a larger group of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKS) of around 300 members.

TRIFED will support the VDVKS through providing them with model business plans, processing plans & tentative list of equipment for carrying out the value addition work of MFPs. The details would be made available on the TRIFED's website.

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