

Global Genome Initiative for Gardens Award

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In news– The Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) at Palode, Thiruvananthapuram has won the 2023 Global Genome Initiative for Gardens (GGI-Gardens) Award.

About the award-

- The **Global Genome Initiative for Gardens (GGI-Gardens)** is an international partnership of botanical gardens and arboreta focused on collecting herbarium vouchers from living collections and preserving their genome resources in biorepositories partnered with the Global Genome Biodiversity Network (GGBN).
- The GGI-Gardens Awards Program aims to promote partnership activities to preserve and understand Earth's genomic biodiversity of plants.
- This program, funded by the United States Botanic Garden, and administered through BGCI's Global Botanic Garden Fund, provided up to 6 awards of up to \$4,500 in 2023 to support sampling activities from living collections with unique families and genera of vascular plants not yet represented in GGBN biorepositories
- **GGI Gardens Programme** is a science-based effort to collect genomic biodiversity from around the world, preserve it in biorepositories, and make it available to researchers.

About JNTBGRI-

- **It was founded in 1979** with the objective of **establishing a Conservatory Botanic Garden of tropical plant resources in general and of the country and the Kerala state in particular.**

- It also undertakes research programmes for the sustainable utilization of the resources.
- The idea of establishing the institute was conceived soon after the first United Nations Conference on human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972 by the Founder Director, the late Professor A. Abraham.
- Consequently, the institute was established as an autonomous R & D organization by the Government of Kerala in 1979.
- The institute had picked several plants including the medicinal plants *Coscinium fenestratum* (tree turmeric) and *Piper barberi* (known locally in Malayalam as 'Kaatu Mulaku') for genome diversity conservation under the GGI-Gardens programme.
- **The JNTBGRI holds the largest living collection of plant species in India** with over 50,000 accessions of about 4,800 species in its conservatories.
- Over the years, the institute had discovered more than 800 new species of angiosperms, mushrooms and fungi.
- Under the GGI-Gardens programme, JNTBGRI will have initial priority for plant families and genus not yet represented in GGBN biorepositories. The focus of the present programme is on medicinal and aromatic plants of the Western Ghats.
- This is the second time that the institute has been honoured with this prestigious award.
- In 2023 the **JNTBGRI is one of the 10 botanical gardens and arboreta across the globe to win it.**