

Press Release

Dr. Nasim Akhtar (Associate Professor) Dept. of Biotechnology, GITAM Deemed to be University has been awarded a research project under the core research grant of SERB, DST, GoI, for the large scale production of red sandalwood plant through tissue culture. The plant is now an endangered species due to illegal destructive exploitation and smuggling from India to Western Europe, China and Japan for its high priced “wavy grain” quality timber. There is severe shortage of the planting materials of red sandalwood with regards to its wide ranging commercial preparations, environment friendly, safe and effective medicinal and therapeutic products in the international market. Moreover the plant can not be propagated conventionally due to hard seed coat, low seed viability, seed dormancy and phenolic compounds. The project is sanctioned to develop a sustainable large scale multiplication of red sanders plants applying tissue culture techniques using immature cells, tissue and organs. Plants so produced will be provided through State Forest Department to the growers for cultivation and restoration of degraded forest lands, non productive marginal or wastelands and coastal land through social forestry program by the tribal, villagers as well as coastal and marginalized population of Andhra Pradesh for their economic uplift. Hence, project would be National asset and a social responsibility to fulfill for the State of Andhra Pradesh and the Nation at large.