

INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, BANGALORE

BHARAT KA AMRUT MAHOTSAV – WEEK 44 TO WEEK 56

A report on webinar conducted
on
“Problems and its solution strategies for wooden handicraft sector in India”
11th February 2022

AzadiKaAmritMahotsav is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of Independence of progressive India and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Sri.NarendraModi inaugurated 'AzadiKaAmritMahotsav' celebration by flagging off 'Dandi March' from Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad on 12 March 2021, 75 weeks before our 75th anniversary of Independence and will end past a year on 15th August 2023.

As part of this celebration, ICFRE is conducting various programs like technical series, workshops, exhibitions, documentary shows, poster and essay competitions, cycle rallies etc. As part of Week 44 to 56 celebration of Bharat KaAmrutMahotsav, the Institute conducted a webinar on **“Problems and its solution strategies for wooden handicraft sector in India”** on 11th February 2022.

The webinar started with a welcome address by Mr. Shiva Kumar C.M., IFS, Head Extension Division. Dr. S.R. Shukla, Head, WPU division gave a brief introduction about the programme. Mr. V.S. Shettepanavar, IFS, Group co-ordinator (Research), articulated the handicraft with history, civilization and culture in his opening remark. Dr. M.P. Singh, IFS, Director IWST mentioned that it is really a learning exercise for IWST to understand the problems being faced by the wooden handicraft sector and then we can strive together to find the solution strategy. In his inaugural address he also told that without knowing the problems, we cannot find their potential solution.

The first presentation in the webinar was made by Dr. T.K. Dhamodaran, former Chair of Excellence (CoE), IWST-ICFRE on overview of wooden handicraft sector in India. In his lecture he covered almost all the handicraft clusters including industrial overview and advocated for bamboo and rattan as an alternative raw material for handicraft.

Mr. B.S. Srinivasan, vice president, LaghuUdyogBharati (LUB), Karnataka also presented his lecture on the role of LUB in promoting handicraft sector in India.

Mr. Gopinath Rao R, Dy.Director, MSME, Development Institute, Karnataka highlighted the support mechanism being provided by MSME for the development of wooden handicraft sector.

Dr.A.K.Sethy,Scientist E, Mr.Ritesh D. Ram, Scientist F and Mrs. C.N. Vani ACTOOF IWST also delivered the lectures on quality parameters, timber seasoning and preservation technique for wooden handicrafts respectively.

Issues in handicraft with design and product quality were covered by Professor Barun Shankar Gupta, Dean (Academics), Head Research, Indian Institute of Crafts and Design(IICD), Jaipur.

Mr. V.S. Gautam, Scientist-B, IWSTdelivered lecture on common hindrances in the wooden handicraft sector in India and its solution strategies.

The lectures were followed by experience sharing session and discussion in whichMr.C.V. Raju, Senior Artisan, Etikoppaka handicraft cluster, Andhra Pradeshsuggested to create a platform for developing dyeing skill in artisans for applying knowledge in colouring of furniture, door and windows etc.using natural and vegetative colours. Mr. AbhishekBharati, Handicraft Trader, Saharanpur, UP, shared his experiences and opined that with wooden handicraft sector, we can sort out so many problems like employment generation,even if the individual is uneducated. He opined that the women employment is very easy as they can work from their home. He suggested that child labour is one of the problems of the country.If they are given proper training, we can create child artisans and that will help in upliftment of handicraft market with full potential. He again highlighted that the cluster have lack of multitasking artisans and raw material bank.Mr. Suresh Babu, Handcraft Wholesaler, Kerala told that he is getting a lot of order but have less capacity to supply the products.Mr. Naveen, Wood Artisan, Channapatna Handicraft Cluster, Karnataka told that apart from webinar, we need face to face interaction in workshop/seminar conducted by government organizationsin the different clusters where artisans are located, especially for wood seasoning and preservative treatment trainings.

Dr.NageshPrabhu, IFS (Retd.), PCCF,HoFF, Kerala Forest Departmentalso sharedhis experience and statedthat majority of timber species are not grown by the farmers because of their long gestation period. Butthey may be grown by forest departments because the departments have huge area of land. At least 5% of it should be reserved for species plantation required for wooden handicrafts. Possibly, IWST-ICFRE take a lead regarding handicraft species and make a case to Government of India that there should be policy decision.He suggested that Director IWST can take a lead role in considering all these issues of handicraft and prepare a plan for 2047.

Dr. S.P. Singh, IFS (Retd.), Director, Amity School of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development, Amity University told thatmarketing has become difficult for the craft manufacturer. So, they have to go for digital marketing. People are not only interested in traditional craft, but they want innovations. It is necessary to bring the people to a common platform through workshop or seminar and make a better policy decision in this matter.

Mr.BhanuPrakash, Wood Artisan, Mysore Handicraft Cluster raised the issue that we should consider the Mysore Art Cluster also for the study.

Mr.B.S. Srinivasan also shared his experience and said that we need to work very closely on digital marketing.

Mr.Ankit Shah, Wood Artisan, Uttarakhand raised issues regarding the gap between GI tag and non GI tag handicraft products.

Mr. Mohan Kumar, Artisan, Mysure Handicraft Cluster told that the scarcity of raw materials is a major issue of the cluster.

The webinar concluded with a formal Vote of thanks by Dr. A.K. Sethy, Scientist-E.

