



# National Gene Bank

## Why in News

Recently, the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) under the Ministry of AYUSH and the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

- The purpose of this MoU is to conserve the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Genetic Resources (MAPGRs) in the **National Gene Bank (NGB)**.

## Key Points

- **Establishment:** The National Gene Bank was notified in 1996-97.
  - **Hosted By:** National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi.
  - **Purpose:** To conserve the Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) for future generations in the form of seeds, genomic resources, pollen etc.
  - **Functioning:**
    - The NGB has four kinds of facilities, namely, Seed Genebank (- 18°C), Cryogenebank (-170°C to -196°C), In vitro Genebank (25°C), and Field Genebank, to cater to long-term as well as medium-term conservation.
    - It stores different crop groups such as cereals, millets, medicinal and aromatic plants and narcotics, etc.
  - **Other Facilities:**
    - The **Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway** houses the world's largest collection of seeds.
    - **India's seed vault** is at **Chang La (Ladakh)** in the Himalayas.
    - **National Animal Gene Bank**, established at the **National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR - Karnal, Haryana)**, has the objective of conserving the indigenous livestock biodiversity.
- NBAGR is one of the [Indian Council of Agricultural Research \(ICAR\)](#) institutes.

## National Medicinal Plants Board

- In order to promote the medicinal plants sector, the Government of India set up the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2000.
- Currently the board is working under the Ministry of **AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha & Homoeopathy).
- The primary mandate of NMPB is to develop an appropriate mechanism for coordination between various ministries/ departments/ organizations and implementation of support policies/programs for overall (conservation, cultivation, trade and export) growth of medicinal plants sector both at the Central /State and International level.

## National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources

- The 'National Bureau of Plant Introduction' was renamed as 'National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources' (NBPGR) in January 1977.
- It is one of the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** Institutes.
  - ICAR is an autonomous organisation under the **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare**.
- It is a **nodal organisation** in India for **management of Plant Genetic Resources (PGR)**.
- It has played a pivotal role in the improvement of various crop plants and diversification and development of agriculture in India through germplasm introduction from various institutes/organizations located in foreign countries and germplasm collection from within the country and abroad and conservation thereof.
  - **Germplasm** is a live information source for all the genes present in the respective plant, which can be conserved for long periods and regenerated whenever it is required in the future.
- The NBPGR has linkage with **National Active Germplasm Sites (NAGS)** for the management of active germplasm of field and horticultural crops.
  - NAGS are located at NBPGR regional stations, other crop-based ICAR institutes or State Agricultural Universities.
- It is headquartered in **New Delhi** and has **10 regional stations**.

**[Source: PIB](#)**

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