

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AYURVEDA, YOGA & NATUROPATHY, UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMEOPATHY (AYUSH)
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3083
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2015
Availability of Herbs in Hilly Areas
Khanduri AVSM Maj. Gen. (Retd) Bhuwan Chandra

Will the Minister of AYURVEDA, YOGA & NATUROPATHY, UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMEOPATHY (AYUSH) be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of AYURVEDA, YOGA AND NATUROPATHY, UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMOEOPATHY (AYUSH) be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is conducting/ proposes to conduct any study in hilly areas particularly in Uttarakhand in respect of availability of herbs and medicinal plants, if so, the details and the findings thereof, State-UT/wise and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of herbs and plants which are in demand internationally, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken note of illegal harvesting of medicinal herbs/ plants, particularly Yarsa Gambo and smuggling these to international markets; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

(a): Botanical Survey of India (BSI) an organization working under Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has been carrying out survey and documentation of all plant resources including medicinal / aromatic plants and herbs of the country which also covers the hilly areas including Uttarakhand. As per BSI estimate more than 8,000 species of medicinal herbs and medicinal plants are found in the country.

The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) during the last financial year has assigned a study to Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), Dehradun to conduct the detailed study-cum-survey to assess the demand and supply of medicinal plants in India in the national perspective, as well as in respect of the international Market. The study will also cover the hilly states of the country including Uttarakhand.

(b): Government is aware of the herbs and plants which are in demand internationally. As per study conducted by National Medicinal Plants Board on Demand and Supply of Medicinal Plants published in year 2008 about 178 medicinal plants species are in high demand. Some of the highly demanded medicinal plants in international markets are Isabgol (Plantago ovata), Senna (Cassia angustifolia), Sandalwood (Santalum album), Amla (Emblica officinalis), Haritaki (Terminalia chebula) and Bahera (Terminalia bellirica) etc.

(c)&(d): Government is aware of possible instances of illegal harvesting of plants including medicinal herbs / plants from the forests and their smuggling.

Government is aware about Yarsa Gambo (Cordyceps sinensis). It is not a medicinal plants rather it is a combination of caterpillar and the fungus. The fungus is parasite upon caterpillar which is widely found in Himalayan region from 3200 – 4000 meter above sea level. The Government of Uttarakhand is aware about its sustainable harvesting, marketing and trade. In this regard, the Government of Uttarakhand had issued a guidelines for sustainable collection and its transit pass which will be governed by the Forest Department.

The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) has also supported a project on Yarsa Gambo (Cordyceps sinensis) entitled "Habitat ecology and distribution pattern of Yar Tsa Gumba (Cordyceps sinensis) in the Central Himalayas" to Department of Zoology, Government Postgraduate College, Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.

Prevention of smuggling of flora and fauna from forests including medicinal plants is primarily done through enforcement of the Indian Forest Act, 1972; Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the rules under these Acts apart from State specific forest related Acts. A Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been established to check illegal trade and smuggling in wildlife, including medicinal plants.
