

India has 64,829 traditional seed varieties in Gene Banks

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New Delhi: “The government has been following a policy to encourage conservation of the seeds of traditional varieties of various crops,” mentioned the Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Mr Parshottam Rupala in the Parliament recently.

In India, the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) has conserved over 64,829 traditional varieties in Gene Banks located in different states.

The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmer’s Rights Authority (PPV & FRA) has also registered 1070 traditional varieties of different crops. PPV & FRA encourages the community and individuals engaged in conservation, improvement and preservation of plant genetic resources of economic plants and their wild relatives particularly in the areas identified as agro-biodiversity hotspots by awarding the community and individuals who have played stellar roles in such activities.

NBPGR and PPV & FRA have been organizing the biodiversity awareness programmes and training for farmers to strengthen community seed system and create awareness to conserve indigenous crop varieties and climate resilient traditional land races of local crops every year.

According to the agriculture ministry, since the collection and conservation of traditional varieties is a continuous activity, 42 exploration and collection missions will be undertaken mainly to collect traditional varieties from tribal areas in the next year by NBPGR.