

## Seed sown for revival of Attappady Buluthi Nellu

Tribal community's staple rice is being conserved by a group of farm enthusiasts

K.A. SHAJI

**PALAKKAD:** Buluthi Nellu once formed an integral part of the staple diet of Attappady's tribal community. Then it faded away from plates and minds. Now the near-extinct rice variant is being given a new lease of life at Kollengode, another part of Palakkad, by a group of agriculture enthusiasts.

Once the collection is ample enough to be distributed as seed, the rice variety would be made available to farmers, including those from the impoverished tribal community in Attappady. Buluthi Nellu belongs exclusively to Attappady and is presently available with very few tribal farmers in Sholayur panchayat.

"Because of large-scale



**NEW LEASE OF LIFE:** The Buluthi Nellu rice variety.

land alienation and adverse climatic conditions, tribespeople in Attappady have stopped cultivating both upland and low land rice varieties. The problems of the region, including poverty and malnutrition-related deaths, began from there. To combat the situation,

enough seeds of Buluthi Nellu should be generated and distributed among tribal farmers and others," said S.N. Anjali, an agricultural researcher who initiated the Kollengode initiative.

Ms. Anjali, who researches on the change in land use patterns in

Attappady, collected the seeds of Buluthi Nellu from tribal cultivator Ponni Ramachandran of Varagampady hamlet of Sholayur.

### Another door closes

"An intervention is inevitable as Ponni and a few other tribespeople are planning to stop farming because of lack of patronage. This variety will be extinct soon if it is not preserved and farmed using traditional tribal wisdom," said Ms. Anjali.

The farming process will begin on Friday on a land owned by farmer and social activist Ummer Farook of Thekkinchira in Kollengode.

Kollengode Agriculture Officer Dileep Kumar and Agriculture Assistant Director V. Babu will supervise the process.

Rajshree  
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