

Training programme on Sandalwood Farming & Management inaugurated

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In news— Union Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj inaugurated a training program on Sandalwood Farming & Management of its health via video conferencing

About Training programme-

- The programme is structured around the basics & benefits of Indian sandalwood, seed handling, nursery techniques & managing the health of the plant.
- It is a **free of cost training initiative** which will help attract the youth towards sandalwood farming, revive this declining art & help reposition India as a market leader in the trade.
- The programme was launched in association with the **Institute of Wood Science & Technology (IWST)**, Bengaluru.

About Sandalwood-

- Sandalwood has been long associated with the Indian heritage & culture, as the country contributed 85% of the world's sandalwood trade erstwhile.
- With **anti-bacterial, antibiotic & anti-cancer benefits** amongst others, sandalwood finds its uses in pharmaceuticals, personal care & furniture.
- **Globally, India & Australia are the largest growers of sandalwood**, while the biggest markets lie in the United States, China, Japan & the Indian domestic market.
- The government aims to take up multiple initiatives like establishing Sandalwood Technology Innovation centres in

the growing states under the leadership of IWST, value addition in training & skill development as well as introducing new methods of cultivation among farmers & young entrepreneurs.

- Sandalwood is often cited as one of the most expensive woods in the world, along with African blackwood, pink ivory, Agarwood and ebony.
- Sandalwood oil has a distinctive soft, warm, smooth, creamy, and milky precious-wood scent that imparts a long-lasting, woody base to perfumes.
- Due to its low fluorescence and optimal refractive index, sandalwood oil is often employed as an immersion oil within ultraviolet and fluorescence microscopy.
- Aboriginal Australians eat the seed kernels, nuts, and fruit of local sandalwoods, and use it in making jams, pies, and chutneys from the fruit.

Institute of Wood Science and Technology(IWST)-

- It is a Research institute situated in Bangalore in Karnataka.
- It works under the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India.
- It is recognized to be a Centre of Excellence for Sandalwood Research and Wood Science.

Extra reading: <https://journalsofindia.com/red-sandalwood/>