

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA EXPANDS THE SUPPORT TO ARTISANS MANIFOLD, FOR MAKING AGARBATTI, TO MAKE INDIA AATM- NIRBHAR

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Issues Related to Poverty, Inclusion, Employment & Sustainable Development

Taking a holistic approach and looking to the enhanced interest of the stakeholders, Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), further expanded the reach and support to Artisans, involved in Agarbatti making, and to the Agarbatti Industry, by issuing new guidelines on 4th September, 2020. Further to its launching the support program on 30.07.20, Ministry has looked at all aspects of the industry, beyond just supply of machines for making Agarbatti. This includes ensuring supply of inputs and raw materials, the demand for which has increased hugely in last one year. The four main pillars of the new program are-

- i) Continuously supporting the artisans through training, raw material, marketing and financial support;
- ii) Working on all aspects of this product, like innovation in the fragrance & packaging, use of new / alternate raw materials like re-usable flowers, coir pith etc., supply of bamboo sticks by closely working with Ministry of Agriculture etc. A 'Center of Excellence' for this purpose is being set up in FFDC (Flavour and Fragrance Development Center) Kannauj;
- iii) Setting up 10 clusters with proper marketing linkages under SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) scheme of the Ministry of MSME at a total cost of about Rs. 50 Crs, to benefit about 5000 artisans for their sustainable employment and enhanced earnings;
- iv) Strengthen the machine manufacturing capability to achieve self-sufficiency in the country and develop various other products by setting up 'Centers of Excellence' with IITs/NITs etc. at a cost of Rs. 2.20 crore.

Under the expanded program announced on 4th September, 400 Automatic Agarbatti making machines as against 200 earlier, and additional 500 Pedal operated Machines will be given to 'Self Help Groups (SHGs)' and individuals through 20 pilot projects, across the country with proper marketing and raw material supply tie ups. The program will immediately benefit about 1500 artisans, in providing sustainable employment with increased earnings. Artisans developing hand rolled Agarbatti and 'Migrant workers' will be given preference as part of the program.

Now, to make India Aatm- Nirbhar in this sector, the total size of the program, has been increased to more than Rs 55 Cr, which will include immediate support to about 1500 artisans of about Rs 3.45 Cr, development of two centers of Excellence costing

at Rs 2.20 Cr at IITs/NITs and at FFDC Kannauj and setting up of 10 new SFURTI clusters at a cost of about Rs 50 Crs, benefitting about 5000 additional artisans. Earlier the size of the program was of Rs 2.66 Crs covering about 500 artisans.

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), one of the statutory organizations, under the M/o MSME, will implement the program and will handhold the artisans & SHGs with proper backward & forward linkages and needful support.

These projects, will give boost to the Agarbatti industry and help in further building indigenous capability in all areas of Agarbatti manufacturing with increased exports, and enhanced employment opportunities to the Artisans and entrepreneurs.

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