

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3388
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2015
PROTECTION OF PLANT SPECIES
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken steps to protect various plant species traditionally used by coastal communities in southern Kerala for food, medicine, fodder, artifacts and other purposes in the light of the survey conducted by the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) which states that as many as 225 plant species are struggling for survival in coastal areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is considering to conduct systematic ethnobotanical survey among the coastal communities to identify and preserve such plant species and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government would be taking initiative to establish natural history museums and libraries in each of the coastal panchayats to document and showcase the diversity of plants and their use in traditional knowledge systems; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE. (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) As per the information furnished by Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), currently it is operating two projects entitled "Ethnobotanical survey in the coastal areas of three southern Districts of Kerala" (in-house project of JNTBGRI), and "An Assessment of Medicinal plants Resources of Kerala" (including coastal, plain and forest areas) funded by State Medicinal Plants Board, Kerala. Based on the study conducted so far, JNTBGRI had identified traditionally used 225 plant species growing in the coastal areas out of which about 60 plant species are of conservation concern. Conservation and protection of plant species in the country, including in the coastal areas are done through enforcement of the Indian Forest Act, 1927; Wildlife (protection) Act, 1972; Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the rules under these Acts. A Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has since been established to check illegal trade and smuggling in wildlife, including plants.

(b) Botanical Survey of India (BSI) is presently working on the ethnobotanical studies of the tribal areas of different districts of Orissa and Dang district of Gujarat.

(c)&(d) In order to showcase the diversity of flora and fauna of the country, including coastal areas, the Government has already established National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) in New Delhi. The NMNH has four regional centres located at Mysore, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Sawai Madhopur.

Further, BSI has been carrying out identification, survey, documentation of the medicinal /aromatic plants and herbs in the country at national, regional, state and ecosystem levels. Besides, the ethnobotanical museum in Central Botanical Laboratory in Central National Herbarium Building and the botanical galleries in Industrial Section of Indian Museum, BSI, Kolkata showcase the ethnobotanical artefacts and plant diversity of different tribal areas of the country and their uses.