

7. Government Plans to Launch Mahua-based Alcoholic Drink

Prelims Syllabus: Governance -Policies

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these Vulnerable Sections.

Why in News?

- The central government is set to launch a Mahua-based alcoholic beverage 'Mahua Nutri beverage' in the market for the first time.
- The beverage has a high nutritional value and relatively low alcohol content (5%). This is the first time that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is getting into bottling and sale of alcoholic beverages.

Key Points:

- It has been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi in collaboration with the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).
- TRIFED has signed a memorandum with the National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) to undertake the assignment of technology transfer to the suitable entrepreneurs for production and marketing of the beverage.
- The marketing is being undertaken under the Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram.
- Besides mahua, other tribal staples such as tamarind and amla will be de-seeded and brought to the market in the form of candies and jams.

About Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram:

- It is Tribal Affairs Ministry's value-addition scheme which was launched in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur in 2018.
- The nation-wide programme earmarked ₹500-600 crore for training tribal clusters to add value to their produce and sell it in a packaged format, aiming to increase their income manifold. The products marketed under the scheme include only those that need primary-level processing, including handicrafts, textiles, food items, jams and pulps and jewellery.

About Mahua:

- It is a prominent forest tree in tribal areas Chhattisgarh and plays an important role in the Rural Economy.
- The mahua flowers are a rich source of sugars and are said to contain vitamins, minerals and calcium. The flowers are also fermented and distilled yielding spirituous liquor also known as 'country beer'.

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- An estimated 90% of the annual production of Mahua flower is used in the process of brewing beverages.

