

Ethno-Botanical Studies on Some Indigenous Plants Used by the Bodo Tribes of Udalguri District of Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District Area in Assam, India

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Abstract

Udalguri district of BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District) harbors a large numbers of medicinal plants due to its wide range of habitats. The population pattern also indicate wide range tribal localities mainly. Bodo peoples distributed all over the district. An ethnobotanical survey was carried out in the year 2011-2013 in different Bodo areas to assess the traditionally as well as locally used some medicinal plants for various treatments particularly by the Bodo people in that areas. A total of 16 plants were collected and recorded for their uses in various purposes particularly by the local Bodo people in the Udalguri district are enumerated in this short communication.

Keywords: Ethno-botany, Traditional knowledge, Bodo tribe, Assam.

Introduction:

Ethnobotany involves the mere relationship between indigenous people with the flora and vegetation of the region. Northeast region of India is rich in Ethnobotanical study for its diverse aboriginal communities and tribes. These areas have ample scope for ethnobotanical study due to its rich folklore^{4,5,6,7}. The Bodo community is also important tribe of Udalguri district. The tribal people used many plants for their own traditional lore. Many such plants yet to be reported from this area. Therefore, a study was undertaken to explore the knowledge of the plants used by tribal communities, particularly Udalguri district of the BTAD area. Udalguri district is located at 26° 46' N 92° 08' E / 26° 77' N 92° 13' E. The average altitude of the district is 590 feet. Udalguri district is one of the twenty seven [27] districts of Assam. The total geographical area of the district is about 1,985.68 sq. km. [GIS based]. The population of the district is 7,56,671 with density of 381 persons per sq. km. The district is bounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh towards North. Sonitpur district in the East, Darrang district in the South and Baska district in the West. The area is high plain land and covered with moderate forest towards northern part of the district. The surveyed villages were Khoirabari, Dimakuchi, Ombagaon, Harisinga, Kapurpura, Doipham and Bhairabkunda. Several ethnobotanical works from Bodo tribes have been done from Assam^{1,2,3}.

Materials and methods

A systematic ethnobotanical survey was carried out in 7 different selected villages of Udalguri district namely Khoirabari, Dimakuchi, Ombagaon, Harisinga, Kapurpura, Doipham and Bhairabkunda. The information of plants used by rural people of that area were gathered from the traditional practitioners and the local elderly people. The plants were collected and preserved for identification. These plants were studied and identified with the help of local flora and

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available literature⁸. The voucher specimens were deposited in the herbarium of the Department of Botany, Nowgong College, Nagaon, Assam.

Results and discussion

The important plants with their botanical name, family, local name and uses were listed in the Table no 1. The traditional methods of medicinal and other uses are still prevalent in the tribal areas. But the folk culture and tradition is now under serious threat and gradually loses the traditional practices.

Conclusion

There is urgent need to protect the information, traditional knowledge and wisdom for conservation of various valuable plants.

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Table1: Ethnobotanical uses of plants by Bodo Tribes from Udalguri district

Sl. no.	Plants name	Family	Bodo name	Uses
1	<i>Alternanthera sessilis</i> (L) R. Br. Ex. D.C.	Amaranthaceae	Dhwgong Jile	Shoots are eaten after boiling or baking
2	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Khanthau khora	Shoots are eaten as vegetables
3	<i>Artocarpus lachusa</i> Ham.	Moraceae	Dhawa	Ripe fruit is eaten
4	<i>Baccaea ramiflora</i> Lour.	Euphorbiaceae	Leteku	Pulp of fruit is eaten
5	<i>Bischofia javanica</i> Blume	Euphorbiaceae	Thaiso	Ripe fruits are eaten and used as dye.
6	<i>Calamus rotang</i> L.	Arecaceae	Rideng Bijo	Young hoots boiled with fish, stem is used as cordage.
7	<i>Eryngium foetidum</i> L.	Apiaceae	Ghangar dundia	Leaves are used as curry flavour and chutney
8	<i>Icus auriculata</i> Lour.	Moraceae	Hider thaikhro	Leaves used as vegetable with pork, fruits are eaten
9	<i>Ficus hispida</i> L.f.	Moraceae	Dumouru	Leaves are cooked with pork meat
10	<i>Garcinia morella</i> (Gaetn) Desr.	Clusiaceae	Undhui thaikha	Ripe fruit eaten after dried and cooked for curing dysentery
11	<i>Garcinia pedunculata</i> Roxb.	Clusiaceae	Gidir theikha	Dried fruit used in dysentery
12	<i>Ipomoea aquatica</i>	Convolvulaceae	Mandemaigong	Used as vegetables
13	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L.	Mimosaceae	Daosa mukreb	Root and leaves are used in micturition
14	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i> L.	Oleaceae	Sepali	Leaves and flowers are used as vegetables
15	<i>Solanum ferox</i> L.	Solanaceae	khunthai	Fruits are used as vegetable or roasted; very bitter in taste.
16	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	Anacardiaceae	Thaisuri	Ripe fruits eaten; unripe fruit used as curry or pickles