

From Traditional skills to Rural Enterprises: How KVIC is creating new Livelihoods

From Struggles to Success: KVIC is Inspiring Entrepreneurial Journeys

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Across rural India, traditional skills and locally available resources are increasingly becoming the foundation for new entrepreneurial opportunities. From scientific beekeeping and value-added honey products to vetiver-based enterprises and banana-fibre products, rural entrepreneurs are demonstrating how local knowledge can be transformed into viable businesses and livelihood opportunities.

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), is supporting this transformation through training, financial assistance, improved tools and technology, market support and other interventions. Through initiatives such as the Khadi Vikas Yojana (KVV), Gramodyog Vikas Yojana (GVY) and the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), traditional skills are being strengthened with modern enterprise capabilities, enabling artisans and rural entrepreneurs to create sustainable livelihoods.

From Struggles to Success: Inspiring Entrepreneurial Journeys:

1. Shri T. Ajin: From Beekeeping to Building Livelihoods

In Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, Shri T. Ajin has turned his knowledge of beekeeping into a successful honey enterprise through his unit, **Marthandam Honey Products**. The enterprise produces AGMARK-certified honey and honey blended with dry fruits, adding value to traditional beekeeping.



But Shri Ajin's contribution goes beyond his own enterprise. He trains farmers, particularly those from economically weaker sections and SC/ST communities, in modern beekeeping practices. He has also participated in State, Regional and District-level programmes, besides sharing his knowledge through All India Radio and Doordarshan.

His journey shows that how an entrepreneur can create impact through a successful business, and also by helping others in the community to find their own livelihood opportunities.

2. Shri B. Sundaraj: Turning Vetiver into an Enterprise

For Shri B. Sundaraj, a naturally fragrant plant became the foundation for a new business opportunity. Through his **Pure Health Herbal Agarbathi Unit**, he produces Agarbathi, herbal products, Vetiver Agarbathi and Vetiver Samburani.



With support under the **Gramodyog Vikas Yojana (GVY)** during 2024–25, Shri Sundaraj strengthened his manufacturing capabilities and expanded his product range. His story is an example of how local resources, traditional knowledge and a business idea can come together to create a sustainable village enterprise.

3. Shri M. Murugesan: Giving Agricultural Waste a New Life

Shri M. Murugesan has built an enterprise around this idea through his **Banana Fibre Fancy Articles Making Unit** under PMEGP. Through Om Banana Craft Private Limited, he converts banana fibre into attractive and useful fancy articles, showing how agricultural resources can be transformed into value-added products.



His work has also earned him Central and State Government awards. He regularly participates in exhibitions and awareness programmes and shares his knowledge through All India Radio, Doordarshan and training programmes. His journey demonstrates that rural enterprises can create value through new product development while making better use of local and natural resources.

Honey Mission: Turning Beekeeping into a Livelihood

One of the prominent initiatives in this journey is the Honey Mission, launched in 2017 to promote scientific beekeeping and create livelihood opportunities for farmers, tribal communities and unemployed youth. Under the programme, beneficiaries receive training along with bee boxes, live bee colonies and related toolkits. This enables them to take up beekeeping and gradually build it into a source of income.



The scale of the initiative can be seen in the numbers. According to the KVIC, around **2,46,000 bee boxes and bee colonies were distributed across the country between 2017–18 and 2025–26**, which resulted in around **5,500 metric tonnes of honey production during 2025–26**.

More Than Honey

Beekeeping creates opportunities beyond honey production. Bees play an important role in pollination, creating a natural link between beekeeping, agriculture and biodiversity. Indian honey bees are cultivated by beekeepers across several States, including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and the North-Eastern States, with livelihoods dependent on the activity.

Beekeeping can therefore serve not merely as a source of supplementary income, but as an entry point into a broader rural enterprise ecosystem.

From Tradition to Enterprise

The experiences of Shri T. Ajin, Shri B. Sundaraj and Shri M. Murugesan illustrate a larger opportunity for rural India: traditional skills and local resources can become the starting point for modern enterprises when supported by training, technology, finance, market access and entrepreneurship.

Through its network of programmes and interventions, KVIC continues to support this transition—helping rural communities preserve their traditional strengths while creating new economic opportunities around them.

From tradition to enterprise, from local resources to value-added products, and from individual skills to wider livelihoods, India's village industries are becoming an important part of the country's rural entrepreneurship story.

For details, please visit the website: <https://www.kvic.gov.in/kvicres/index.php>

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