

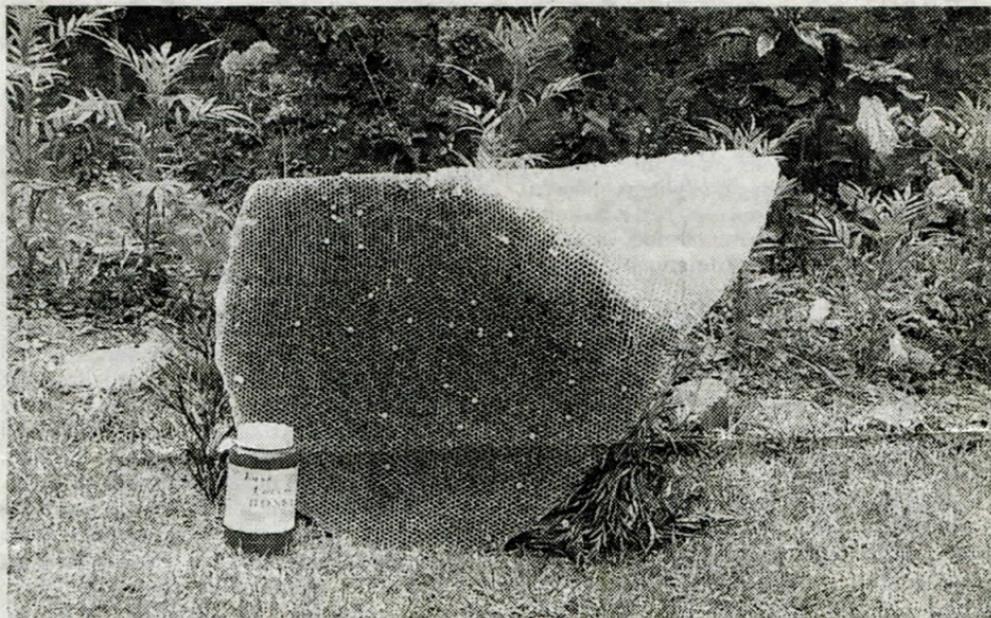
Reporter's Diary

That, honey or, "jenu" in local parlance, has for ages been a popular product of the Blue Mountains, is well known. However, not many even here are aware of an activity of an organisation in Kotagiri, connected with the sweet, viscous, viscid yellow fluid.

Buchanan, who did a survey of the British-conquered territories in 1800, bemoaned the loss of revenue to the British in the Nilgiris due to the monopoly of the Badaga community over the practise of honey-gathering. Not only the Badagas but the Todas too were expert honey-gatherers prior to the commercialisation of agriculture.

Rev. P. K. Mulley, a clergyman-cum-anthropologist of Kotagiri says, "Badagas and Todas were so skilled that they would leave the beehives intact after collecting the honey.

Though the practice is on the whole declining, "Keystone," an eco-development organisation based in Kotagiri, has provided opportunities for the Irulas and Kurumbas to continue honey-collection in traditional style. Introducing appropriate technology and participatory management methods among these tribes, Keystone, has made honey-collection a sustainable means of a livelihood for them.



Modern agricultural practices are contributing significantly to the economic uplift of the tribal people in the Nilgiris district.