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Ethno-botanical studies on some indigenous plants used by the Bodo tribes of Udalguri district, BTAD, Assam, India

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Abstract

Udalguri district of BTAD 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 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 590feet. 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 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 losses the traditional practices. Therefore, it is urgent need to protect the information, traditional knowledge and wisdom for conservation of such valuable plants.

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TABLE

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	<i>Dhwgong Jile</i>	Shoots are eaten after boiling or baking
2	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	<i>Khanthau khora</i>	Shoots are eaten as vegetables
3	<i>Artocarpus lachusa</i> Ham.	Moraceae	<i>Dhawa</i>	Ripe fruit is eaten
4	<i>Baccuarea ramifolira</i> Lour.	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Leteku</i>	Pulp of fruit is eaten
5	<i>Bischofia javanica</i> Blume	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Thaiso</i>	Ripe fruits are eaten and used as dye.
6	<i>Calamus rotang</i> L.	Arecaceae	<i>Rideng Bijo</i>	Young hoots boiled with fish, stem is used as cordage.
7	<i>Eryngium foetidum</i> L.	Apiaceae	<i>Ghangar dundia</i>	Leaves are used as curry flavour and chutney
8	<i>Icus auriculata</i> Lour.	Moraceae	<i>Hider thaikhro</i>	Leaves used as vegetable with pork, fruits are eaten
9	<i>Ficus hispida</i> L.f.	Moraceae	<i>Dumouru</i>	Leaves are cooked with pork meat
10	<i>Garcinia morella</i> (Gaetn) Desr.	Clusiaceae	<i>Undhui thaikha</i>	Ripe fruit eaten after dried and cooked for curing dysentery
11	<i>Garcinia pedunculata</i> Roxb.	Clusiaceae	<i>Gidir theikha</i>	Dried fruit used in dysentery
12	<i>Ipomoea aquatica</i>	Convolvulaceae	<i>Mandemaing</i>	Used as vegetables
13	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L.	Mimosaceae	<i>Daosa mukreb</i>	Root and leaves are used in micturition
14	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i> L.	Oleaceae	<i>Sepali</i>	Leaves and flowers are used as vegetables
15	<i>Solanum ferox</i> L.	Solanaceae	<i>khunthai</i>	Fruits are used as vegetable or roasted; very bitter in taste.
16	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	Anacardiaceae	<i>Thaisuri</i>	Ripe fruits eaten; unripe fruit used as curry or pickles