

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:738
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2009
OVER EXPLOITATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the medicinal plants used in the traditional drugs for combating diseases like cancer and malaria are being over-exploited as reported in the Times of India dated 11 January, 2009;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (c):- Medicinal plants constitute the main raw material for the majority of the traditional drugs of Ayurveda, Sidha and Unani systems of medicine. As per a nationwide study done by the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), 77% of the production of medicinal plants in the country is sourced from the forests and wastelands. Due to open access nature of the forest resources, over-exploitation of certain medicinal plants cannot be ruled out.

The Ministry of Environment & Forests is responsible for implementation of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 which have provisions for protection of forests and wildlife, including medicinal plants. The National Biodiversity Act, 2002 regulates the access to forest resources, including medicinal plants. The Ministry of Environment & Forests is also supporting a number of projects on conservation by setting up Medicinal Plants Conservation Areas (MPCAs) that are primarily located in forest areas. Plantation of medicinal plants in degraded forest lands is also supported through schemes of the National Afforestation & Eco-development Board (NAEB), Ministry of Environment & Forests.

Government has also set up Medicinal Plants Board to coordinate matters relating to medicinal plants with Ministries/ Departments and other stakeholders for ensuring availability of medicinal plants of quality to the industry on a sustained basis.

The Board also supports schemes for conservation and resource augmentation of rare, endangered and threatened species of medicinal plants under its Central Sector Scheme of conservation, development and sustainable management of medicinal plants which has an outlay of Rs. 320 crores during the 11th Plan.