Medico-ethnobotany of Bodo tribals in Gohpur of Sonitpur district, Assam

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The paper deals with the results of ethnobotanical survey work carried out during 2005-2006. The information was collected from 13 villages, mostly of remote places near the border area of Arunachal Pradesh. Totally, 20 plant species were collected and recorded for their use in various ailments. The species are short listed giving their plant name, family, vernacular name, and uses.

Keywords: Ethnomedicine, Traditional knowledge, Bodo tribe, Assam

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The tribal people of Gohpur rely on plant resources for their uses in daily life. They collect some of the important plant species from their surroundings and use according to their own traditional lore. The report reveals that about 25% of the therapeutic drugs are obtained from plants¹. But, there are many unknown plants which are still to be studied and observed. The traditional uses of plants by the different tribes may be regarded as the basic material for scientific documentation studies. Therefore, in the last few years, traditional knowledge of plants comes into focus for research work and for development of other value added products. Gohpur is situated in the extreme East of Sonitpur district (26°21‘-26°93’ N & 91°71‘- 92°37’ E) covering an area of 79 m in upper Assam². Sonitpur district is bound by Arunachal Pradesh on the North, Lakhimpur district on the East and Darrang district on the West, Brahmaputra river on the South. The northern part of Gohpur is inhabited mainly by four tribal communities, viz. Bodo, Mishing, Deuri and Karbi. Among these, Bodo tribes are rich in population and restricted in the northern part of Gohpur. The area is high plain land and fully covered with forest resources up to 1980. Due to deforestation, the area has now become open for human habitat. Out of total 2,43,000 population of Gohpur, Bodo population is about 14.04%. The surveyed area belong to the villages of Alupora, Doimalu, Kakila, Rajgarh, Doimoguri, Digambari, Alaripur, Dharampur, Milanpur, Goroiarmi, Daphalagar, Karibil kachari and Jaipur of Gohpur. Several research have been done in the field of ethnobotany from Assam, on Bodo tribes in particular, and other parts of country³-¹³.

Methodology

The information was collected from informers of different villages, viz. Mr Daniel Musahari, Mr Bahadur Basumatari, Mr Jogeswar Brahma, Mr Sunilal Basumatari Mrs Thuntri Basumatari and Mrs Nilachari Narjari. The collected information was verified with other knowledgeable persons. Local names, plant parts used and mode of administration were recorded. The plant specimens were studied and identified with the help of local flora, publications and Herbarium of Botany Department, Gauhati University¹⁴-¹⁷. The collected specimens have been deposited in the herbarium of the Botany Department, Chaiduar College, Gohpur.
future. Earlier the northern side was one of the richest areas of forest trees within Gohpur. The area is now occupied by the people of different tribes and most of them are still dependent on forest and agriculture and far behind from all modern facilities. Some part of these areas may also be selected for establishment of medicinal plant garden for future uses. Some of the younger generations are gradually migrating to town and cities. As a result, the traditional wisdom is decreasing quickly day by day. So, the evaluation of traditional knowledge, the conservation of plants and scientific documentation has great significance and become an essential constituent.

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References


