

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2098
ANSWERED ON:23.07.2014
MEDICINAL PLANTS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of species of medicinal plants found across the country;
- (b) whether several rare species of medicinal plants are at the verge of extinction;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has issued any special guidelines for conservation of medicinal plants found in inaccessible dense forests of the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the policy/scheme formulated/proposed to be formulated by the Government for protection, promotion and plantation of medicinal plants?

Answer

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

(a) As per the information supplied by Botanical Survey of India (BSI), it is estimated that around 8000 species of medicinal plants are found across the country.

(b)&(c) According to BSI, no hard core data on the extent of threat to the medicinal plants are readily available. However, according to them about 70 medicinal and aromatic plants species are threatened due to various anthropogenic activities. Out of 19386 species of vascular plants (Angiosperms – 18043; Gymnosperms – 75; Pteridophytes – 1268), around 53 medicinal plants species are threatened due to various anthropogenic activities. The important threatened medicinal plants are: *Aconitum balfourii*, *A. chasmanthum*, *A. deinorrhizum*, *A. falconeri* var *latilobum*, *A. ferox*, *A. heterophyllum*, *Acorus gramineus*, *Allium stracheyi*, *Angelica glauca*, *Anogeissus sericea* var. *numularia*, *Aquillaria mallaccensis*, *Aristolochia bracteolata*, *A. indica*, *Arnebia benthamii*, *Atropa acuminata*, *Berberis affinis*, *B. apiculata*, *B. aristata*, *Bergenia stracheyi*, *Capparis pachyphylla*, *Carum villosum*, *Colchicum luteum*, *Coptis teeta*, *Coscinium fenestratum*, *Dactylorhiza hatagirea*, *Dioscorea deltoidea*, *Elaeocarpus prunifolius*, *Ephedra gerardiana*, *Gentiana kurooa*, *Gloriosa superba*, *Hedychium spicatum*, *Hyoscyamus niger*, *Hydnocarpus macrocarpa*, *Iphigenia indica*, *I. pallida*, *I. stellata*, *Kolanchoe roseus*, *Madhuca insignis*, *Nardostachys grandiflora*, *Panax pseudoginseng*, *Picrorhiza kurrooa*, *Podophyllum hexandrum*, *Pterocarpus santalinus*, *Rauwolfia serpentina*, *Rheum emodi*, *Saussurea bracteata*, *S. costus*, *S. gnaphalodes*, *Swertia chirayita*, *Taxus wallichiana*, *Taxocarpus kurzii*, *Urginea indica* and *Urginea maritima*.

(d) For conservation and management of flora and fauna of the country, including medicinal plants, the Government has established a network of 670 protected areas (102 National Parks, 517 Wild Life Sanctuaries, 4 Community Reserves and 47 Conservation Reserves) in different bio-geographic regions of the country. Further, 18 Biosphere Reserves have also been established for landscape conservation. Conservation and protection of medicinal plants 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 medicinal plants.

(e) With a purpose of conservation and management of medicinal plants, the Government has set up a National Medicinal Plants Board vide Resolution notified on 24th November, 2000 under Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Important functions of the Board include Co-ordination with Ministries / Departments / Organizations / States / Union Territories (UT) for the development of the medicinal plant sector. At the State / UT level, State Medicinal Plants Boards (SMPBs) have also been constituted by the States. Under the provisions of Section 38 of Biodiversity Act 2002, the threatened species, including medicinal plants have been notified in respect of one Union Territory namely Andaman & Nicobar Islands and 14 states namely Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Orissa, Meghalaya, Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, West Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Tripura.