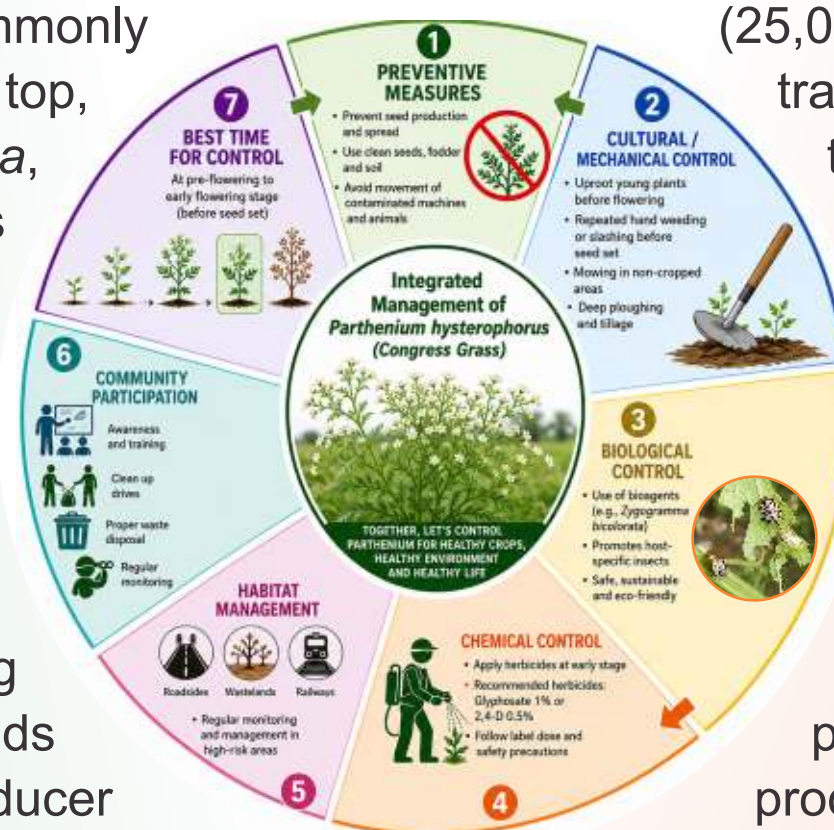


21th PARTHENIUM AWARENESS WEEK

16-22 August, 2026

Parthenium (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) commonly known as *gajarghas*, congress grass, white cap or top, carrot weed, asadi, *safed topi*, *gajari*, *nakshatra gida*, *chatak chandani*, *phandriphuli* and *vayyari bhama* is an alien invasive weed of national importance. The weed was first reported in India during the 1950s. It has now been spread throughout the country affecting around more than 35 million hectares of crop and non-crop areas including railway tracks, roadsides, wastelands, gardens, etc.

It is an annual herbaceous plant reaching heights up to 1.5 to 2.0 meter. It mainly spreads through seeds. *Parthenium* is a prolific seed producer



(25,000 to 50,000 seeds/plant). The seeds may be easily transported by wind, water, and human activities due to their low weight.

It has been identified as one of the most hazardous weeds and causes health problems like dermatitis, asthma, and bronchitis in humans and livestock. On consumption, it can cause mouth ulcers with extreme salivation and diarrhoea in animals and reduces milk and meat quality. Being unpalatable, it can't be used as animal fodder. It is a serious invasive weed of pasture and other grazing lands reducing their productivity to a large extent.

Control measures

- ❖ Community initiatives by all sections of the society including colony members, farmers, municipalities, NGOs, school children etc. are required to keep their surroundings free from *Parthenium*.
- ❖ Organize meetings, trainings and demonstrations to make people aware about *Parthenium* menace and its management.
- ❖ Uproot the weed before flowering and make compost or vermicompost.
- ❖ Broadcast seeds of self-perpetuating competitive plant species like *Cassia tora*, *Tagetes erecta* to replace *Parthenium*.
- ❖ In non-cropped areas, spray herbicides like glyphosate (1.0-1.5%) for total vegetation control and metribuzin (0.3-0.5%) or 2,4-D (1.0-1.5%) if grasses are to be saved before flowering of *Parthenium*.
- ❖ In crops, broad-leaf weed killing herbicides should be used in consultation with weed scientists/experts.
- ❖ Release of bioagent *Zygogramma bicolorata* in *Parthenium* infested areas during July-August.



APPEAL

Parthenium has emerged as one of the most aggressive weeds in the world, inflicting severe damage on agricultural productivity, biodiversity, and the health of both humans and animals. In India, it has assumed alarming proportions, invading cropped and uncropped areas alike, as well as urban landscapes, roadsides, railway tracks and institutional premises. Its widespread presence was also evident during **Khet Bachao Abhiyan, 2026**, when its encroachment on croplands was found to be causing considerable hardship to our farmers.

I am pleased to note that the ICAR–Directorate of Weed Research, Jabalpur, organizes **Parthenium Awareness Week** every year from 16th to 22nd August to sensitize and motivate the public towards the management and eradication of this invasive weed. As we are aware, the health of humans, animals, plants and the environment is deeply interconnected. The “**One Health**” approach underscores this interdependence and calls for integrated action to address ecological and health-related challenges. Seen in this light, the eradication of *Parthenium* is an important step towards maintaining ecological balance and environmental health.

Addressing this menace calls for concerted efforts across disciplines, both to develop effective management strategies and to raise public awareness of the serious health hazards posed by this weed. ICAR–DWR has successfully developed and disseminated efficient biological control technologies for *Parthenium* management and remains committed to promoting their wider and sustainable use.

The **21st Parthenium Awareness Week** will be observed from **16th to 22nd August 2026** across the country. This initiative also aligns closely with the objectives of the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**. I therefore appeal to all staff member of ICAR Institutes, Agricultural Universities and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (VKVs) to participate wholeheartedly in this campaign as a key activity under the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**, and ensure that their campuses are made *Parthenium*-free at the earliest.



(M.L. Jat)

Secretary, DARE & Director General, ICAR

Join hands to eliminate Parthenium to save health, environment and biodiversity



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