

Studies on ethnomedicinal uses of plant resources in Ormanjhi block of Jharkhand state, India

ISHWARI PARSAD GUPTA, H.B. SAHU AND H.P. SHARMA

Accepted : February, 2009

Key words : Horopaths, Pahans, Neutraceutical, Sadan, Indigenous, Pristin custom.

The present paper deals with the collection, identification, documentation of medicinal uses and preservation of thirty ethno-medicinally important plants being used by local Horopaths, Pahans, Vaidyas and other knowledgeable persons of Ormanjhi Block under Ranchi district of Jharkhand for the treatment of different diseases. The plants belong to 29 genera, 30 species and 22 families. There are many horopaths, pahans, kabiraj, and vaidyas who are expertise in herbal medicines and gives drugs derived from plants for the treatment of various ailments. Some have medicinal as well as nutritional values (Gupta, 1974)

The Ormanjhi Block of Ranchi district of the Jharkhand State is still rich in plant resources because this block still holds its pristine custom and cultures and it is not very much disturbed by the so called developmental activities. Different ethnic tribes together with non-tribal indigenous people (popularly called Sadan) constitute the major chunk of the population.

They are still very close to nature and fully dependent on plants and their produces for their livelihood. The crops they grow in their fields in different seasons fulfill their nutritional need and the local Horopaths, Vaidhyas, Kabirajs, Pahans and faith healers either meet by their self-management system or health security. Whatever may be the source of treatment, the medicines given or prescribed are herbal drug, which is prepared from the plants growing wildly in ambience. They are the real custodian of nature and repository of knowledge related to plants and their uses against different ailments. Ormanjhi Block has about 85-87% indigenous population with 35-37% tribes and 50-52% non-tribes (Sadans). Majority of these mass still depends on forest produces for their livelihood and health security.

Therefore, it is urgently required that the migration of indigenous and tribal be checked immediately and their knowledge about the plant should be gathered so that the fragmentary knowledge be documented and compiled systematically before it is too late.

Keeping this in mind, the present work was undertaken (Mahto and Sahu, 2008).

The exploration, collection and documentation need proper planning and preparation, therefore, some of the tools and items which were carried during the course of investigation are: map of the concerned area, camera, old papers and magazine, scissors, scalpel, plastic bags etc. Local persons were also carried in order to meet language problems, and to help in making contacts with local persons such as Horopaths Vaidyas, Pahans, Kabiraj, old knowledgeable persons, (both men and women), and patients for documentation of valuable knowledge, location and identification of plants (Mahto and Sahu, 2007, Bondya *et al.*, 2008, Mahto and Sahu, 2008). Information was collected on the basis of readymade questionnaire. Documentation of information and collection and preservation of life forms was done following the methods, Jain (1965) and Jain and Rao (1976). It was done through continuous field survey in different villages and indigenous pocket of Ormanjhi Block during the years 2004-2007.

Plants, plant parts, local knowledgeable persons, faith healer, and Vaidhyas etc have been photographed. Herbaria of the collected materials were prepared, their photographs taken and kept in the University Department of Botany for reference.

Plants collected and got identified with the help of local persons, taxonomist or Floras and their uses have been authenticated from well known literatures. (Haines, 1921-1925, Hembrom, 1974). Plants and their uses have been given in tabular form in alphabetical order giving their botanical name, followed by local name and family in capital letters and finally their medicinal uses.

The tabular chart has been prepared on the basis of first hand documented informations through direct interviews and interactions with the local indigenous horopaths, vaidyas, kabirajs, other knowledgeable local (men and women) and the plant collectors of the area.

Correspondence to:

H.B. SAHU, Post Graduate Department of Botany, Ranchi University, RANCHI (JHARKHAND) INDIA

Authors' affiliations:

ISHWARI PRASAD GUPTA, Department of Botany, Ranchi College, RANCHI (JHARKHAND) INDIA

H.P. SHARMA, Department of Botany, Ranchi University, RANCHI (JHARKHAND) INDIA
