

Blood oozing tree

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Why in news?

For the first time that a dragon tree species has been reported from India.

About the species:

- A trio of researchers has discovered **Dracaena Cambodian**, a dragon tree species in the **Dongka Sarpo area of West Karbi Anglong, Assam**.
- It is a plant that yields **dragon's blood, a bright red resin, used since ancient times as medicine in China, body oil, varnish, incense and dye**.
- In addition, various parts of the plant yield antifungal and antibacterial compounds, antioxidants, flavonoids etc...
- In India, the **Dracaena genus belonging to the family Asparagaceae** is represented by nine species and two varieties in the Himalayan region, the northeast and Andaman and the Nicobar Islands.
- But according to the study, **Dracaena Cambodian is the only true dragon tree species**.
- It is a medicinal plant as well as an ornamental tree.

Threats:

- Overexploitation to meet the increasing demand for dragon's blood.
- The habitat of the plant is severely fragmented due to open excavation of a stone quarry.
- Decrease in the number of mature individuals.
- The **Dracaena** seeds are usually dispersed by birds. Only a few species of birds are able to swallow the fruits because of its big size, thus limiting the scope of its natural conservation.

