

Tala Maddale (†ALa maddaLe) (ತಾಳ ಮದ್ದಳೆ) is an offshoot of Yakshagaana the popular theatrical art form of coastal Karnataka, Malnaad and some parts of Kerala. It is also known as 'kooTa' (ಕೂಟ), baiThak, (ಬೈರಕ್) prasanga, (ಪ್ರಸಂಗ) Odike(ಓದಿಕೆ) and 'jAgara'. (ಜಾಗರ) To put it briefly Tala Maddale, is Yakshagana sans its visual components. Of course there are some minor variations.

As the name suggests, †ALa (cymbals) and maddaLe (drum) are the main instruments that provide the back ground music for this performance. Chande (canDe) is other percussion instrument which is used very sparingly. Tala Maddale is an ancient art. Shivarama Karantha has found a mention of this art in an inscription installed in Kuragod (kuragODu) town in Bellary district. (1556 A.D.) A popular argument says that Tala Maddale preceded Yakshagana and that it was some kind of a rehearsal for the final performance. However a more rational explanation is that Tala Maddale was invented as a pastime that suits the rainy season because an out door performance is ruled out during that period. Usually Talamaddale is conducted in a temple, a residential building or a Bhajan Mandir. In olden days talamaddale was a part of the curriculum in village schools. (ಐಗಳ ಮಠ). Rendering of the songs, explication of the text and playing on the maddale were included in the syllabi. During the Navaratri season the teacher would go in a procession along with his students in the village streets. The performance of the students concluded with some talamaddale under the 'Bhaagavatike' of the teacher. .

Talamaddale is an art form that is dependent on the erudition and innovative nature of the practicing artists. Activities such as dancing and acting recede to the background. Costumes are conspicuous by their absence. The artists are called 'arthadhari's. Bhaagavatha' is the one who renders the songs. Actually his role is marginalised in talamaddale when compared to the Yakshagana. Instrumental background is provided by others who are called 'himmELa'.

Talamaddale begins with the instrumental score and artists take over then onwards. These performances do not have a pre determined text. The general out line of the story is known universally and the arthadhaaris have their own inventive and innovative ways of creating the text for every performance. Consequently each Talamaddale is some thing new, even when the same artists are performing. Wit and wisdom of the artists play a dominant role and they hold a magnetic attraction for the audience. Mythological episodes are renewed so as to suit the contemporary situations. The arguments are highly nuanced and the entire performance is as intellectual as it is artistic.

Talamaddale begins with the traditional Ganesha Stuti. Other gods too are invoked occasionally. 'sabhaalakshaNa' and 'pUrvapITike' are omitted in talamaddale. The roles will have been distributed well in advance. An introduction is given by the Bhagavata and then the characters develop the storyline. Not only the dialogues, but also the songs and music are flexible. Most of the stories are based on traditional epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata. Talamaddale is more suited to a delineation of emotions such as shrungaara, karuNa and haasya rather than valour. Talamaddale gives an opportunity to artists who are not very proficient in dancing and those that are too aged and ailing to participate in a full fledged Yakshagana performance.

Van Dhan Internship Programme" organised by TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recently been launched by the government.

18 interns (to be called Minister's interns) from some of the reputed institutes of rural management, social work and Social Services of the country are participating in the "Van Dhan Internship Programme".

These interns have been selected to enhance the output of Van Dhan programme to make the tribal population self-reliant.

They will support the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) activities on livelihood promotion, marketing and credit linkages, etc.

They will develop tools and techniques on institutional development including a mechanism for determination of a just price or producer price of Minor Forest Products.

Van Dhan Yojana

Van Dhan Yojana was launched in 2018, in Chhattisgarh. A Van Dhan Vikas Kendra was set up under the program.

The Van Dhan Vikas Kendra will cater to ten Self Help Groups of thirty tribal gatherers each. The selection of the tribal beneficiaries and formation of the SHGs has been undertaken by TRIFED.

The Van Dhan Vikas Kendras will boost the economic development of tribals involved in the collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and provide a sustainable MFP-based livelihood in MFP-rich districts.

The scheme will be implemented through Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Nodal Department at the Central Level and TRIFED as Nodal Agency at the National Level.

At State level, the State Nodal Agency for MFPs and the District collectors are envisaged to play a pivot role in scheme implementation at grassroot level.

Locally the Kendras are proposed to be managed by a Managing Committee (an SHG) consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.

Composition: As per the plan, TRIFED will facilitate establishment of MFP-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, a cluster of 10 SHGs comprising of 30 tribal MFP gatherers each, in the tribal areas.

Significance of MFP:

Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is a major source of livelihood for tribals living in forest areas. The importance of MFPs for this section of the society can be gauged from the fact that around 100 million forest dwellers depend on MFPs for food, shelter, medicines and cash income

It provides them critical subsistence during the lean seasons, particularly for primitive tribal groups such as hunter gatherers, and the landless. Tribals derive 20-40% of their annual income from MFP on which they spend major portion of their time.

This activity has strong linkage to women's financial empowerment as most of the MFPs are collected and used/sold by women. MFP sector has the potential to create about 10 million workdays annually in the country.