

Some plants in folk medicine of Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh

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SUMMARY

Hitherto unknown uses of 34 plant species in the treatment of antivenom, eczema, leucorrhoea, piles, pyorrhoea, asthma, ophthalmia, hernia, enteric fever and other diseases by the tribals and rural people of Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh are reported.

Key words : Tribals, Folk medicine, Chhindwara district, Madhya-Pradesh

The people of rural India, by and large, are still dependent on traditional medicines for their healthcare and treatment of diseases. These medicines have been developed through the experience of many generations assimilating the knowledge, in course of time, from fragments of Ayurvedic, Yunani as well as tribal systems of medicine. These may be called 'Folk medicines'.

Chhindwara district not only known for oranges, maize, cotton or coal deposits but its natural and scenic beauty also attract every one who comes here for the first time. The name of the place is derived from the 'Chhind' or date-palm-tree. Chhindwara, in the south-west of Jabalpur Revenue Division, is situated on the Satpura Plateau in the South-Central part of the Madhya Pradesh State (the Central State of India) and lies between latitudes 21°23' and 22°49' North and the longitudes 78°10' and 79°24' East.

Considerable work has been done on ethno medicinal plants which are used for various ailments by the tribal of Chhindwara District, M.P. (Rai 1987, 1989) and ethno-medicinal aspects of this area as well as the adjoining region of Chhindwara have been reported by Rai (1987, 1988).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The observations are based on surveys conducted in tribal dominated areas of Chhindwara district during 2008-2009. Group interviews were organized bringing plants from surrounding areas and showing them to tribals

of assorted ages into the forest. The specimens were identified from the Herbarium and voucher specimens were deposited in the Department of Botany, Dr. Hari Singh Gour University, Sagar, M.P. The data gathered were screened with the help of available literature. In the enumeration, the botanical names are arranged alphabetically followed by family, local names in inverted commas and locality. In a majority of cases, fresh plants were used for alleviating the complaints.

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The observation obtained from the present study have been discussed below:

Enumeration :

– *Abrus precatorius* L. (Fabaceae), 'Gulnchi'

Use: Root and seeds are used for preparing tonic.

Leaf extract is applied on ringworm and also taken orally against snake bite.

– *Acacia nilotica* (L.) Del. (Mimosaceae), 'Babool'

Use: Leaves are given orally to pregnant ladies for birth of beautiful child, although their parents may be ugly.

– *Achyranthus aspera* L. (Amaranthiaceae), 'Chirchitta'

Use: Roots are put under the pillow of pregnant lady to accomplish easy delivery and are removed immediately after delivery.

– *Allium cepa* L. (Liliaceae), 'Pyaj'

Use: Fried bulb in butter is given for three days to cure piles. The patient is advised to avoid curd for six days.

– *Aloe barbadensis* Mill. (Liliaceae), 'Gawarpatha'

Use: Pulp of leaf is applied on swelling, burns and piles. It is also given orally in sunstroke and for improving digestion.

– *Anethum graveolens* L. (Apiaceae), 'Sua'

Use: Seed extract is given orally thrice a day for

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