

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2491
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2009
AVAILABILITY OF HERBS IN FOREST AND HILLY AREAS
Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any study/assessment about availability of herbs in forest and hilly areas in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any efforts have been made by `Central Pharmaceutical and Aromatic Institute` to meet the increasing demand of herbs in international market; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) & (b): Yes. Survey units of Research Councils viz Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (CCRAS) and Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) have conducted surveys of forests and hilly areas of the country to inventorise and document medicinal plants as well as the local plants used in health traditions. The National Medicinal Plants Board has been providing financial assistance to research and development institutions and Universities to survey and inventories medicinal plants in the hilly and forest regions in the country. Botanical Survey of India (BSI) an organization under Ministry of Environment and Forest have also been conducting ethno-botanical studies in several districts of Orissa, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and North Eastern States under Annual Action Plan projects and all India coordinated Research project on Ethnobiology.

(c) & (d): There is no information about the presence of "Central Pharmaceutical and Aromatic Plants Institute". However, laboratories working under Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), namely, Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP), Lucknow; Institute of Himalayan Bio-resources Technology (IHBT), Palampur; Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIM), Jammu; and North-East Institute of Science & Technology (NEIST), Jorhat; conduct R&D on natural bio-resources of the hilly region including genetic improvement through conventional breeding and biotechnological methods and agro-technology of economically important plants, including medicinal and aromatic plants and process technology for phytochemicals. CIMAP and IIM are also involved in the development of knowledge-based herbal formulations, genomics and DNA fingerprinting of plants, bioinformatics, bioprospection for new drugs and agrochemicals and organic farming. CIMAP's efforts towards development of high yielding mint varieties, cropping and integrated pest and soil nutrient management schedules transferred to cultivators leading to high mint oil yield and enormous employment generation in the area, has largely contributed to India achieving a capability to meet about 75% of world's requirement of about 15000 tons of natural menthol.