Plants are being used for prevention, care, control of various disease and ailments since long and it is no exaggeration to say that the uses of plants for human health are probably as old as human beings themselves (Madhav Karki, 2000). Medicinal plants benefit everyone on earth in one or other way; it may be for drugs, cosmetics or for cultural and religious reasons. Nearly about- 80% of the global population cannot be separated from medicinal plants, as it is closely intermingled with them from birth to death.

According to the World Health Organization, 80% of people from developing countries rely mainly on traditional medicine for primary health care (Jackie Siles, 1999). A WHO study lists 21,000 plants with reported medicinal uses around the world [WHO, 2002] and the ecosystem people who belong to some 4,635 ethnic communities use an estimated 7,500 species of plants [ASI, 1994].

In India people believe that growing plants will please the divine forces and help them to get the
heavenly bliss. Hence, they grow plants like *Azadiracta indica*, *Ficus bengalensis*, *Ocimum sanctum*, *Jasminum grandiflorum*, *Vetiveria zizanioids* etc., in their home, farmlands, temples, schools, forests and in all common public areas. Their children are named after plants like Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), Vembu (*Azadiracta indica*), Arasu (*Ficus bengalensis*), Maruthu (*Terminalia arjuna*) etc.

Majority of species of medicinal plants are used only in folk system of medicine and relatively a few species are used in Traditional Medical Systems (about 500-600 species in Traditional Chinese Medicine and about 1250-1400 species in Ayurveda, 342 species in Unani and 328 species in Siddha). In a country like India, where 65 percent of the total population has access to only local medicinal plant knowledge systems [WHO, 2002], and 70 percent of the population lives in villages struggling to access and afford modern allopathic medicines, both Traditional System of Medicine (TSM) and the Folk Medicine Systems (FMS) are of significance [Kala, 2004].

Over 90% of the medicinal plants traded are harvested from the wild in an unsustainable manner. Due to increasing demand for medicinal plants, destructive
harvesting of medicinal plants, and fragmentation of natural habitats, close to 200 species of medicinal plants of India have been so far assessed as under threat in the wild, based on International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 1994) Red List Criteria.

Medicinal plants-based drug industries and enterprises which run into thousands presently source more than 85% of their raw materials from the wild as they are cheap and believed to be of higher potency (Madhav Karki, 2000).

Conservation of biodiversity is one of the paramount concerns the world over. Governments, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Scientists, are all preoccupied with the problem of devising ways and means of conserving biodiversity, or at least retarding the rapid rate of its loss (IUCN, 1994).

Lessons learned through the Indian experience confirm that community participation is an effective way of conserving biodiversity.

Some ways suggested were maintenance of sacred groves, home herbal garden, community and urban gardens, school gardens, eco-villages, eco-preserves, agro-
Promotion of cultivation of medicinal plants and management can become highly remunerative both in financial and economic terms for the small-scale growers since experience from developing countries shows that cultivation of medicinal plants can improve livelihoods of rural communities (El Alamein, 2004).

*Andrographis paniculata*, which is also known as "King of Bitters", has a broad spectrum of medicinal uses and is becoming uncommon in some eco systems in Devarayanadurga forest, out of 307 species reported *Andrographis paniculata* has become uncommon (Eidus Robert, 2005).

*Phyllanthus amarus* and *Andrographis paniculata* are the two important medicinal plants, which received the global attention for their unique medicinal properties. These two plants have wide acceptability and usage by the local traditional medicinal advocates and rural people.

This study is an attempt to create awareness about the medicinal uses, promote their cultivation and conserve them.
Objectives

1. To scientifically document the data on the natural occurrence of these two sps.
2. To conserve these two plants by promoting community participation.
3. To develop the agro technology for the systematic, scientific cultivation of these species and advocate economically viable cultivation practices to the grower, which will ultimately lead to the production of higher herb yield.
4. To test the feasibility of organically cultivating these plants since these are being used for medicinal purposes and to study the growth and development of these plants under different agro climatic conditions.
5. To formulate strategies for ex situ conservation of these two herbs.

Scope of the study

1. This study gives scientifically validated information about cultivation of medicinal plants viz., Andrographis paniculata and Phyllanthus amarus. The results also provide information about the quantum of herb yield that can be obtained in
different soil and agroclimatic zones. Agrotechnology suitable for the small and tiny land holders will also be generated.

2. This study suggests ways for creating sustainable bio-partnerships between rural communities especially women, school children and ex situ conservation medicinal plants.

3. This study helps the farming community to promote the cultivation of Phyllanthus amarus and Andrographis paniculata and its management with organic manure and conventional fertilizers. This study also helps in production of these herbs in large scale and end up erosion of these herbs from their natural habitats.

4. This study will also help the Traditional healers and those who practice conservative systems of medicine to collect these herbs in their immediate surroundings and attend to the health of patients.

Limitations of the study

1. This study did not cover the qualitative analysis of the active principle contents of Phyllanthus amarus and Andrographis paniculata in various parts of the herb grown in different soil types, agro climates and during different years.
2. This study does not cover the pest and disease management of these herbs.

3. This study has not covered the response of these crops to bio-fertilizers and micronutrients.

Hence further study in the above said aspects will result in a complete understanding of these two herbs for commercial cultivation and also provide best quality raw material for the user industry and rural people.