

# Indian Wood & Allied Panels

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## Green Rise: Greenply Industries' step towards a more sustainable future

*The plantation project signifies the company's commitment to sustainable practices, particularly by embracing the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest management model*



**G**reenply Industries has launched the Green-Rise initiative under its eco restoration and plantation drive at its Tizit facility in Nagaland, aiming to contribute positively to the environment while fostering self-reliance within communities. Under this project, a plantation of a sapling is being done in the name of an architect associated with the wood panel industry.

The plantation project signifies the company's commitment to sustainable practices, particularly by embracing the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest management model. It is noteworthy to mention here that Greenply has attained the FSC – FM (Forest Management) Certification from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for its sustainable plantation unit located in Tizit, Nagaland and it is the first company to have successfully achieved the certification in the interior infrastructure segment in India. This certification provides an assurance to consumers that the products they are buying come from a responsible/sustainable source and protects the rights of indigenous people to use the forest and helps to combat deforestation, forest degradation and illegal logging in certified areas.

The Green Rise project's opening phase involved planting



over 780 saplings in honour of architects from Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. Later, architects from Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh and across India will be similarly honored. Each tree planted under this scheme is labeled with a barcode containing pertinent information such as the architect's name, address, plantation date and time, tree species, and contact number. These trees will

mature over 7 to 8 years, and upon harvesting, proceeds will be bestowed to charitable organizations or schools in the architects' names.

At present, our cumulative plantation across pan India is across 52,983 acres of land, utilised for this mission with over 41.57 million saplings covering the area. It is the company's aim to plant 50 million saplings by 2025. Towards executing the initiative, Greenply has collaborated with the state government, and local communities and has achieved enthusiastic participation of the locals.



The company's investments in plantations are helping it nurture the sustainability-led growth model. The model is built on a long-term perspective of uninterrupted raw material supply for its products and steers the all-encompassing development of its farmer community, Greenply is also developing a plantation around its upcoming MDF unit under WOS in Vadodara, much in line with its strategy to invest in sustainable development in the catchment of all its manufacturing facilities.

Greenply is also one of the first companies in India to promote the use of Okoume a natural timber harvested under the Sustainable Forest management plan. The company is also collaborating with various government research organizations in India to update on the latest technology for its plantation activities for the benefit of farmers.

Renewable power sourcing is an important focus area for the Company. Greenply has been undertaking activities to reduce emissions and move towards renewable energy generation. Rooftop Solar panels are installed at all the manufacturing facilities for the generation of green energy.

The company is the first one in the wood & panel industry to introduce a range of Zero Emission (E-0) products keeping in mind the health interest of its consumer by assuring safeguarding the indoor air quality by reducing formaldehyde emission to



negligible or equal to zero. The E-O innovation has reached over 1 million households and Greenply continues to build on the awareness amongst its stakeholder through multiple touch points. The E-O range not only stands for strength and durability but also comes with internationally approved certification by California Air Resources Board (CARB) for conforming to E-0 grade emission and low Volatile Organic Compounds.

Greenply has also promoted the cause of reducing plastic footprints across India. The company had recently conducted an awareness drive to discourage the production, sale, and use of plastic Tiranga (Indian National Flag). Greenply has also taken a pledge to stop the usage and disposal of single-use plastic at an organizational level. □

## Homag and Luli Wood strike strategic agreement

*Chinese panel product giant Luli Wood Industry has a new strategic partnership agreement with German woodworking manufacturer Homag Group.*

The three-year contract will see Luli Wood a comprehensive package of Homag machines and systems for furniture production. The total value of the order is approximately €90m. The strategic co-operation agreement was formally sealed with a traditional signing ceremony attended by Zhong Duzhang, Deputy General Manager of the Luli Group, and Dr Daniel Schmitt, CEO of the Homag Group, as well as other representatives of both companies. "We decided to work with HOMAG again because the company offers advantages in the field of Industry 4.0, has extensive industry experience and has been active in China for more than 40 years," Zhong Duzhang explained during the ceremony. The value added for the major order will be created in both Germany and China. Homag is relying on a mixture of Chinese and German teams for installation, commissioning, and service at Luli Wood Industry. "We are very pleased to have received this order," said Dr Schmitt. "It also shows that the Chinese market is extremely dynamic and important for us." Luli Wood produces a big range of products, including plywood (1 million m<sup>3</sup> annual output) and particleboard. □

## Birch wood market: A snapshot



**T**he market for birch wood products was estimated to be worth US\$2.51bn in 2021, and is now expected to grow at a CAGR of 5.2% to reach \$3.62bn by 2031.

Birch wood is known for its smooth texture and light hue. Because of its aesthetic appeal and versatility, it is preferred by designers and artists. Consumer preferences, interior design trends, technological developments in wood processing, and sustainable forestry methods are some of the variables that impact the market for products made from birch wood. The market for products made from birch wood is broad and includes a variety of products, such as plywood, veneers, solid wood furniture, flooring planks, and ornamental embellishments. In turn, the applications can be found in industries such as furniture manufacture, interior design, flooring, cabinetry, and handicrafts.

Birch wood is a popular option for both traditional and contemporary designs because of its homogeneous texture and fine grain. It is used by manufacturers because of its workability, which enables fine craftsmanship and detailed details. Additionally, birch wood products are prized for their longevity, resilience, hardness and strength, which make them appropriate for use in both commercial and domestic settings.

In the global market for birch wood products, engineered flooring is projected to hold a sizable proportion, while furniture is predicted to dominate. Its smooth texture and light hue make it suitable for a range of design aesthetics, including modern and rustic. Because of its robustness, birch is a good material for structural components like drawers, table legs, and chair frames. It also offers a consistent surface for fine detailing, which means veneers can also appreciate it. Birch's inherent resistance to warping and its good stain and finish resistance make it a desirable material for furniture.

The market for birch wood products is also changing to include eco-friendly certifications and procedures as sustainability gains traction in consumer decisions. This ensures

that birch forests are responsibly managed for future generations.

Based on a study, the Asia-Pacific area is positioned to take the lead in the global market for items made from birch wood. A number of variables, such as growing industrialisation, expanding construction projects, and a growing need for flooring and furniture applications in major economies like China, India, and Japan, support this predicted domination. This region offers significant potential for the continued growth and improvement of the birch wood market due to its notable capacities for both production and consumption.

### Legend

1. Birch plywood used for cabinets
2. Birch wood flooring



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### Events that have impacted birch wood market

On 6 Apr 2021, Georgia-Pacific, a division of Koch Industries, released a statement. They disclosed in this disclosure that they had purchased Norbord, a participant in the global wood-based panel manufacturing market. Through the completion of this transaction, Georgia-Pacific expanded its product and service capabilities while strengthening its position in the birch wood product market.

Another noteworthy event occurred on 4 Dec 2019, when DuraSense was introduced by Stora Enso, a supplier and developer of sustainable solutions for paper, biomaterials, wooden structures, and packaging. This biocomposite material is created by combining polymers and wood fibres. Through the introduction of this technology, Stora Enso creates a viable substitute for conventional plastics, opening up new opportunities for the market for birch wood products.

GrowDex BioInks, the newest technology from UPM-Kymmene Corporation, made a debut on 17 Aug 2020 with its biocompatible hydrogels, which are reportedly indispensable instruments for applications involving 3D cell culture. With the introduction of a tailored and sustainable solution for tissue engineering and regenerative medicine, this technology has implications for the market for birch wood products. □

## India will need to build 100 million homes this decade amid rising household incomes



**I**ndian home builders may have to construct as many as 100 million new dwelling units this decade as rising household incomes in the world's fastest-growing major economy buoy demand for new residences, according to a top official at one of the country's largest developers.

About 70 million Indian households will turn eligible for home ownership over the next 10 years, which, along with people seeking to upgrade their apartments, should create requirement for as many as 100 million new houses, Abhishek Lodha, chief executive officer at Mumbai-based Macrotech Developers Ltd. said in an interview earlier this month. Macrotech's flagship projects include the Trump Tower in Mumbai.

Narendra Modi, who was sworn in as India's prime minister for a third straight term has vowed to continue pushing growth especially in the housing and infrastructure sectors. Real estate consulting firm Knight Frank expects the demand for homes created by rising income levels to translate into \$906 billion of economic output over the next ten years.

The South Asian nation's property market has heated up since the pandemic, with 2023 being the best year for home sales in at least 15 years. The momentum allowed Macrotech, which operates under the brand name Lodha, to report its highest ever quarterly sales in the three months ending March.

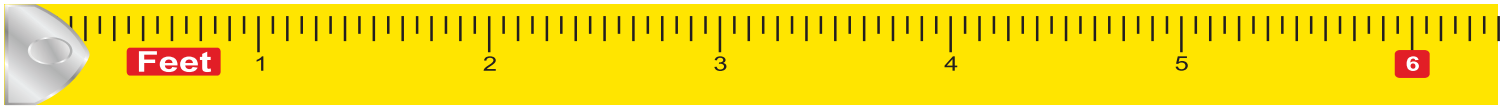
In 2023 about 600,000 primary homes were built in India and even a fast pace of growth in the construction sector would struggle to meet the demand for 100 million homes over this decade, he said

Macrotech Developers, also best known for its gated communities in upscale neighborhoods, last year entered tech hub Bengaluru and expanded in the city of Pune, about 150 kilometers from India's financial capital, Mumbai. The company is the second-biggest listed real estate developer by market value, after DLF Ltd. and its shares have risen over 43% so far this year, compared with a 40% climb in the NSE Nifty Realty Index.

Lodha said the rising demand for homes "is a fifteen-plus year cycle. We are only in year four and there is a long, long way ahead to go before India has real estate at its rightful share in its economic mix." □



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# Does certification lead to sustainable forests?

*India's forest and wood certification scheme is expensive and won't necessarily lead to sustainable extraction of forest produce or better forest management.*



*By Dhanapal Govindarajulu*

The government of India launched the Indian forest and wood certification scheme in December 2023. The scheme offers voluntary third-party certification on timber and non-timber forest products (NTFP) obtained from both forest and private land that they have been harvested sustainably. The objective of the scheme is to promote sustainable forest management and agroforestry (trees on farms) and enhance the market value of forest products through certification.

There are now several private and government agencies providing certification in India as third parties, such as the Chhattisgarh certification society, which began in 2003. The new scheme aims to regulate certification agencies and procedures by mandating the registration of certification bodies with the National Accreditation Board and by providing certification based on criteria and indicators set by the government under the National Working Plan Code, 2023.

This raises an important question about whether certification can lead to sustainable management of India's over 70 million hectares of forests and benefit state forest departments, forest-dependent communities, and farmers growing trees on their farms.

The concept of sustainable forest management in India is not recent but starts from the colonial period. After the Indian Forest Act, 1865, the government took control of forest land to maximise timber production for ship building and laying railway sleepers. Dietrich Brandis, India's first Inspector General of Forests between 1864 and 1883, first proposed the concept of sustainable forest management.

The idea was to sustainably harvest timber from the forest. For this, each forest division was to be divided into working circles of different timber tree species. Each working circle would be subdivided into compartments. By rotating the harvest of trees across compartments, the regeneration of the forest was assured and a wood stock was maintained. The aim was a sustainable supply of timber to the colonial government.

A forest working plan was to be prepared for each of the forest divisions, describing the estimated volume of timber

available and how it would be harvested over a 10 to 15-year period. The first national forest working plan code, which was to serve as a guideline for preparing working plans, was published in 1881.

However, the sole objective being maximising timber production, other aspects of sustainable forest management, such as biodiversity and the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, were largely ignored in the colonial period. Aggressive plantations of teak (*Tectona grandis*), a valuable timber tree was taken up in wildlife-rich areas, and they can still be seen in many tiger reserves in India. Timber from Deodar trees in the Himalayas were extracted until exhaustion in a few places such as the Sutlej valley.

After independence, the extraction of timber from forests continued rather indiscriminately till 1996 when the Supreme Court intervened. The case, famously referred to as Godavarman versus Union of India, was a landmark in Indian forestry. The petition was filed due to the felling of trees on private land and the Supreme Court ruled that the forest, irrespective of ownership, should be treated under its working plan. This meant that the felling of trees on private land would be in accordance with the working plan and permission must be sought from the forest department for it.

This ruling had the positive effect of greatly reducing deforestation on private land and in forests situated above 1,500 metres and in north-east India, where it completely banned tree felling. Its negative effects were that it made many state forest development corporations obsolete and provided farmers no incentives to grow trees on their farms.

The state forest development corporations were set up on the basis of the recommendations of the National Commission for Agriculture in 1976. The objectives of the corporations were to raise forest plantations and harvest timber and non-timber forest products in a sustainable manner, thereby supporting the country's economy.

After the 1996 ruling, the activities of many state forest development corporations, like the Himachal Pradesh Forest



*Aspects of sustainable forest management, such as biodiversity and the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, were largely ignored in the colonial period. | Picture courtesy: Pxhere*

Development Corporation, were reduced to collecting resin (from *Pinus roxburghii*) and extracting salvage trees from the forest. The Lok Vaniki scheme initiated by Madhya Pradesh in 1999 to help farmers grow trees on their farms did not succeed because even small and marginal farmers with land holdings of less than a few hectares had to follow bureaucratic procedures to obtain the government's permission for tree felling. This, in effect, discouraged them from growing trees.

### **Why forest certification?**

Globally, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) established as a non-profit organisation in Bonn, Germany, in 1993 is the leading forest certification agency. The FSC aims to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. It claims on its website that the certification covers about 160 million hectares of forest land in 89 countries.

Forest certification has been, over the years, shown to reduce illegal logging in some countries such as Chile and Peru, but has not been identified as the only factor to have reduced deforestation in countries such as Mexico and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Forestry researchers still debate the effects of certification because several other factors influence sustainable forest management, such as recognition of community rights, policies on forest protection, and so on.

**When it comes to non-timber forest produce, the certification looks even less important.**

Further, certification is a costly affair. A case study on the certification of acacia plantations in Vietnam showed only marginal returns from certification and that too only if the plantations were more than 3,000 hectares. This clearly indicates there were no benefits for farmers with smaller land holdings.

In the case of India, a study commissioned by the International Tropical Timber Organisation notes that in 2020 the demand for roundwood in India—mainly used for furniture making, paper and pulp, panels and plywood, and construction—was around 57 million cubic metres, of which 47 million cubic metres was met domestically. Of this, 45 million cubic metres was from trees outside forests and only a meagre 2 million cubic metres came from state-owned forests.

In this context, certification looks a meaningless exercise because large quantities of timber will be produced from trees outside forests as block plantations of poplar, teak, and eucalyptus exist and domestic buyers are least likely to care for certified timber. In terms of export, very little timber from teak and sisham—0.01 million cubic metres—was exported in 2020.

Any shift in demand for certified timber domestically or internationally could tilt the scale in favour of wealthy farmers who can afford certification costs. It could also discourage small farmers from growing trees on their farms.

When it comes to non-timber forest produce, the certification looks even less important. Produce such as mahua flowers, sal seeds, and tendu leaves in central India and rhododendron

flowers and pine cones in the Himalayas are gathered and marketed locally. There is no evidence of any of these being exported in their raw form.

**India aimed to boost its agroforestry through the National Agroforestry Policy in 2014. However, almost a decade later, there has hardly been any improvement in agroforestry.**

As for state forest departments, the Supreme Court’s 1996 restrictions on extracting timber are still in place and they have to prepare working plans and get them approved according to the latest working plan code. This should include the volume of timber that can be sustainably extracted without affecting biodiversity and the needs of forest-dependent communities. Only then will the certification be a value addition if the forest products are exported.

For forest-dependent communities, community rights are recognised in about 6.5 million hectares of forest land under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006. Communities using their Community Forest Rights (CFR) provisions have been sustainably extracting NTFP and marketing thereby making good economic gains. Many more millions of forest dependent communities still depend on NTFP for their livelihood even without rights. Further, there is no provision for extracting timber under the management rights given to communities, though forest departments run plantations in forests with recognised community rights.

India aimed to boost its agroforestry through the National Agroforestry Policy in 2014. It made tree saplings easily available to farmers and eased restrictions on tree felling and transit. However, almost a decade later, there has hardly been any improvement in agroforestry. A recent study titled “Severe Decline in Large Agroforestry Trees in India over the Past Decade”, to which I contributed, noted a severe decline of mature trees on farms in India because of changing cropping patterns, mechanised farming, and farmers perceiving no economic benefit in having trees on their farms.

In sum, the global experience shows forest certification can at the most increase the market value marginally but this comes with high certification costs, which doesn’t help marginal farmers and forest dependent communities and certification alone does not lead to sustainable forest management or help in increasing agroforestry.

**Towards sustainable management**

In India, the causes of deforestation are diversion of forests to non-forestry purpose such as mining, roads, and other infrastructure and degradation due to fire, cattle grazing, and invasive species such as lantana.

**Caution must be exercised to not raise plantations on grasslands and other open natural forest, which are important ecosystems in themselves.**

Sustainable forest management is important to ensure ecosystem services such as the flow of streams and rivers, to support the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, and for a forest-based economy. More than certification, what

is required is a good working plan to manage the forests and sustainably extract timber and other non-timber forest produce.

The National Working Plan Code, last revised in 2014 and 2023, provides guidelines on managing forests sustainably through a working plan that considers biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and the livelihood needs of local communities, including grazing and firewood collection.

A study in the Congo basin has shown that a forest management plan with rotational harvest of timber and a clear benefit-sharing plan with forest-dependent communities were much more effective than forest certification in sustainable forest management.

To meet the growing domestic demand for timber, plantations outside forests can be increased. This can reduce the logging pressure on natural forests and reduce deforestation. A possible way forward is to encourage forest development corporations to raise plantations on degraded land and farmers to plant trees on their fallow or uncultivable land. Waterlogged and degraded land with invasive trees such *Prosopis juliflora* could also be utilised for raising plantations.

Some of colonial era plantations of pine and eucalyptus could be slowly removed and planted with native oak and sal trees, which are more resourceful. Communities having CFR in degraded land could also be encouraged to raise plantations with a clear procedure for getting full benefits from the timber produced. Lastly, procedures to fell trees according to a working plan, transit and market them should be made easy for both states and farmers.

However, caution must be exercised to not raise plantations on grasslands and other open natural forest, which are important ecosystems in themselves. There is a need to strengthen the capacity of state forest departments to prepare good working plans that can identify plantation areas, raise quality plantations, and sustainably harvest timber—all the while preserving natural forests for ecological security.

To conclude, these few steps would help improve sustainable forest management in India and increase the income of farmers and state forest departments much more than forest certification.

**About The Authors**

*Dhanapal Govindarajulu is a postgraduate researcher at the Global Development Institute, the University of Manchester. His current research is on examining social and ecological impacts of forest restoration in India.* □

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# Hickory, red oak and white oak drive growth of US hardwood lumber exports to India in 2024

*Total value of American hardwood lumber and veneer exported to India reached US\$2.87m in Q1 2024, according to international trade association American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC).*



Roderick Wiles, regional director, AHEC



Exports of the oaks, hickory and walnut to India during the period increased

Total hardwood lumber shipped from the US to India declined by 18%, down from \$2.89m to \$2.37m, and dropped by 28% in volume, from 5,035m<sup>3</sup> to 3,628m<sup>3</sup>. This downturn was due to a decline in India's imports of two species — ash and maple — according to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The top three exports to India were oak at \$692,000 and 1,059m<sup>3</sup>; hickory at \$611,000 and 703m<sup>3</sup>; and red oak at \$557,000 and 889m<sup>3</sup>. Exports of walnut also rose, with an increase in value and volume of shipments both by 197% and 304% to reach \$202,000 and 230m<sup>3</sup> respectively.

US hardwood veneer exports were valued at \$497,000. In addition, \$1.39m worth of American hardwood logs were imported into the country during the same time period.

According to Trade Data Monitor, India imported some \$192m worth of hardwood lumber in 2023. This was accounted for by plantation teak, coming from many supplying countries like South East Asia, Africa and Latin America.

For temperate hardwoods, the biggest supplier was EU, which shipped around \$24m to India. Most of this was accounted for by France and Germany with their live sawn oak, beech, ash

and European maple. The UK's sizeable exports of hardwood lumber to India are said to be entirely accounted for by willow for cricket bats.



The biggest supplier was EU for temperate hardwoods

The US accounted for about 5% of the total market last year in value, an increase from three years ago which reportedly shows India's growing appetite for American hardwoods. AHEC regional director Roderick Wiles said that it is positive to see the demand for American oak increasing in India.

The long-term trend is for India's imports of hardwood lumber to continue to grow over the coming years, while log imports will continue to decline. Limited domestic hardwood supplies, coupled with strong sustained growth, makes India an attractive and long-term prospective market for US hardwoods, according to AHEC.

"Combined, the oaks are the dominant species in the US hardwood forests with their distinctive grain pattern and are suitable for furniture, flooring, doors, architectural joinery, mouldings and kitchen cabinets," Wiles added. "Despite the lack of well-established distribution channels and with few importers keeping stock on the ground as yet, it is promising to see India embrace the widely available American hardwood species." □

## Can a construction material be created out of sugarcane? | Sugarcrete | Surfaces Reporter New Material Update



Experts have derived a new material called Sugarcrete® which is composed of Bagasse- a byproduct of sugarcane. This can be a sustainable and cheaper alternative to the traditional bricks. A report by SURFACES REPORTER.

### What is Sugarcrete®?

Sugarcrete® is a material that combines sugarcane fibres left over after sugar production, with sand-mineral binders to produce bricks that have a carbon footprint six times smaller than traditionally made clay bricks.

These bricks provide a low-carbon alternative to bricks and concrete blockwork. Being developed by University of East London (UEL), this project is a collaboration between the UEL MArch Architecture programme and the Sustainability Research Institute (SRI) with the support of Tate & Lyle Sugars.

### Why this could be a great alternative to traditional construction practices?

Sugarcane is world's largest crop by production volume. According to the researchers, "The processing of sugarcane to produce sugar, generates enough raw material to partially

replace high energy-demanding construction systems such as concrete or brick. Sugarcane growth provides one of the fastest CO2-to-biomass conversion mediums available, up to 50 times more efficient than forestry."

Research developed at UEL demonstrates how this residue stream can provide a sustainable construction material. The new Sugarcrete® material, prototyped using the Sustainability Research Institute's advance Laboratory, presents high-quality mechanical, acoustic, fire and thermal properties, and has been tested to industry standards for fire resistance (ISO 1716:2021), compressive strength (ASTM C39), thermal conductivity (Hot-Box method) and durability (BS EN 927-6). The testing has shown promising results for Sugarcrete® to be used as insulation panels, lightweight blocks, load bearing blockwork and structural floor and roof slabs.

### How will it benefit the local economy as well as ensure sustainability?

According to the UIL, "Sugarcrete® research will benefit local manufacturers in the global south where construction materials are frequently imported, environmentally poor performing, high cost and high carbon minimises transportation costs. Local producers can make radically new, affordable and ultra-low carbon 'vernacular' building materials that can create new income streams via export to the global North."

The qualities of Sugarcrete have garnered recognition as it was nominated for the Earthshot Prize—an award celebrating outstanding sustainability projects worldwide. This prize considers five categories featuring the top sustainability efforts.

### No patents to provide 'Open Access' for all

Sugarcrete is not yet patented. UEL says that, "It is purposely 'open access' in order to establish partnerships to produce new bio-waste-based construction materials where sugar cane is grown, and benefit is greatest." (with inputs from uel.ac.uk) □

# Saket Mica unveiled it's stunning 1mm new Laminate collection, Myriad of Style and Texture at Baku, Azerbaijan on 23rd to 27th May

**S**aket Mica, is a very fast emerging brand in decorative laminates and it is from the house of a well-established, more than 20-year-old brand Amulya Mica, both manufactured by Purbanchal Laminates Pvt. Ltd.

Saket Mica orchestrated an international excursion to Baku, Azerbaijan, with 36 flagship channel partners from across India, accompanied by some prominent team members of the company's esteemed sales team. Though MD Mr. Rakesh Agarwal was physically not present in this trip but virtually conveyed his gratitude and best wishes to all trade partners.

Baku, renowned as the world's largest city situated below sea level, dazzled with its unique attractions, including the captivating 'Little Venice.'

The New Collection of Saket Mica 1mm laminates, received enthusiastic accolades from the distributors for its stylish designs, enticing range of trends and innovations, expanded palette of pastel colours and various textures to reflect contemporary design preferences by all fraternity. Notable is the introduction of premium quality Metallic Digital laminate and revolutionary 90-Degree bendable 1.25mm PVC Laminates collection within HPL Catalogue is one of its kind in the industry. This has been very well received by the channel partners because it provides them the opportunity to tap wider range of customers by offering

wider range of products, that too at a minimal additional investment.

The catalogue highlights several new textures such as Abstract Grill, Crossed Flute, Crossed Stone, Fabino, Abstract Herin Brone, Light Gloss, Light Oak, Moroccan Mesh, Super Suede, Swirl and Zero Surface, along with a diverse array of wood grain, stone, and marble finishes for a touch of natural elegance. The Unicore series, featuring black, dust grey, and dark grey, offers a sophisticated touch to interior spaces.





Innovative user-centric features include a full view QR code with 300-degree visualization for immersive exploration of laminate options and a user-friendly Click & Look web-based app for convenient online browsing of the entire collection. The Saket Mica IMM catalogue boasts a total of 183 décor papers, including 61 new additions, 35 textures (11 of which are new), and a collection of 55 PVC Laminates.

The company also announced a very attractive scheme of



international trip for its aspirant channel partners. As a strong support in secondary sale generation, an app-based carpenter and contractor scheme has been offered, which is very uncommon in the laminate industry, underscoring its commitment to expanding Saket Mica sales. The Baku trip was a delightful experience for all delegates, leaving them feeling rejuvenated and inspired with sky-high growth initiatives for Saket Mica laminates upon their return to India. □

## Centuryply Commences Commercial Production of Its AP Based MDF Plant



**C**enturyPly has started its commercial production of a newly set-up MDF unit in Andhra Pradesh on 27th March, 2024. The Company has invested Rs 700 crores in MDF and INR 250 crores in laminates and PVC in the first phase at this plant. The new unit will increase their production capacity in MDF plant by 950 M3, which will double their footprint in MDF.

Speaking on the occasion Mr Keshav Bhajanka, the Executive Director CenturyPly, said. “The commencement of commercial production of MDF, a significant stride forward for Centuryply, epitomises its commitment to excellence, innovation and customer satisfaction. With a dedicated team and cutting-edge technology, we are poised to redefine the industry benchmarks and emerge as a paragon of quality and reliability.”

“In fact, we are happy that we have doubled our medium density fibreboard (MDF) capacity from 900-1900 CBM. This new capacity increase will not only boost revenue but also growth of the brand. Additionally, we are also planning to achieve 20 percent volume as well as value of growth.”

Century Ply MDF production line is of Siempelkamp Make which is regarded as the industry-leader in Conti Press lines. There are many standout features in the entire production line, for example a state-of-the-art Mat scanner which plays a pivotal role in identifying poor quality boards before production, ensuring a higher quality standard of finished products and reinforcing their commitment to delivering superior quality.

The inclusion of an adjustable magnet in the mat former is a strategic choice aimed at reducing machinery downtime during transitions between different thickness requirements. Furthermore, the plant features an advanced press fume system, ensuring minimal emissions within the facility and aligning with environmental standards.

Safety takes centre stage throughout this production line. Every facet, from the Mat former to intermediate storage, is equipped with high-end safety features. This emphasis on safety not only prioritizes the well-being of their personnel but also safeguards the integrity of their equipment, contributing to a secure and reliable manufacturing environment.

Notably, the facility is designed with provisions for extending the press, demonstrating flexibility and scalability for potential future increases in production capacity. □

# Over 10,000 hectares identified for tree plantation across 13 states under 'green credit' programme

*The Green Credit Programme initiated tree plantation on 500 land parcels across 10 states. Madhya Pradesh leads with the highest approved degraded forest land. The Programme involves various entities and assures green credits post plantation.*



Over 500 land parcels spanning 4,885 hectares — the size of nearly 6,000 football fields — across 10 states have been approved for tree plantation ever since the Green Credit Programme (GCP) kicked off in the country. These states, along with three others, have together identified over 10,000 hectares of land for the programme.

Madhya Pradesh has, so far, reported the highest 954 hectares of approved degraded forest land for plantation/greening exercises followed by Telangana (845 hectares), Chhattisgarh (713 hectares), Gujarat (595 hectares) and Assam (454 hectares).

Other five states where such land parcels have been approved by the administrator — Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) — are Bihar, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Odisha. Land parcels have, so far, been identified by forest departments of 13 states.

As many as 14 public sector undertaking (PSUs) and other entities have been registered to do plantations on degraded forest land and eventually earn green credits. Individuals, industries and other public/private entities, including philanthropies and local bodies, can voluntarily participate in the GCP.

Underlining how the programme will nurture the entire ecosystem services, Union environment secretary Leena Nandan said, “GCP is envisaged independent of the carbon credit mechanism, as it intends to encourage other non-carbon environmental positive actions for benefits to local soil, water

and ecosystems, and does not encompass only the carbon sequestration aspect of the areas where greening has successfully been carried out.

“Though the programme was launched six months ago to encourage environmentally friendly practices by people, the environment ministry notified the methodologies for calculation of credit generated in lieu of tree plantation on degraded land parcels, including scrub land, wasteland and catchment areas of rivers in every state and Union Territory in Feb.

“Based on the biodiversity of each degraded forest land block, tree species will be selected based on discussion with the relevant forest department, the entity which has selected the land and the ICFRE. Tree species selection will be strictly site relevant and such as to encourage assisted natural regeneration and indigenous species,” Nandan told TOI.

States have identified the land parcels for plantation amid certain concerns expressed by experts over implementation of GCP. “In my view decision to hand over degraded forest land for plantation activity to any private company is fraught with legal complications and may become a source of conflict between tribals communities and forest departments,” said S S Badhawan, retired Indian Forest Service officer and former principal chief conservator of forest, Jharkhand.

He said the GCP may be seen as an attempt by the government to dilute stakes of tribal communities over natural

resources, where they are one of the biggest stakeholders.

Badhawan apprehended that most of forest land which may be identified by state forest departments will come from protected forests over which tribal communities have statutory rights under provisions of Indian Forest Act 1927.

He said, “In view of the legal position, the Govt of India, in 1990, issued instructions to all State Govts/UTs to form Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC) and seek help of local tribal communities in regeneration of degraded forests... Since then these JFMCs have been taking active part in forest protection and plantation activity. Now question arises as to what will happen to the legal rights of local tribals over land identified for plantations.

“The environment secretary explained that the respective state forest departments will identify degraded forest land blocks with canopy density ratio of less than 0.4 for implementation of greening activities on degraded forest land.

She said, “All degraded forest land blocks made available by the State forest departments are to be under their administrative control and management and free of any encumbrances. These

land parcels will be made available on the GCP Portal. Entities including individuals, private sector, philanthropies, local bodies etc. desirous of undertaking plantation for purpose of green credits will select the land parcel of their interest from the degraded land inventory made available for plantation on the GCP Portal and make payment to the Administrator through the Portal.

“The amount will be transferred to respective state forest department for undertaking tree plantation and monitoring/maintaining the same for a period of 10 years. Existing flora and fauna diversity of each degraded forest land block made available for plantation by the state forest department will be identified and details will provided on the GCP Portal.

“Spelling out other details, Nandan further said,” Depending on the terrain and agroclimatic conditions, there will be greening through shrubs and grasses as is relevant. Where existing root stock is available, only boundary fencing, closing of areas and other protection measures will be undertaken for naturally regenerating the biodiversity. Green credits will be issued to the entities on completion of the greening activity in a period of two years.”□

## Merino introduces mesmerising luxury interior collection: Curation



**M**erino has always been experimental with creating unique and luxury interior collection. This time, they have brought another inventive and captivating collection: Curations. This collection is a reflection of trending designs in laminates and panels, coupled with matching edgebands.

Backed by Merino Industries Ltd.’s decades-long legacy of excellence, this innovative range is designed to enhance interior aesthetics comprehensively. Curations is divided into three unique sub-collections—Soul, Grow, and Traces—each offering a diverse array of design possibilities to elevate, transform, or reinvent any space.

At the outset, Curations by Merino offers homeowners and interior designers alike the opportunity to step into a world of design possibilities. The god lies in the detail, coupled with Merino’s continued focus upon quality, each design within the collection is carefully crafted to reflect the latest trends in interior decor. From the timeless elegance of Soul to the organic allure of Grow and the bespoke urban vibe of Traces, there’s

something to suit every taste and style preference. Available in various colours and sizes, the Curations range stands out for the diversity it offers.

Soul in general, invites homeowners and architects to embrace simplicity and tranquility through its elegant designs and soothing color palettes. Inspired by nature’s beauty, Grow celebrates our connection to the environment with earthy tones and organic patterns. In contrast, Traces provides a glimpse into the future with its innovative textures and urban-inspired finishes.

At Merino, sustainability is at the heart of everything the company does. With Curations, it strives to minimise the environmental footprint by using eco-friendly materials and manufacturing processes. Each design is crafted with precision and care, ensuring both beauty and sustainability go hand in hand. Thus, Curations by Merino, is an ode to transform any space into a work of art that reflects the individual’s unique style and personality.

Merino is a versatile manufacturer and marketer of Interiors Solutions with a wide collection of products for homes, offices, commercial and public areas. Sustainability is at the core of Merino’s strategy as they incorporate practices to minimize wastage and conserve water during production. Merino Group has come a long way since the launch of plywood in 1974 and subsequently with the launch of the high pressure laminates in 1981. Today Merino Group has a beautifully strong presence in over 80 countries with an annual turnover of over 245 million USD with diverse business interests that expand from Interior Architectural products to Information Technology to Food & Agro products.□

# India calls for details on ambit of proposed EU deforestation norms

## Synopsis

*India has reached out to the European Union for details regarding its forthcoming regulation, which aims to evaluate exporting nations as either low or high risk based on deforestation levels. The EU's proposed deforestation-free product regulation carries significant implications for India's exports of coffee, cocoa, soybeans, wood products, rubber and derivatives, as well as leather goods.*



whether the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Union Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change cover emissions and removals from agriculture, forestry and land use. "India has asked the EU to elaborate on the rationale behind setting agriculture-related NDC commitments as a criterion from the bench-marking systems," said a Geneva based official.

The EU's Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) is expected to hit India's agricultural exports worth \$1.3 billion to the EU starting from December 2024.

"Indian exports may take a bigger hit than exports from other competing countries to the EU because of India's higher deforestation rate," said trade expert.

At the World Trade Organization (WTO), India has also asked the bloc if it would cover adaptation costs in traceability

## Bone of Contention

- **Rules** benchmark exporting nations as low or high-risk basis deforestation levels
- ▶ **Rules prescribe fines** up to 4% of a firm's annual turnover in the EU 
- ▶ **Also confiscation** of product and revenues gained from a transaction

**India asks EU if it would cover traceability, due diligence costs**

- **Grants provided to protect, restore, manage forests in partner nations details sought**



India has sought information from the European Union about its proposed regulation that seeks to benchmark exporting countries as low or high risk basis deforestation levels. The EU's deforestation-free product regulation has implications for India's coffee, cocoa, soya, wood products, rubber and its products, and leather goods exports.

The regulation requires firms to ensure that the product exported to the EU has not been deforested after December 31, 2020. It prescribes fines up to 4% of a firm's annual turnover in the EU, confiscation of product and revenues gained from a transaction. The new rules will apply to large firms from December 2024 and small firms from June 2025.

New Delhi's concerns relate to one of the conditions on

and due diligence requirements of the unilateral measures. As per the regulations, operators in third countries, including smallholders, could face costs to develop or implement systems to allow EU operators to comply with the new requirements, where they do not already have systems in place.

Further, additional costs in producing countries to ensure compliance with the regulation would be any costs of switching to production practices compliant with the 'deforestation-free definition'.

India has also sought details of the grants provided to protect, restore and sustainably manage forests in partner countries, as well as details pertaining to grants provided to support sustainable agriculture in partner countries. □

# What are the future prospects in the furniture industry?

*India's furniture industry is growing rapidly and has enormous promise in the future. Don't hesitate to make a significant contribution to a rapidly expanding field by immersing yourself in it.*



**A**lmost 65% of Indian furniture is made of wood. The need for wood in India's furniture manufacture has increased due to the appeal of traditional furniture. The use of wooden products in the home has grown over the past few years as people have started using wood for various purposes, including as decoration and pantry outfitting. In addition, metro locations such as Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai, and other major cities are seeing an increase in the demand for designed wood furniture. The reason for this is that in these metropolitan settings, ready-to-assemble furniture is becoming more and more popular. The customer finds it easier to purchase furniture products when created wood furniture is available through many delivery channels.

The following tips are given by Raghunandan Saraf, Founder and CEO, Saraf Furniture

## **FUTURE ACROSS MANY INDUSTRY VERTICALS**

In the upcoming years, there is a huge possibility for growth in the furniture sector. You can check out the following profession verticals that are progressively gaining prominence in the market.

- Product Manager
- A sales manager and team
- Logistics and warehouse management; - Furniture designer
- Human resources

Various graduate programmes are provided by esteemed private institutions around the country to prepare you for a variety of special industry positions.

## **CAREER IN THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY: BEST OPTION OF THE DECADE**

The furniture industry requires a harmonious combination of design, artistry, and flair. A career in the furniture sector was formerly thought to be simply a myth in India; however, leading

furniture companies list more than 500 jobs daily on various job portals.

This sudden rise in positions supports the fast development potential of the organised and unorganised furniture markets in the upcoming years. There are several work opportunities available today in a variety of industries, including the furniture industry.

There has been a noticeable increase in furniture companies' employment recently, particularly in positions such as designer, sales manager, product manager, and so on. Consequently, if furniture is your job option, the future seems good.

## **KEY SKILLS REQUIREMENTS:**

You need to have specific skill sets to function well in the sector. These are the essential abilities that you need to possess.

- Look for special and valuable patterns
- Ability to sketch - Prompt Design Skills
- Improved comprehension of furniture design, practical space, and floor plans
- A creative disposition - An understanding of the industrial production system
- Effective presentation quality
- Complete knowledge of 3D design software

## **FACTS AND FIGURES YOU MUST CONSIDER WHILE PLANNING A FUTURE IN THE INDUSTRY:**

The worldwide furniture market is forecast to be worth \$1.1 trillion, while the domestic Indian furniture market is predicted to develop at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.91% between 2020 and 2024.

The Indian government wants to raise the manufacturing sector's GDP share to 25% by 2025 as part of the Made in India plan. To further promote the sector's expansion, the government allowed 100 per cent FDI in contract manufacturing through the automatic method in August 2019. □

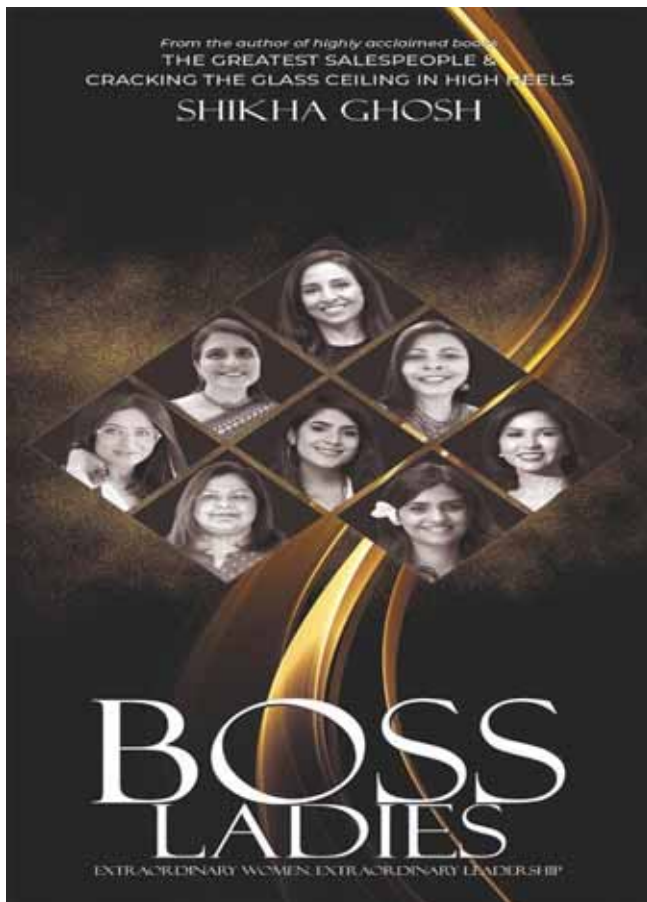
# Amulya Mica awarded the title of India's 20 Most Impactful Power Brands – at the launch of the Power Brands Edition 2024-25 at Mumbai on 15th March 2024

We are delighted to announce that Amulya Mica has been honored with prestigious title of India's 20 Impactful Power Brands 2024-25 by Power Brand Research Unit, initiated by Management Guru Dr. Arindum Choudhury, conferred upon us on the 15th March/24, during a splendid ceremony held at Hotel Novotel, Mumbai. On behalf of the company the award has been received by Mr. Raja Gopala Pillai-VP- Sales (West & South) and Mr. Manoj Thirani, Commercial Manager-Purchase. The event was further embellished with the unveiling of Ms. Shikha Ghosh's latest book "BOSS LADIES," graciously inaugurated by the esteemed cine star Padmashri Ms. Shabana Azami. "Boss Ladies" encapsulates the captivating journey of eight remarkable women showcasing extraordinary leadership. We take immense pride in sharing that one of these inspiring stories is dedicated to our Director Marketing, Ms. Shailja Agarwal, illuminating her path to success.

The evening was also celebrated the commendable contribution of Indian Brands, recognized Bollywood Film Journalist Award, and paid tribute to inspirational women leaders who have significantly influenced the realm of branding globally.

Reflecting on the significance of the event, Dr. Arindum Choudhuri, the Founder of Planman Consultancy, remarked, "Amulya Mica has indelibly etched its presence across the





nation, fully deserving the accolade of India's 20 Most Impactful Power Brands.”

Expressing his gratitude, Mr. Rakesh Agarwal, MD Amulya Mica, expressed his joy in receiving this esteemed award. He described it as another noteworthy achievement for Amulya Mica, accentuating the Group's value proposition. Mr. Agarwal extended his appreciation to Dr. Arindum Choudhari and Ms Shikha Ghosh for the recognition bestowed upon him and for featuring his daughter, Ms. Shailja Agarwal, in the book “BOSS LADIES” alongside eminent personalities such as Ms. Nandita Puri, Journalist Author, Tred X Speaker and Chairperson Om Puri Foundation, Ms. Roshni Sanah Jaiswal, Promoter and Executive Director Jagajit Industries and Founder & CEO Swarnrose Inc. among others.

Furthermore, Mr. Agarwal expressed heartfelt gratitude to his team, friends, relatives, associates, channel partners, and patrons for their unwavering support throughout his journey with Amulya Group. □

## Century plyboards ventures into the office interiors market

India's leading plywood company, Century Plyboards (India) Ltd has announced the launch of a new product, Century Cubicles, augmenting towards a vigorous investment plan along with product diversification in their already existing plywood category.

Century Cubicles is getting launched in Bangalore followed by Kochi and Kolkata. CenturyPly aims to launch this new range of product nationally in all top cities within a couple of months' time and is planning to close it in two subsequent phases.

Century Cubicles” by CenturyPly ushers Seamless Experience, Smart Spaces! It is a thoughtful addition to their vast range of products that looks like the one-step solution for Restroom and Locker issues.

The new product segment is categorized into Brillo-Bu, Nox-Bu, Cielo, Aquilon, Skadi, and Auralite, providing impeccable features of self-sustained structure and quality material that has been crafted with quality accessories with means to achieve an elegant look and great performance. The product strongly features abrasion resistance, anti-bacterial, scratch resistance, and is also easy to maintain.

It is a thoughtfully designed product, that lasts long due to the minimized damaged risks. Century Cubicles showcases durable materials that gracefully withstands regular wear and tear and commits to sheer elegance. It is for all age groups including children.

The products are made from all European Papers keeping a step towards a sustainable world and focusing more on resource efficiency and innovation. With this development, CenturyPly is keeping its promise of being more environment friendly when it comes to its vast range of plywood products.

Additionally, Century Plyboards has initiated the commercial dispatch of medium-density fibreboard (MDF) from its newly inaugurated 100% subsidiary, Century Panels, situated in Badvel, YSR Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh. With this, it has marked a significant event marking a pivotal moment in the company's journey. Meanwhile, the brand has effectively doubled its MDF capacity from 900 to 1900 cubic meters. □

*Readers are invited to send views, comments and suggestions if any, addressed to Editorial board  
We also invite your valuable Advertisement and Article to be published in the Journal.*

## “INDIAN WOOD & ALLIED PANELS”

Quarterly Journal - FIPPI

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## India Office Market Records Third-Highest Net Absorption in 5 Years



The Indian office market continues its positive trajectory, registering a net absorption of 11.5 Million Square Feet (MSF) across top 8 cities in Q1-24, according to Cushman & Wakefield's Q1 office data. This is the third-highest level recorded in the last five years, demonstrating a robust appetite for office space among businesses. Net absorption is a barometer of real demand or expansion of occupied space in the market.

While this quarter's net absorption was 38% lower than the exceptional Q4-2023, it was a 44% increase over Q1 2023, indicating continued space occupation by businesses. Bengaluru and Mumbai emerged as the leading markets, absorbing 3.6 MSF and 2.5 MSF of space, respectively. They were followed by Hyderabad at 1.6 MSF, Delhi-NCR at 1.5 MSF and Pune at 1.3 MSF, Ahmedabad and Kolkata at 1 MSF, and Chennai at .8 MSF.

According to the report, the Gross Leasing Volume (GLV) also remained robust at over 20 MSF, a 20% decrease q-o-q but a steep rise of 33% on y-o-y basis. Gross leasing volume, which factors in all leasing activity in the market, including renewal of contracted term by corporates, is an indication of overall market activity. This quarter's figures signify a resilient market with sustained interest in office space.

Nearly a third of the entire India GLV was recorded in just one city, Bengaluru (6.7 MSF), followed by Mumbai (4.8 MSF) with a share of one-quarter. The two cities combined had a share of over 57% in total leasing volumes for the first quarter. A significant contribution to Bengaluru's healthy leasing volume was 4.8 MSF of fresh leasing activity, and the city accounted for 33% of total fresh space leasing across the top-8 markets. The city also received close to 2.0 MSF of pre-commitments during Q1-24, thereby making it the largest contributor amongst all.

In line with the trend seen in recent past, fresh leasing continues to dominate GLV with 72% share, with pre-commitments and term renewals taking-up the balance 28% in GLV.

Among the sectors, IT-BPM and Engineering & Manufacturing sectors emerged as the major drivers of demand, contributing over 45% to the GLV. The BFSI and Flex Space leasing followed with ~17% and ~11% shares, respectively.

Global Capability Centers (GCCs) took-up close to 4.5 MSF (~22% share in GLV) of office space in Q1, further consolidating the belief that this sector is having a positive influence on office market of India.

The first quarter also witnessed close to 13 MSF of new supply, continuing the momentum of healthy supply from previous quarters. The cities that saw the biggest supply additions were Hyderabad (2.9 MSF), Bengaluru (2.9 MSF) and Delhi-NCR (2.8 MSF). These three, together accounted for over 67% of total supply in top-8 cities. The new supply, coupled with strong absorption, led to a slight decline in the national vacancy rate to 18.1%. Notably, Mumbai's supply-constrained market witnessed the sharpest vacancy rate drop by 1.22% points to ~17%.

Rents across most cities exhibited a slight upward trend, reflecting the positive market sentiment and rising demand. □

## Hafele Introduces Free Space Stay Flap Fitting

With the new Free Space, Hafele offers an innovative stay flap fitting which, with its strong features and universal aesthetics, can be used in furniture across interior spaces. It immediately provides added value and more efficiency when working.

The fittings of the Free family give flaps new freedom in movement. This opens up more opportunities in the visual and technical design of furniture and has tangible benefits compared to hinged doors. But above all, it gives the furniture and the room undreamt elegance and lightness.

Almost 100 years of experience with furniture fittings, engineering expertise, and a close connection to the market and the people who work with furniture fittings on a daily basis led to the development of Free Space. Inspired by the requirements of the market of tomorrow Free space fulfils all demands for



creative freedom and choice of material, design, ease of installation and convenient operation on a whole new level. □

# IKEA unveils its first ever B2B furniture collection

## 'MITTZON'



Inspired by the opportunity to create a desire to feel more at home when at work, IKEA has introduced its largest office collection to date, Mittzon. From adjustable desks to sound-proof screens, the new collection of 56 products comprises of first-to-market innovative solutions and unique styles tailored to address the challenges and aspirations of today's workforce. With a keen focus on optimising the office experience, Mittzon integrates functionality and aesthetics with holistic ergonomic design principles that prioritise wellbeing at work.

**Acoustics:** Mittzon prioritises acoustics in its development to enhance focus and well-being in the workplace. The collection includes high-level acoustic screens that absorb and block sound, prevent visual distractions, and provide privacy for focused work. Mittzon showcases innovation using wood fibre filling in its acoustic screens made of more than 90% wood, providing effective sound absorption while being recyclable.

**Biophilic Design:** Mittzon incorporates biophilic design elements, such as nature-inspired shapes, colours, and materials. These features promote wellness by reducing stress and increasing productivity, drawing from Scandinavian outdoor elements like sand patterns and wood finishes to create a relaxing and inspiring environment.

**Durability:** The collection is designed to be durable and long-lasting, with modular, repairable, and refurbished components. It also features high-quality materials like fade-resistant wood veneer and high-strength steel, backed by a 10-year warrantee, aligning with IKEA's commitment to sustainability and circular product design.

Sumit Parthi, Country B2B Manager, IKEA India, said, "Our new office system, Mittzon, is developed with flexibility at its core to adapt to distinct working preferences and activities. It is an efficient and affordable product range for the workplaces of today and tomorrow. The result is a new office system that inspires collaboration, comfort, and productivity. B2B in India is growing exponentially, and our solutions, backed by thorough research of global and Indian trends, expand the scope to grow our market share. Currently, IKEA B2B contributes to 15–20% of overall IKEA sales in India, and with this new collection, we aim to increase our presence and sales in the coming years." □

## Rushil Décor Ltd Plans Expansion In South America



# RUSHIL

DECOR LIMITED

WE'LL MAKE IT

Rushil Decor, a leading MDF manufacturer in India, is capitalizing on the multi-billion-dollar growth potential of the global wood panel market by strategically expanding into South America. This move comes as the company experiences strong financial performance, with a 9 per cent year-over-year growth and export revenue contributing significantly to their overall income.

They see South America as a key market to fulfil the high demand for MDF and laminates, leveraging their expertise in

both product lines. This expansion aligns with their vision of reaching Rs 2,500 crore in annual revenue by 2029, allowing them to further solidify their global presence while providing high-quality and sustainable products to new customers. Their participation in Interzum Bogota, an industry fair focused on sustainability and innovation, further emphasizes their commitment to these values.

Rushil Decor Ltd is primarily engaged in the manufacturing and sale of laminate sheets, medium-density fibre boards, prelaminated medium-density fibre board boards, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) boards and particle boards. Its net sales increased by 9.1 per cent to Rs 233.43 crore and operating profit increased by 9.1 per cent to Rs 31.14 crore in Q4FY24 compared to Q4FY23. The company reported a net profit of Rs 9 crore in Q4FY24 compared to a net profit of Rs 13.56 crore in Q4FY23.

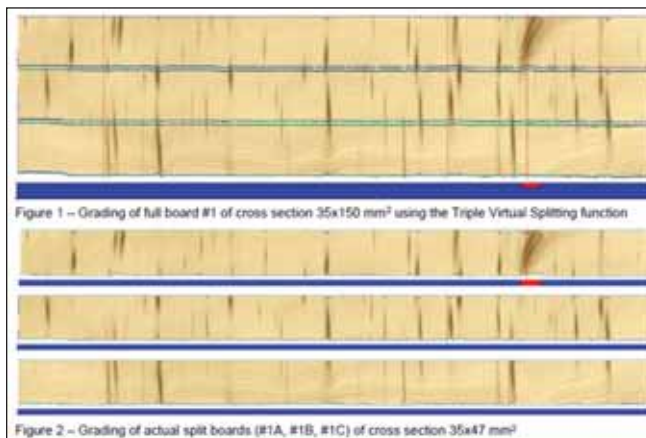
The net sales increased by 0.7 per cent to Rs 843.97 crore in FY24 compared to FY23. The company reported an operating profit of Rs 122.79 crore and a net profit of Rs 43.11 crore in FY24 compared to an operating profit of Rs 150.77 crore and a net profit of Rs 77.67 crore in FY23. □

# Unique Approach to Strength Grading: Virtual Splitting at James Jones & Sons Ltd with MiCROTEC Solution

*James Jones & Sons Ltd, one of the UK's largest and most progressive timber processing companies, chooses again MiCROTEC Goldeneye scanners for their strength grading lines in Aboyne and Lockerbie for the processing of British spruce and larch timber. The 5th generation family business has received the first Goldeneye scanner for strength grading in 2003 and has since then relied on MiCROTEC, a company that looks back on more than 25 years of experience in the development of scanners for machine strength grading.*



In 2021, James Jones & Sons has decided to upgrade its mills and has invested in two new Goldeneye scanners including X-ray for their strength grading lines, one in their Aboyne location and one in the Lockerbie location. This new generation of scanners is more compact, does not rely on water cooling and is overall easier to maintain compared to the models from 20 years ago. The Goldeneye allows James Jones & Sons to grade the boards that are later used for construction according to EN-14081 standards. The in-line moisture meter M3 Scan measures the moisture content of every single board. Boards with a moisture content outside the target range are automatically rejected. The project applies the approach of double and triple virtual splitting, first introduced by MiCROTEC who is still exclusively offering the triple virtual splitting solution. Before sawing, the Goldeneye software utilizes a virtual board splitting mechanism, dividing a



board lengthwise into either two or three parts. This segmented data is then forwarded to the strength grading software, which treats each part as an independent board.

James Jones & Sons and MiCROTEC look back on a long-standing partnership. Reflecting on the collaboration, Tobbe Sandberg, Technical Manager at James Jones & Sons emphasizes the pivotal role of MiCROTEC's Goldeneye X-ray grading technology in their operations: "James Jones & Sons Ltd has used Goldeneye X-ray grading for many years at its Aboyne and Lockerbie sites. When the time came to upgrade the strength grading in Aboyne and Lockerbie, we chose MiCROTEC Goldeneye again due to its reliability, good service and the long-established relationship we have with MiCROTEC." □

## Action TESA unveils Moist-Master: High moisture resistant particle board

Action TESA proudly presents the MOIST-MASTER, a high moisture-resistant particle board. The MOIST-MASTER boasts a high density (>700), ensuring robust performance and durability, particularly in coastal regions. It offers long-lasting protection against common pests with its borer and termite resistance. The board also features excellent screw-holding capacity, facilitating secure and reliable construction. Additionally, it is environmentally friendly, manufactured with sustainability in mind to reduce its environmental footprint and promote healthier indoor air quality with low formaldehyde emissions. MOIST-MASTER is designed to meet the evolving needs of consumers and professionals who require superior materials for their projects. Its high moisture resistance makes it particularly suitable for environments prone to humidity and moisture, offering unparalleled reliability and longevity. "With MOIST MASTER, we continue our legacy of innovation and excellence, offering our customers a product that surpasses



expectations in terms of performance and durability. With 'MOIST MASTER' we are not only raising the bar in terms of product performance but also redefining industry norms. We believe that 'MOIST MASTER' will empower architects, designers, and builders to create structures of enduring quality and sustainability," said Ajay Aggarwal, managing director, Action TESA. □

# Global Timber Index launches index for wood-based panels



The Global Timber Index (GTI), which tracks the performance of the timber sector in seven pilot countries, has launched its first specialised index on wood-based panels, thereby increasing the scope and depth of the GTI and preparing the ground for the launch of other specialised GTI indices. The GTI is a collaborative effort between ITTO, the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute and the Secretariat of the Global Green Supply Chains initiative, with more than 200 enterprises and companies also participating. The aim is to facilitate business information and data exchange on the timber trade and promote collaboration among stakeholders in a stable, transparent and predictable business environment.

The GTI-Wood-based Panel Index (WBP), which covers diverse categories of plywood, fibreboard and particleboard, tracks and monitors overall trends in the wood-based panel industry in eight GTI pilot countries — Brazil, China, the Congo, Gabon, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico and Thailand. In 2021, the total production of wood-based panels in these eight countries was 210 million cubic metres, which was 53% of the total global production volume of wood-based panels. The WBP is calculated based on five diffusion indices: 1) production; 2) new orders; 3) inventory of raw material; 4) employees; and 5) delivery time — weighted according to their influence on the industrial economy.

In April, the GTI-WBP registered 43.1%, significantly below the threshold value of 50%, indicating that the overall prosperity of the wood-based panel industry in the pilot countries shrank in April. In other news, China's overall timber market maintained its upward momentum in April, amid further growth in new orders and the sound performance of the timber sector, according to the latest edition of the Global Timber Index Report in April. China's GTI was at 52.3% in April, the second consecutive month it has exceeded the 50% threshold, thus indicating growth in the sector).

Less positively, GTI values were below the threshold in Brazil (49.3%), Indonesia (48.8%), Thailand (44.7%), Mexico (42.0%), the Congo (41.6%), Gabon (38.4%) and Malaysia (31.1%). Despite the overall weaker performance in the seven countries, positive changes were evident from the GTI data. In Brazil and Thailand, the volume of export orders increased significantly compared with the previous month; in Malaysia and the Congo, the sub-index for existing orders rose, indicating improvement; and, in terms of timber supply, Indonesia's timber

sector showed an increase in harvesting and production volumes and Gabon's downward trend in harvesting and production eased.

GTI pilot countries also continued to address issues in sustainable forest management in April. The Indonesian government indicated plans to engage in diplomacy by presenting comprehensive forest-cover data and scientific methodologies to respond to the European Union deforestation regulation, and the country's Minister of Environment and Forestry said Indonesia has a detailed forest database, Simontana.

In the Congo, the Minister of Forest Economy highlighted the need to explore new technologies and innovative practices, such as remote sensing, drones, and internet-of-things sensors for tree health monitoring and fire prevention.

In China, the government released the Ecological Protection Compensation Regulations, which give full play to the role of market mechanisms and encourage social forces and local governments to engage in ecological protection compensation by purchasing ecological products and services in accordance with market rules. □

## New 3D printing technology developed by researchers

Researchers from Rice University and Oak Ridge National Laboratory have developed a new 3D printing technology that recycles wood waste material. According to the paper "Three-dimensional printing of wood" in *Science Advances*, the new methodology results in 3D printed objects with the texture, appearance, thermal stability, and smell of natural wood. Also, in contrast with some other 'wood' 3D printing filaments available today, the new material is simply a water-based ink made of lignin and cellulose, the primary building blocks of natural wood.

The researchers were inspired to develop their wood ink after pondering over the inefficiency of traditional carpentry. They still, however, were attracted to some of the defining qualities of wood — specifically its visual, textural, olfactory, and mechanical properties. They wanted to mix the latest manufacturing technology of 3D printing, or additive manufacturing, without losing the attractive qualities of wood in the process. Current wood filaments for 3D printers are reportedly not up to scratch in this regard, being around 70% polylactic acid (PLA). The new 3D printing wood ink uses "entirely woodbased constituents and is devoid of any binder or foreign polymeric phase".

No chemicals such as acetone are used in the waste wood processing either, according to the report. Last but not least, using sawdust and wood scraps to make this wood ink leverages on the substantial waste created by traditional wood manufacturing processes. □

# Wood Panel Import Statistics in India



**Import Export Gap Wood Panel Products From 2019-20 to 2023-24**

(Value in Crores)

Year	Plywood	MDF	Particle-board	Veneer	Sawn Timber	Log
HSN code	4412	4411	4410	4408	4407	4403
2019-20	514	528	261	1691	3100	6281
2020-21	364	145	167	1247	2690	5485
2021-22	495	203	147	1938	3002	7052
2022-23	463	242	165	1816	3944	8501
2023-24	687	377	111	1784	2418	4878

**Import of Wood Panel Products from 2019-20 to 2023-24**

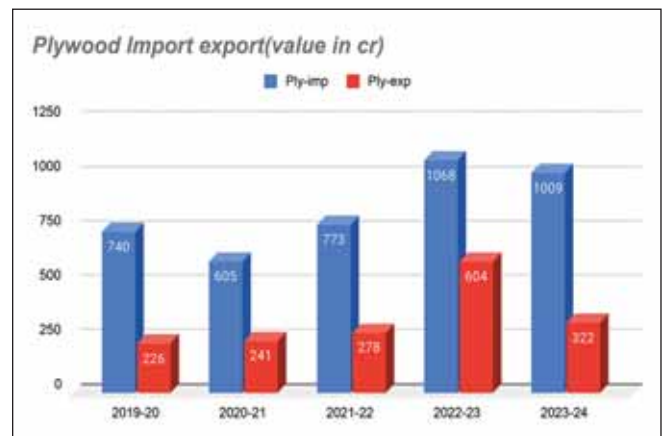
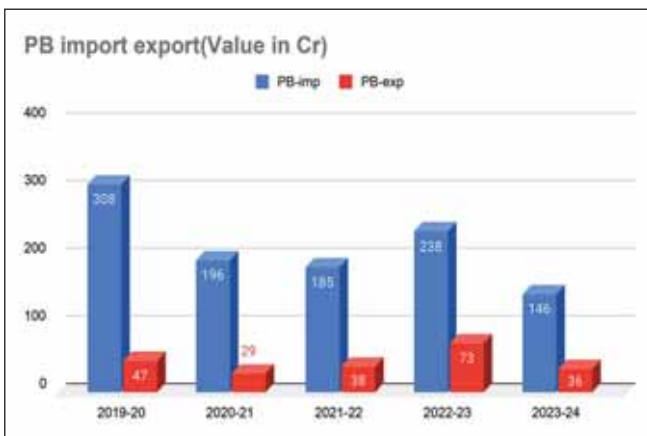
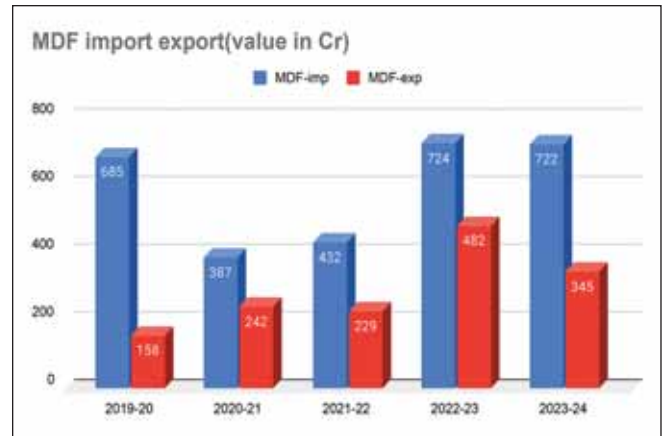
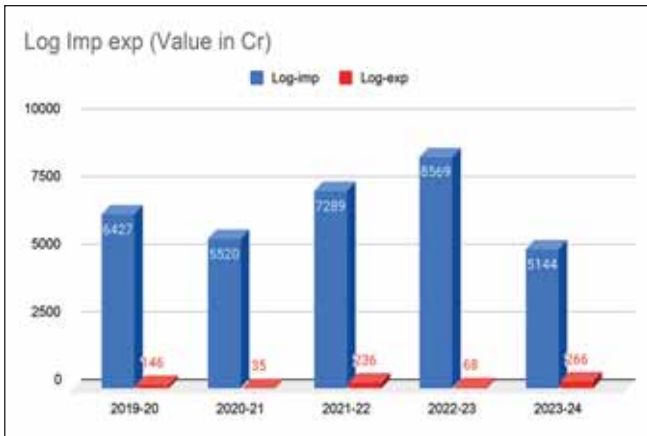
Import (Value in Crores)

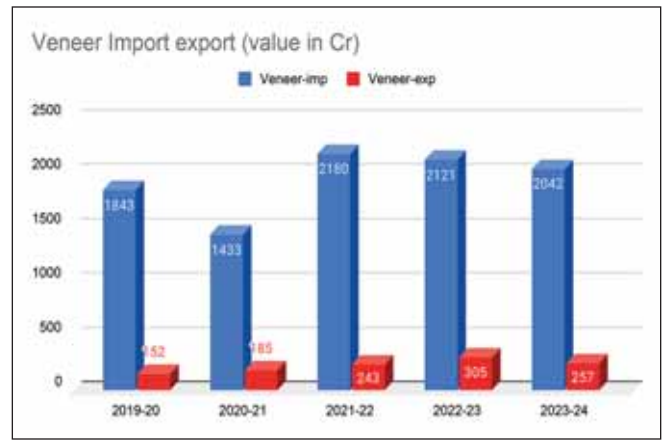
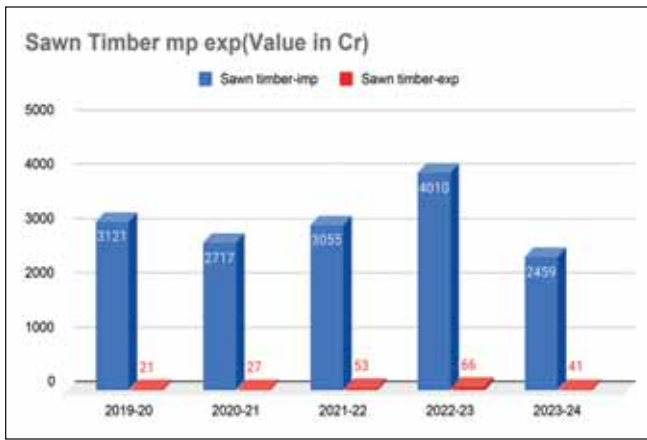
Year	Plywood	MDF	Particle-board	Veneer	Sawn Timber	Log
HSN code	4412	4411	4410	4408	4407	4403
2019-20	740	685	308	1843	3121	6427
2020-21	605	387	196	1433	2717	5520
2021-22	773	432	185	2180	3055	7289
2022-23	1068	724	238	2121	4010	8569
2023-24	1009	722	146	2042	2459	5144

**Export of Wood Panel Products from 2019-20 to 2023-24**

Export (Value in Crores)

Year	Plywood	MDF	Particle-board	Veneer	Sawn Timber	Log
HSN code	4412	4411	4410	4408	4407	4403
2019-20	226	158	47	152	21	146
2020-21	241	242	29	185	27	35
2021-22	278	229	38	243	53	236
2022-23	604	482	73	305	66	68
2023-24	322	345	36	257	41	266





## Berndorf Band Group opens new branch in India

**B**erndorf Band Group sets up new branch in India. Berndorf Band Group has announced their expansion into the Indian market with a new branch as part of the company’s growth strategy. According to the company’s press release, India’s thriving economy, projected growth and “ambitious global goals” convinced Berndorf Band Group to expand into there.

The company’s vision for the Gujarat, India branch, named as Berndorf Band India, aims to provide potential and new customers with steel belts, belt systems, and local service support. “By becoming a reliable partner across various industries, we strive to significantly contribute to the company’s success in the region,” the press release stated.

The management of Berndorf Band India will be led by Mohit Bhavnagari as managing director, who is jointly registered with Alexander Leutner in the company’s register, and Satish Pal as vice-president.

It will focus on the wood, food, and chemical industries in the steel belt sector. Simultaneously, they will provide



process equipment (Solidification & Cooling Systems) for the petrochemical and chemical industry.

Their global service network will also be active in India, with three local service technicians to be closer to their customers and provide fast, cost-effective service. □

## China’s Demand For African Timber Keeps Growing

**A**ccording to Global Wood Trade Network, Gabon is experiencing a rainy season, which is affecting the operation of timber factories in inland areas. During the rainy season, Gabonese veneer and plywood factories can continue to produce, but due to the impact of the rainy season, the inventory of logs has decreased, especially the inventory of Augustan logs, which has decreased significantly.

Meanwhile, China’s demand for African timber is on the rise. In particular, they are particularly interested in Bilinga (Batimu, irregularly called Huanghuali and Huangtanmu), Ayous (aka White wutong, African White Wood), Okan (aka Disc Bean), Movingui, Sapelli, and Okoume (aka Red Walnut).

Recently, according to reports from African timber traders, as China enters 2024, African timber exports, represented by African rosewood, have begun to show signs of recovery. The price trend of high-end timber is strong, continuing the price surge of 2023.

At the consumer end, entering the Year of the Loong,



driven by the new Chinese consumption boom and the high-end consumer market, the rosewood market continues to be hot. The precious hardwood known for its appearance and texture - African rosewood has become the new favorite of the high-end floor consumer market. □

## SCM partners with Springa to distribute Goliath CNC



Springa Srl is excited to share a major achievement in its commercial growth: SCM, a global leader in technologies and services for secondary wood processing, has selected Springa's sales network to distribute Goliath CNC, the portable and adaptable CNC milling machine designed for crafting large-scale projects.

### The Goliath System: A Game-Changer for Small Businesses

Introduced to the market in 2021, the Goliath CNC system has garnered the attention of approximately 1000 customers in recent years. Comprising the Goliath CNC robot, Slingshot CAM software, and precision positioning sensors, the Goliath

System—innovated and patented by Springa—empowers businesses to work with large-scale panels, boasting a maximum diagonal work area of 3.5 meters while occupying minimal space when not in use.

Industries such as carpentry, craftsmanship, event staging, and visual communication have shown significant interest in recent years. Additionally, the education sector, including schools, universities, and FabLabs, has expressed keen interest. Goliath CNC enables professionals and enthusiasts alike to explore woodworking with creativity and innovation.

### The Purchase and Distribution Agreement

After a thorough validation process and comprehensive product analysis, Springa and SCM Group have concluded a significant commercial agreement. Under this agreement, the robot will be distributed globally through authorized distributors and the SCM e-shop. Additionally, the product will be tailored and marketed as “SCM Maker”. Springa will maintain its sales operations through its e-commerce channel, retaining the “Goliath CNC” brand.

This collaboration enables SCM to enhance its product portfolio, catering to both carpenters, artisans, and industrial players in the woodworking sector. Springa sees SCM as a leading international partner, facilitating access to new customers and previously untapped markets. □

## Mato Grosso Works on Implementing Certification of Wood Products

Sustainable forest management areas (MFS) have increased and currently occupy 5.025 million hectares on private properties in Mato Grosso. With the harvesting of suitable tree species, according to criteria established in environmental legislation, 7 million cubic meters (m<sup>3</sup>) of wood per year are produced from Sustainable Forest Management Plans (PMFS). Production with proof of origin, traceability and quality assurance.

There is potential to advance even further and reach 7 million hectares of managed forests in the Mato Grosso territory, according to a survey by the State Secretariat for the Environment (Sema). This is an important solution in a climate emergency context. At the same time as it guarantees the conservation of natural resources, it promotes socioeconomic development with the generation of jobs and income. 12,712 thousand formal workers are employed in forestry-based activities in the state.

In pursuit of this objective, the forestry sector of Mato Grosso is committed to implementing a certification model that establishes greater security for the market in the acquisition of wood products, in accordance with the entire rigorous traceability process guaranteed by the chain of custody system. Used by the State's forest-based sector, this procedure aims to control and certify the origin of native wood from the forest to the final consumer, using tools such as the Forest Products Trading and

Transport System (Sisflora 2.0) and the Forest Origin Document (DOF+ Traceability), which are, respectively, state and federal. This challenge is being faced by the Center for Wood Producing and Exporting Industries of the State of Mato Grosso (Cipem), the National Forest Base Forum (FNBF) and the Federation of Industries of Mato Grosso (Fiemt), benefiting not only this economic segment of the State, but also across the country.

The objective is to create a certification mechanism that certifies the origin and quality of Mato Grosso's raw materials, from sawn wood to the finished product, especially for European countries, a more demanding market that already demands this certification. In April, the Recommended Practice ABNT PR 1020 - Management of native tropical forests was launched, a standard that values sustainable forest management and establishes the procedures for obtaining certification. Initiative that guarantees the creation of a certification seal of product origin, endorsed by the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT).

We demonstrate with this that we are dedicated to expanding the commercialization of forestry production and we believe that the certificate issued by ABNT, in addition to adding reliability and safety to wood from Mato Grosso, will make forestry products more competitive, in accordance with trade regulation standards. and industry. □

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