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Class : Deg. - II (Hons.)

Paper : III (Group - 'B')

Topic : Family - Euphorbiaceae

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Family : Euphorbiaceae

The family Euphorbiaceae has been named after one of the greatest Greek physician to Joba, Euphorbos, Besides, Euphorbium is the important genus of the family which does mean 'a gum resin got from some spurge'.

On the basis of above two facts, this family has been named.

• Classification :

Division : Angiospermae

Class : Dicotyledons

Sub-class : Monochlamydeae

Order : Utriculariales

Family : Euphorbiaceae

(According to Bentham and Hooker)

• Distribution :

Euphorbiaceae or the spurge family is a large and extremely variable one, containing about

283 genera and 7300 species which are of wide geographic distribution, some abundant in the warmer climates and extending into the temperate regions of northern and southern hemispheres but absent from the arctic countries.

374 species of Euphorbiaceae is found in India.

• Vegetative characters:

• Habit:

Plants of family Euphorbiaceae are mostly herbs, but also shrubs or trees, some have the external habit of cactus tribe. Many are xerophytic.

All plants are characterized by the presence of a juice, often milky, which is lightly acid, narcotic or corrosive.

• Root:

This is tap-root.

• Stem:

It is prostrate or erect, herbaceous or woody, sometimes spiny, or xerophytic and modified to cladode.

• Leaf:

Leaves are generally alternate, sometimes opposite or opposite above and alternate below; mostly simple, rarely divided or compound; stipules usually small, sometimes replaced by glands or thorns.

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