

Traditional therapeutical knowledge on common sags among the indigenous people of Panch Pargana in Jharkhand, India

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SUMMARY

The present article deals with the collection, identification, preservation and documentation of therapeutical properties of forty (40) common leafy vegetables, locally called as sags, both wild as well as cultivated forms whose leaves are consumed as vegetable by the indigenous people, both tribes as well as non-tribes of Panch-Paragana (Jharkhand) as their traditional food. The leaves have cooling, bitter, astringent, diuretic, laxative, constipating, somatic, antipyretic, digestive, galactagogue, tonic and appetizing properties.

Key words : Sags, Panch-Pargana, Indigenous, Sadan, Moolvasis, Horopaths, Ethno-medico-botanical, Therapeutical.

Panch-Paragana under Ranchi district of Jharkhand state covers a ethnobotanically very important geographical area that includes five paraganas namely Bundu, Sonahatu, Tamar, Erki and Rahe, consisting of four community blocks ie. Bundu, Sonahatu, Tamar and Erki. It lies between 22° 50'-23° 15' N to 85° 31'-85° 50' E covering an area of 1669.33 Sq. Km. The whole area have thick pat forest with rich biodiversity. The forests have enormous number of ethno botanically as well as ethno-medico-botanically important plants which are traditionally used as food, fodder, medicines, making agricultural implements, house hold articles, musical instruments and in making many article of commercial value as baskets, ropes, mats, weapons, fish trapping nets (kumni), tooth brushes, eating plates (pattal), bowls (dona) etc. The study area *i.e.* Panch-Paragana is historically also important as it have about. 32 different ethnic tribe communities residing with non-tribal indigenous population since time immemorial maintaining their socio-cultural and socio-religious institutions impact with peace and harmony. The tribal (about 50%) and the non-tribal (about 30-35%) comprise about 80-85% of the total population of the area. The important tribal communities are the Munda Oraon, Santhal, Bhumij, Bedia, Birhor, Gond, Lohra, Karmali, Chikbaraik, Ho, and Mahli. The non-tribal indigenous mass is called as Sadan or Moolvasis. This 80-85% indigenous population (both tribes and non-tribes) is basically nature loving and depends on agriculture and forest produces (both major and minor) for their livelihood and subsistence. This mass is expertise in utilizing plant parts for various uses to meet their all sorts of requirements.

The present study deals with the documentation of such plants whose leaves are consumed as sags by the indigenous mass of Panch-Paragana as their food and have medicinal properties also.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Continuous ethnobotanical field survey and contact with local herbal practioners (Horopaths) Vaidis, Kotwars, Pahans, and other indigenous knowledgeable persons were made to collect the information. Data related to ethnobotanical concern was recorded through extensive interview, regarding their food habits, plants utility as food, fodder and medicine etc. The field study was conducted following Jain and Rao (1978) and first hand original informations were recorded in the light of ethno botanical literature (Hembrom, 1991; Jain, 1996; Haines, 1925; Bondya *et al.*, 2003).

In the present communiqué specific plants (herbs, shrubs and tress) whose leaves are consumed as vegetable commonly called as sag (in local language) have been recorded, collected, documented and identified. The live forms have been preserved as herbarium in Ethno-botanical Laboratory, Department of Botany, Ranchi University, Ranchi. Scientific botanical identifications of the plants were done with the help of Haines (1925) and proper guidance. The plants were collected, taking the help of local knowledgeable persons and medicinal properties were recorded through interview with Horopaths, Pahans and local Vaidis.

The plants have been enlisted, alphabetically with their botanical names followed with family, local name and medicinal uses and mode of administration.

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