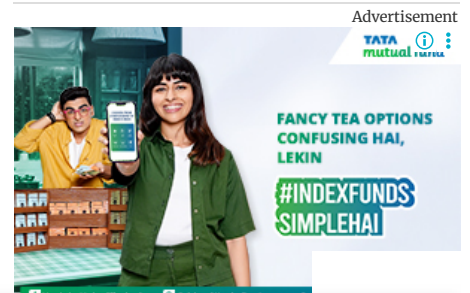


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Tamil Nadu

# Irular association alleges graft under PM-JANMAN scheme in Villupuram

*They claimed 20–30% of project funds were siphoned off as commissions, resulting in poor-quality houses.*



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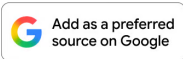
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Krithika Srinivasan

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VILLUPURAM: Irular tribal rights protection association has alleged widespread corruption in the PM-JANMAN (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan) housing scheme for tribal families in Villupuram district and urged the state and union government to take immediate corrective steps, at the state executive meeting held in Villupuram on August 14.

The meeting, chaired by association president K Sivakami and other coordinators, had members who charged that political functionaries and local body representatives were illegally taking over housing projects. They claimed 20–30% of project funds

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were siphoned off as commissions, resulting in poor-quality houses.

While thanking the governments for sanctioning `5.09 lakh per house, the association demanded the amount be revised to `2,000 per sq. ft. to match rising construction costs. It also sought the speedy issue of three cents of house-site pattas to those members who haven't been allotted yet and digitisation of all pattas for transparency.

Sivakami told TNIE, "We urge the state government that completed and ongoing housing projects under the JANMAN scheme be inspected by IIT professors to prove our claim of poor-quality houses. We demand the district officials responsible for irregularities be penalised." The association further pressed for the government to directly construct houses, following the Periyar Samathuvapuram model, so that impoverished tribal people are not forced to depend on middlemen.

The association further announced a state-level convention in Villupuram

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