

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

Sr. No.	Botanical name	Local name	Family	Medicinal use
1.	<i>Acacia arabica</i> , Willd	Kikar	Leguminaceae	Gum used in diarrhoea, dysentery, diabetes
2.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> , L.	Latjira	Amaranthaceae	Plants used in piles, boils, skin eruption, colic
3.	<i>Adhatoda vasica</i> , Nees	Basak	Acanthaceae	Leaves and roots are used in cough, bronchitis, asthma. Leaves used in rheumatism
4.	<i>Aegel marmelos</i> , Corr.	Bel	Rutaceae	Ripe fruit is used as an astringent, and also used in chronic diarrhoea
*5.	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> , L.	Kataili	Amaranthaceae	Leafy vegetable. Roots given for gonorrhoea, colic. Leaves and roots are given for boils and burns
6.	<i>Artocarpus integrifolia</i> , L.	Kathal	Moraceae	Leaves used in skin diseases. The juice of the plant applied to glandular swelling
7.	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> , Willd	Satmul	Liliaceae	Roots used in dysentery, antiseptic, diuretic
8.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> , A. Juss	Neem	Meliaceae	The bark is bitter, tonic, leaves are applied to boils. Oil is used in skin disease
9.	<i>Barleria cristata</i> L.	Jhinti	Acanthaceae	Roots and leaves are used in swellings
10.	<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> , L.	Kachnar	Caesalpiniaceae	Bark used in skin diseases and ulcer. Dried buds are used in dysentery and piles
11.	* <i>Bauhinia purpurea</i> , L	Koinar	Caesalpiniaceae	Leafy vegetable. Roots carminative. Bark used in diarrhoea. Flower is laxative and anthelmintic
12.	<i>Blumea lacera</i> , D.C.	Kukursunga	Asteraceae	Roots are used in cholera. The plant is antipyretic
*13.	<i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i> , L	Khapra sag	Nyctaginaceae	Leafy vegetable. Leaf decoction is useful in swelling of limbs during pregnancy. Leafy juice used in curing eye infection
14.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Ait) R.Br.	Akwan	Asclepiadaceae	Latex is used in toothache. It is used in dysentery and chronic fever
15.	<i>Cassia fistula</i> , L.	Amaltas	Caesalpiniaceae	Fruits applied in rheumatism and snakebite. Juice of leaves used in skin disease
*16.	<i>Cassia tora</i> , L.	Chakunda	Caesalpiniaceae	Leafy vegetable. Leaf paste is used to facilitate labour pain. Seed powder is used to cure wounds. Leaves purgative, anthelmintic
*17.	<i>Centella asiatica</i> , L.	Beng sag	Umbelliferae	Leafy vegetable. All parts are useful. Plant juice is used to cure diarrhoea and dysentery. Leprosy and other kind of skin disease. Useful in jaundice and diabetes
*18.	<i>Chenopodium album</i> , L.	Bhatua sag	Chenopodiaceae	Leafy vegetable. Possess laxative and anthelmintic properties
19.	<i>Dioscorea alata</i> , L.	Kham alu	Dioscoreaceae	Tubers useful in leprosy, piles and gonorrhoea.
20.	<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i> , L.	Pith alu	Dioscoreaceae	Tubers useful in piles, dysentery, syphilis and ulcers
21.	<i>Eclipta alba</i> , Hassk.	Bhangra	Asteraceae	Plant juice is used in jaundice. Leaf juice along with honey used in remedy for catarrh in infants
22.	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaestn.	Amla	Euphorbiaceae	Rich source of vitamin-C. Used as expectorant, laxative, diuretic and coolant
23.	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i> , L	Dudhi	Euphorbiaceae	Plant juice is used in dysentery and asthma
24.	<i>Evolvulus alsinoidis</i> , L.	Sankapushpa	Convolvulaceae	Leaves smoke is used in chronic bronchitis
*25.	<i>Ficus glabella</i> , Blume infectoria	Putkal	Moraceae	Leaves are very useful in gastritis and other stomach disorder
26.	<i>Grewia asiatica</i> , L.	Phalsa	Tiliaceae	Fruit astringent, cooling, stomachic, bark- demulcent, root- rheumatism
27.	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i> , R.br.	Anantmul	Asclepiadaceae	Roots used in skin disease, fever, syphilis
28.	<i>Ixora parviflora</i> , Vahl.	Rangan	Rubiaceae	Roots or fruits are given to female in urine infection
*29.	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> , Lam	Munga	Moringaceae	Leafy vegetable used in high blood pressure. Seed oil applied in rheumatism. Bark of the stem is anthelmintic and applied to alleviate pain due to excessive lactation
*30.	<i>Polygonum plebejum</i> , R.Br.	Chimti sag	Polygonaceae	Leafy vegetable It is used in bowel complains and pneumonia

* Nutritional and medicinal values

The Ormanjhi block is very rich both in plant biodiversity and ethnic diversity. Different ethnic groups and indigenous persons who predominantly reside in this block since last many centuries have more or less similar socio-economics and socio-cultural institutions. Herbal drugs are widely adopted in their primary health care system such as cold, cough, fever, pain, diarrhoea, dysentery etc. and even in some severe diseases such as malaria, jaundice, diabetes, arthritis and piles etc. In term of their dietary they consume large number of uncommon leafy vegetables which are growing in inhospitable conditions of their own and are of nutraceutical values *i.e.*, therapeutical and nutritional values. Thus, they are keeping themselves quite healthy and are generally not

suffering from some of the common disease such as depression, blood pressure and diabetes, which are very common amongst the urban people because of modern life.

Acknowledgment:

We are highly grateful to Dr. Radha Sahu and Dr. Ramesh Pandey, University Professor and present and former Heads, respectively, Department of Botany, Ranchi University, Ranchi for providing facilities and suggestions as and when required. We are also obliged to Dr. Anand Bhusan, Principal Ranchi College, Ranchi as without his cooperation the field work could not been completed.

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