

Madamma: An Epitome of a self-reliant Soliga woman

The Soligas are one of the indigenous tribals living in the forests of South India with a Population of 40,000. The Soligas worship Mother Nature and are dependent on Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for their livelihood. The Soligas living in the BR Hills have achieved a remarkable victory by getting community and individual rights under the Forest Rights Act, the opportunity to live in the forest despite that forest being notified as Tiger Reserve by the Govt. of India. BR Hills is a unique forest by itself with its position connecting Western & Eastern Ghats.



Madamma- Proudly displays products of BR Hills

Smt. Madamma w/o Madegowda is one of the Soliga women living in Muttugadagadde podu hamlet in BR Hills. She is aged 43 years & has two children; her daughter is a graduate and working as a Bill collector in Panchayath. Her son is working as a driver. They have a small piece of agricultural land where they grow coffee and pepper. The family is residing in a house provided by the government.

Madamma has formal school education till fifth grade, but her ideas and ambitions are very high. She has immense knowledge about various NTFP collections since her early days. She has been a role model in her society. She was elected as a Panchayath member for a term and has done various developmental works in her village. She is an active member of BR Hills Soliga Samskarana Sangha (NTFPs processing association) that is BR Hills wild bee honey cluster under the SFURTI. She is also the first tribal woman to become the President of the Sangha. She is exploring all possible ways of getting income from honey production for her society. Madamma now feels self-reliant and wishes every tribal woman to become so. She has inherited the knowledge of NTFP collection from her parents, later from her husband and will continue to pass it to the future generations.