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**Velappar Koil - Paliya Tribals - Traditional Herbal Shop for Tribals**

Theni District consists of many hills and forest areas, which are inhabited by tribals. These people possess an abundant knowledge of traditional herbs that can cure common illnesses. Velappar Koil, a forest area, is situated in Aundipatti union. It has a Murugan Temple that attracts tourists and devotees. The temple is maintained by tribals themselves. These tribals earn a livelihood by collecting herbs and sell them to medicine manufacturers.

**Intervention of Vazhdhu Kaattuvom Project**

An intervention was made under the Vazhdhu Kattuvom Project to improve the earning of tribals. They were made aware of a livelihood opportunity and the Village Poverty Reduction Committee provided Rs.50,000 to them to set up a shop to sell herbal medicines. Five beneficiaries -- K.Selvi, S.Meenakshi, T.Kalaiarasi, P.Chinna Velthai and A.Velmani -- were identified and given Rs 10000 each. A shop was built at a cost of Rs. 25000 and the remaining money used for buying herbal materials.

The Collector inaugurated the shop on Thai Poosam day near the temple and herbal medicines worth Rs. 4000 were sold on the first day.

The tribals are confident of earning Rs. 3000 - 5000 a month.