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Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission Strengthens Tribal Forest Economy through Value Addition, Market Linkages and Community Entrepreneurship

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Recent Developments:

- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** has continued to use the **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)** to strengthen tribal entrepreneurship, livelihood opportunities and value addition of **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** and other tribal products through **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)**.
- As of **13 August 2026**, **4,712 VDVks** had been sanctioned across **28 States/UTs**, covering **12.94 lakh beneficiaries**, while **3,406 VDVks** were operational; the combined sanctioned amount under PMJVM and PM-JANMAN was **₹642.19 crore**.
- Under PMJVM specifically, the Ministry reported **4,172 VDVks**, covering **12.48 lakh tribal members**, with **3,406 operational VDVks** and value-added product sales of approximately **₹174 crore**.
- The government has notified **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for 87 MFP items**, expanding the price-support mechanism beyond its initial coverage of 10 MFP items in 2013–14.

What is Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission?

About the Mission:

- **PMJVM** is a **Central Sector Scheme** of the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, implemented through the **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED)** and State Nodal Departments and State Implementing Agencies.
- The Mission was created by merging the earlier schemes relating to **MSP for MFP and development of the MFP value chain** and **institutional support for development and marketing of tribal products and produce**.
- It seeks to create **livelihood-driven tribal development** by integrating production, procurement, primary processing, value addition, branding, marketing and market access through backward and forward linkages.
- The broader objective is to shift tribal communities from dependence on the sale of **raw forest produce** towards collective ownership of **processing, enterprise development and value-added marketing**.

Major Components:

- The Mission supports **MSP-based procurement of MFP, VDVks, Van Dhan Producer Enterprises, value addition, skill development, branding, e-commerce, marketing infrastructure, storage and market linkages**.
- The scheme also provides for supporting infrastructure such as **Haat Bazars and warehouses**, thereby addressing storage losses, weak bargaining power and inadequate market access.
- An approved outlay of **₹1,612 crore for five years** has been associated with PMJVM, with provisions for **3,000 Haat Bazars and 600 warehouses** to strengthen the tribal produce supply chain.

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- A maximum of **₹15 lakh** is provided to State Governments for establishing one VDVK, covering **raw material, training, capacity building, toolkits, machinery, mentoring, packaging, branding, transportation and storage.**

Minor Forest Produce and Tribal Livelihoods:

Meaning and Importance of MFP:

- **Minor Forest Produce** broadly includes non-timber forest products collected by forest-dependent communities, such as **bamboo, cane, tussar cocoons, honey, wax, lac, tendleaves, mahua flowers, tamarind, medicinal plants, roots, tubers and wild herbs.**
- MFP provides an important source of **subsistence income and cash income** for many forest-dependent tribal households, particularly during periods when agricultural employment is limited.
- The economic problem is often not the absence of natural resources but the **low value captured by primary collectors** because of inadequate processing, storage, market information and bargaining power.

Legal Protection under the Forest Rights Act:

- The **Forest Rights Act, 2006** recognises the rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers over **Minor Forest Produce**, including the right to collect, use and dispose of such produce.
- This provision is important because it links **livelihood security with community-level forest rights**, rather than treating forest produce merely as a state-controlled resource.

PESA and Community Ownership:

- The **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** recognises the ownership of **Gram Sabhas or Panchayats at the appropriate level over Minor Forest Produce** in Scheduled Areas.
- PESA therefore strengthens the principle of **local self-governance and community control over forest-based economic resources.**

MSP Mechanism for Minor Forest Produce:

Price Support:

- Under PMJVM, the government notifies **MSP for 87 MFP items** and provides revolving funds to State Implementing Agencies for procurement when market prices fall below the notified MSP.
- The mechanism aims to protect tribal gatherers from **distress sales**, particularly when local traders offer prices substantially below the economic value of the produce.
- Since the programme began in **2013–14**, State Governments have procured approximately **2,67,954 metric tonnes of MFP worth ₹693.98 crore.**
- TRIFED works with State Implementing Agencies, including tribal development cooperatives and other designated institutions, to strengthen procurement and marketing.

Persistent Challenges:

- Tribal collectors may continue to depend on **middlemen**, who can purchase raw produce at low prices because collectors often lack storage facilities, transportation, processing capacity and reliable market information.
- The major policy challenge is therefore to ensure that **MSP protection is complemented by value addition and direct market access**, rather than functioning only as a procurement mechanism.

Van Dhan Vikas Kendras:

Institutional Model:

- VDVKs organise tribal gatherers into **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and clusters so that small producers can achieve economies of scale in procurement, processing and marketing.
- A typical PMJVM VDVK comprises approximately **15 Van Dhan SHGs**, with up to **300 members**, thereby creating a community-based enterprise structure.
- The **Van Dhan Yojana**, launched on **14 April 2018**, provides the operational foundation for the VDVK model.

From Raw Produce to Value-Added Products:

- VDVKs provide training in **scientific harvesting, sustainable collection, primary processing, value addition, packaging and branding**, along with tools and equipment.
- Tribal producers can transform raw materials into **higher-value products**, thereby increasing income and reducing dependence on intermediaries.
- Examples include converting forest and agricultural produce into **pickles, powders, jams, squashes and other processed products** suitable for organised markets.

Marketing and Digital Linkages:

- VDVKs are connected with **Haat Bazars, exhibitions, private partners, non-profit organisations and digital platforms** for wider market access.
- TRIFED supports **market intelligence, branding, promotion and e-commerce**, enabling tribal enterprises to respond more effectively to market demand.
- Such linkages help shift tribal producers from **price-takers to market-oriented entrepreneurs**.

Tribal Women Empowerment:

Women-Led Enterprises:

- Tribal women undertake a substantial share of **MFP collection, processing and local sales**, making VDVKs important instruments of women's economic empowerment.
- Under PMJVM, the government has explicitly linked tribal entrepreneurship with livelihood opportunities for **both tribal men and women**.
- As of August 2026, training had been provided to beneficiaries of **2,922 VDVKs**, covering **7.13 lakh beneficiaries**, in sustainable collection, processing, value addition, packaging, branding and marketing.
- Collective enterprise ownership can provide women with greater participation in **production decisions, branding, marketing and income generation**, rather than restricting them to unpaid or low-paid labour.

Way Forward:

- Strengthen **producer-owned enterprises** and cooperative models so that tribal communities retain a larger share of the final consumer value.
- Expand **quality certification, geographical indications, traceability and branding** for distinctive tribal products.
- Integrate VDVKs with **digital commerce, organised retail, tourism markets and government procurement**.
- Promote **climate-resilient harvesting, sustainable collection protocols and community-based resource management**.

Conclusion:

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- **PMJVM** represents a shift from welfare-oriented support towards **tribal enterprise development**, where forest-dependent communities participate in procurement, processing, value addition and marketing.
- The **MSP mechanism** can protect collectors from distress sales, while **VDVKs** can create the institutional platform required to convert dispersed forest produce into commercially viable products.
- The long-term success of the Mission will depend on whether tribal communities can move beyond being **raw-produce collectors to owners and entrepreneurs within the value chain**.

Value Addition for UPSC:

Prelims Pointers:

- **PMJVM:** Central Sector Scheme of the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.
- **Implementing Agency:** **TRIFED**.
- **MSP coverage:** **87 MFP items**.
- **VDVK structure:** Approximately **15 SHGs**, with up to **300 members** per VDVK.
- **VDVK establishment support:** Up to **₹15 lakh**.
- **Latest PMJVM status:** **4,172 VDVks**, **12.48 lakh beneficiaries**, and **3,406 operational VDVks** as reported in August 2026.
- **MFP procurement since 2013–14:** Approximately **2,67,954 metric tonnes worth ₹693.98 crore**.
- **Legal linkage:** **Forest Rights Act, 2006** recognises forest-dwelling communities' rights over MFP, while **PESA, 1996** recognises community-level ownership over MFP in Scheduled Areas.

Mains Question:

“Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission seeks to transform tribal communities from collectors of forest produce into value-adding entrepreneurs. Examine its potential for tribal empowerment and discuss the challenges that may limit its effectiveness.”