

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1292
ANSWERED ON:18.07.2014
MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any study/research with regard to availability of medicinal and aromatic herbs/plants in the country;
- (b) if so, the details along with the findings thereof, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether a number of medicinal and aromatic herbs/plants are on the verge of extinction or likely to become extinct in the near future;
- (d) if so, the details of the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for their sustainable management, cultivation and commercial exploitation in the country; and
- (e) the financial and technical assistance provided for the above purpose during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) & (b): Botanical Survey of India (BSI) an organization working under Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, who are mandated for survey of plant diversity of the country; its documentation, including traditional knowledge associated with it at National, Regional, State and Ecosystem level and its conservation in different parts of the country has been carrying out survey and documentation of all plant resources of the country including medicinal / aromatic plants and herbs. The survey is the nodal repository for Reference Plant Collections and at present houses about 3.2 million specimens in its different herbaria, which help in taxonomic characterization and monitoring of species, including medicinal plants. It is estimated that, more than 8,000 species of medicinal herbs and medicinal plants are found in the country.

A study was got conducted by the National Medicinal Plants Board of Department of AYUSH through the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Tradition (FRLHT), Bangalore. According to the report of study published in year 2008, total traded quantity of medicinal plants in the country was estimated to be about 3.19 lakhs metric tones for the year 2005-06. In all, 960 medicinal plants are traded, out of which 178 species have annual consumption of more than 100 metric tones (MTs).

However, State / UT-wise findings are not available in this regard.

(c): According to the Botanical Survey of India (BSI), no hard core data on the extent of threat to the medicinal plants is readily available. Out of 19156 species of vascular plants (Angiosperms-17817; Gymnosperms – 74; Pteridophytes – 1265), about 70 medicinal and aromatic plants species are threatened due to various anthropogenic activities.

(d) & (e): Various measures have already been taken in this direction which include the following:

Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) constituent laboratories, namely CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow; CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu; CSIR-North East Institute of Science & Technology (CSIR-NEIST), Jorhat; and CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur undertake studies related to

- (i) survey, collection and inventorization of medicinal and aromatic plants from different phytogeographical regions of India;
- (ii) development of improved varieties; and
- (iii) development of agrotechnologies and processing technologies for economically important medicinal and aromatic plants and their value addition. The laboratories are disseminating the technologies among farmers and entrepreneurs through training-cum-demonstration programmes.

Research Councils working under Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare viz. Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Central Council for Research in Unani Medicines (CCRUM) and Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) have been conducting studies through surveys and explorations to collect information regarding availability of medicinal and aromatic plants / herbs in various States and have documented information in this regard.

With the purpose of conserving & promoting medicinal plants utilized in the traditional systems of medicines, the Government has set up 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 / State / UT Government for development of medicinal plants sector.

Following schemes implemented by National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) during 11th Plan for overall development of medicinal plants sector in the States have so far been continued:

(i) Central Sector Scheme for "Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants": Under this Scheme support is provided for undertaking activities on Survey, Inventorization, in-situ conservation, ex-situ conservation / herbal gardens, linkage with JFMCs, Research and Development etc. on Medicinal Plants. Information regarding financial assistance which include the technical components viz. capacity building of all stakeholders, provided under the Scheme during last three years and the current year, State / UT-wise is at Annexure-I.

(ii) Centrally Sponsored Scheme of "National Mission on Medicinal Plants":

This scheme is primarily aimed at supporting cultivation of medicinal plants on private land with backwards linkages for establishment of nurseries, for supply of quality planting material etc. and forward linkages for post-harvest management, marketing infrastructure, certification etc. in a mission mode. Information regarding financial assistance provided under the Scheme during last three years and the current year, State / UT-wise is at Annexure-II.