

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF AYUSH**

**LOK SABHA  
ADMITTED UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2171  
ANSWERED ON 15<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

**‘Species of Medicinal Plants’**

**2171. SHRI MARGANI BHARAT:  
SHRI MADDILA GURUMOORTHY:**

Will the Minister of AYUSH be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is true that as much as 10 percent of 900 major medicinal plant species found in India fall under the ‘threatened’ category, as per experts observations;
- (b) if so, the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to rectify and deal with reported causes, such as over-exploitation, drug industry’s high dependence on wildlife population, habitat destruction and urbanisation;
- (c) the details of the percentage of medicinal plants native to India that are currently being cultivated;
- (d) whether the Government has taken any initiatives to encourage the cultivation of medicinal plants, considering their health benefits; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF AYUSH  
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)**

**(a) & (b) :** The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) mandated for survey of plant diversity of country and its documentation including medicinal plants. As per BSI, about 8,000 species of medicinal and aromatic plants are found in the country and about 76 species of medicinal and aromatic plants with high commercial value became endangered or critically endangered due to over-exploitation, high dependence of drug Industry’s on wild population, habitat destruction and urbanisation etc.

For protection of wild population of medicinal plants, the Government has taken following steps:

- i. The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of Ayush provided supports for in-situ conservation of medicinal plants in their natural habitats by way of establishment of Medicinal Plants Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs) and Ex-situ conservation by way of establishing Herbal Garden / Germplasm Banks / Seed Bank etc. outside designated forest areas.
- ii. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) formulated Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, to accord protection of forests and their components including medicinal plants.
- iii. MoEF&CC through National Biodiversity Authority implementing Biological Diversity Act, 2002 to regulate the access of biological resources and knowledge associated thereto, including the medicinal plants for the research, commercial utilization, bio-survey and bio-utilization.

**(c) :** As per Demand & Supply study of medicinal plants in India published in 2017 by NMPB, Ministry of Ayush it is estimated that about 1178 species of medicinal plants are in trade out of which 242 species are in high commercial demand (>100 MT per year). As per study it is also estimated that about 15% of the medicinal plants species forming the source of herbal raw drugs in India are cultivated and 85% sourced from the wild.

**(d) & (e) :** Yes, to encourage the cultivation of medicinal plants, the Ministry of Ayush has taken following initiatives:

- i. Implemented “Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Mission of Medicinal Plants” w.e.f. 2008-09 to 2014-15 and ‘Medicinal Plants’ Component of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Ayush Mission w.e.f. 2014-15 to 2020-21. As per the scheme guidelines, the support was provided for:
  - (a) Cultivation of prioritized medicinal plants on farmer’s land.
  - (b) Establishment of nurseries with backward linkages for raising and supply of quality planting material.
  - (c) Post-harvest management with forward linkages.
  - (d) Primary processing, marketing infrastructure etc.
- ii. Implementing “Central Sector Scheme on Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants”, under which project based support is provided to

Government and Non-Government Organizations for development of Quality Planting Material (QPM) of medicinal plants and their distribution to farmers for cultivation; development of agro-techniques and varieties of medicinal plant species; impart training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Field Collection Practices (GFCPs) to farmers / growers of medicinal plants.