

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:524
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2013
CHECK ON EXTINCTION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS
Kumar Shri Kaushalendra

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether various species of medicinal and aromatic plants are close to the point of extinction in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/being taken by the Government for the rejuvenation of these plants;
- (c) whether plants are being grown with the use of fertilizers made of chemicals of various kinds under National Medicinal Plant Mission which hugely affect their quality;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the effective measures likely to be undertaken by the Government to insulate human lives from its impact?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) & (b): No firm data on the extent of threat to the medicinal and aromatic plants is readily available. The Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), which is a Centre of Excellence in Medicinal Plants & Traditional Knowledge of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, has prepared a list of 335 Red Listed Medicinal Plant species.

In addition, Section 38 of the Biological Diversity Act empowers the Central Government in consultation with the concerned State Government to notify from time to time any species which are on the verge of extinction or likely to become extinct in the near future as threatened species, and prohibit or regulate their collection, and also to take appropriate steps to rehabilitate and preserve those species. Accordingly, a State-wise list of such species, which includes medicinal plants, was prepared and sent to the State Governments. Following responses received, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has issued notifications for 16 States so far. These plants also include medicinal and aromatic plants.

Several steps have been taken by the Government for rejuvenation and management of medicinal plants. These include setting up of a National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB). The Board has formulated central sector and centrally sponsored schemes which are implemented in States / UTs for overall development of medicinal plants sector.

(c) to (e): The NMPB implements a Centrally sponsored scheme, "National Mission on Medicinal Plants" where subsidy is provided to farmers / growers of medicinal plants in various States of the country through Mission Directors identified in States. Under the Scheme, there is a special provision of supporting the States / growers of medicinal plants for organic certification of their produce to encourage promotion of such production in an organic manner. In addition, NMPB also implements a scheme on voluntary certification of medicinal plants through certification bodies identified by Quality Council of India for Good Agricultural Practices finalized by NMPB, so as to ensure that the produce is of high quality and do not adversely affect the quality of medicines. Schedule T of the Drugs & Cosmetic Act, 1940 lays down guidelines for Good Manufacturing Practices of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) medicines, which is enforceable by the concerned State Governments on the manufacturers of ASU drugs to ensure good quality of drugs.