

FOLK-LORE MEDICINAL PLANTS OF DUMKA (BIHAR)

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ABSTRACT: The present paper reports medicinal properties of 69 plants of Dumka forest division of Dumka district of Bihar. The information is gathered from the tribals and local physicians inhabiting the forest.

Introduction

The entire protected and demarcated forests of Dumka forest division stretch from 23°45' to 25°15' north latitude and from 86°55' to 87°55' east longitude. The tract has 662.511 square kms. Of demarcated forests out of total forest areas of 620.815 square kms.

The Dumka district is an upland tract with a central block of hilly country extending from north to south. Out of approximately 5179.98 square kms. Of this hilly block of country the areas of government estate is 3511.94 square kms. With a width of about 48.28 kms. At the centre narrowing to the north and south to about 48.28kms. at the centre narrowing to the north and south to about 24.14kms. this estate consists of hills, plateau, Valleys and ravines. All the nalas including big rivers like Gumani and kajhia originate from the central ridge draining to pakur and Godda. The ride eventually terminates at the river Bansloi.

The area is moderately unduaited and forested several hills are found rising from

76.2 to 274.32m.a.s.l, sometimes isolated hills without thick vegetation are also noticed. The elevation in reserve forest, in general varies from 152.4 to 243.84 m.a.s.l., some hills attain an altitude of 457.20 meters and a few of them like Mahuwagarhi and Champapahar rises to 502.92 m.a.s.l. The entire area falls in the santhal pargana of Dumka district. Major part of the population is of tribals (santhals and Paharias).

Cultivated lands are few and scattered. They are mostly dependent upon the forests for their living hood such as collection of Mahuwa flowers, kendu leaves, wild grass, bamboos etc.

Minerals: Economic minerals found in the area are coal building stone, Road Metals, Ornamental stones, hooting lime etc.

Climate: The area has usual three tropical seasons namely the hot, the rainy and the cold, the humidity being very high during the rains and very low during the hot weather, typical of the Bihar Gangetic plain, in the hot season the temperature rises to a

maximum of 64°C (115°F) and in the winter season the temperature drops to 20°C.

Wildlife: In the past when the forests were thick, wild animals such as tigers, bears, leopards, deer, samar, wild boars etc. were common.

At present the forest has started deteriorating due to overfelling, illicit cutting, fire etc. the fauna also started disappearing due to destruction of habitat, indiscriminate shooting and customary tribal shikar. Of these only a few wild bears and very few leopards are found in the sheltered areas.

Due to constant association with forest environment the tribals have occurred considerable knowledge of plants and their utility especially for medicinal purposes. The uses of many of the medicinal plants are restricted to their community.

Purpose of the present paper is to record this information for further investigation by the plant chemists and pharmacologists. Present paper deals with the detailed information collected on folk-lore claims of the plants available in the district Dumka of Bihar. Latin name of the plant, local name and Sanskrit name alongwith its uses and process of preparation and administration and place of collection of the claim are given here.

Cassia Occidentalis L. (L. Kadhari, S., Kasamarda, P. Masanjore)

A paste of whole plant is applied over teeth and gums in the case of toothache and swelling of gums.

Dioscorea bulbifera Linn. (L.Kapu, S.Varahikanda, O. Nijhore Nala).

Pounded tubers are taken internally as stomachic.

Desmodium parvifolium DC. (L. Sukrisonda, P. Lada).

Its roots are pounded with black piper and taken internally in dysentery.

Desmodium gangeticum DC. (L. shalparni, S. Saliparni, P. Masanjore).

Pills prepared from its roots and roots of Piper betal are given after 45 days of delivery or after 2.4 days of menstruation to make a women sterile.

Eclipta alba Hassk. (L. Bhangra, S. Bhrngaraja, P. Dangapara).

The fresh juice of whole plant is taken internally to cure haematuria.

Ficus religiosa Linn. (L. Pipal, S. Asvattha P. Susni).

After application of coconut oil the powder of bark is applied over severe burns of the body.

Gardenia turgid Roxb. (L.Karhutta, P.Susni)

Pounded roots are taken internally for bodyache and general inflammation of the body.

Acacia farnesiana willd. (L. Gabur P. Kathikund)

Powdered bark is spread near the house to ward off snakes.

Albizia procera Benth. (L. Shirish, S. Sirisa, P. Saldaha).

Decoction of the bark is used to gargle for toothache.

Amorphophyllus companulatus Blume.

(L. Bansuran, S. Surana, P. Champapahar).

Pounded tubers in small quantity is given to women after delivery to remove coagulated blood from uterus.

Antidesma ghaesamvilla Gaertn. (L. Amtuasag, p. Narganj).

Pounded leaves are given to bulls in case of intestinal disorders.

Costus speciosus Smith. (S. Kemuka, P. Silingi).

The paste of the rhizomes is applied externally and also taken internally in the case of headache.

Celastrus paniculatus Willd. (L. Gujari, S. Jyotismati, P. Narganj).

Fruits are pounded and given internally to newly born calf of buffaloes to prevent it from getting infected with intestinal worms.

Cissampelos pareira Linn. (L. Tejumala, S. Patha, P. Mahuwagarh).

Pounded roots is taken internally in the case of diarrhoea and dysentery.

Aristolochia indica Linn. (L. Godh, S. Isvarimula, P. Dugal Phar).

Roots kept in house is said to ward off snakes. A paste of its roots is applied externally for snake bite.

Andragraphis paniculata Nees. (L. Chisayta, S. Kalamegha, P. Masanjore).

Whole plant is powdered and taken internally as stomachic blood purifier and liver corrective.

Asparagus racemosus Willd. (L. Kalmula, S. Satavari, P. Kathikund).

Its roots, piper nigrum and the roots of Zizyphussps are pounded together and taken internally to cure haematuria.

Aegle marmelos Correa. (L. Sinjo, S. Bilva, P. Kathikund).

Hot fomentation of the leaves of *Aegle marmelos* and *ocimum sanctum*, *Nerium indicum* and salt (boiled in water) is taken to cure sprains.

Azadirachta indica A. Juss. (L. Nim S. Nimba, P. Godda).

Its leaves and heated alum are powdered and pills prepared from it are given for malaria.

Abrus precatorious Linn. (L. Kanwe, S. Gunja, p. Masanjore). Whole plant is powdered and applied externally in muscle pulling and paralysis.

Achyranthes aspera Linn. (L. Chirchira, S. Apamarga, P. Masanjore).

Its seeds are powdered and taken internally for piles.

Hemidesmus indicus Br. (L. Dudhilata, S. Anantmula, P. Masanjore).

Whole plant is pounded and taken internally and also applied over head for headache.

Helecteris isora Linn. (Marodphali, P. Masanjore).

Fruits are kept in custard oil and the oil is applied over stomach in the case of intestinal spasm o children.

Moringa oleifera Lamk.(L. Saijana, S. Sahiujana, P. Digal Pahari).

Pounded bark is spread near house to ward off snakes.

Mimosa pudica Linn. (L Jhaphi, S. Lajjalu, P. Masanjore).

Pounded roots are applied over head and taken internally in the case of malaria.

Martynia diandra Glox. (L Kaknasa, P. Kathikund).

Mustard oil heated with its fruits is applied externally to heal up wounds.

Madhuka indica J.F.Gmel. (L Mahawa, S. Madhuka P. Saldaha).

Its bark and barks of *Eugenia jambolina*, *Holarrhena antidysenterica*, *Butea superb*, *shorea robusta* and roots of *smilax prolifera* pounded with l=black peper (*Piper nigrum*) is given to women to remove coagulated blood from uterus (after elivery).

Nerium indicum Mill (L. Kaner, S. Karavira P. Masanjore).

Its flowers and flower of *Gulabchin* (*Plumeria acutifolia*) are pounded and taken internally to relieve burning sensation of the body of women (After delivery).

Ocimum sps. (L. Virtulsi, P. Masanjore). Pounded whole plant is taken internally to

relieve burning sensation of the body of women (after delivery).

Ocimum sps. (L. Virtulsi, P Masanjore).

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Ricinus communis Linn. (L. Arandi, S. Eranda, P. Kunjabana).

Pounded roots are taken internally and stem bark is tied over neck to check vomiting

Salmalia malabarica schott and Endl. (L Semar, S.Salmali, P. Nijhore Nala). Pounded root is taken internally to cure haemeturia.

Piper betel Linn. (L. Pan, S. Pan). Roots of piper betel, roots of *Borassus flabellifer* and *saccharum* (Jharughas) are pounded and pills (about 1gn. Each). Prepared from it are given internally after menstruation for three menstrual cycles to make women sterile.

Soymida febrifuga A. Juss (L Rakat Rohan, S. Rakta Rohini, P. Khairbani).

A fomentation of decoction of bark cures sprain.

Semicarpus anacardium Linn. (L Bhilawa, S Bhallataka, P.Kathikund).

Its fruits are warmed and applied over injuries to check bleeding;

Solanum Xanthocarpum Schrad and wendl (L rangaini janum, s kantakari P. Amrapara).

Its roots are fried and taken internally to cure cough.

Trichosanthes palmate Roxb. (L. Kenmohkab, S. Indrayana, P. Masanjore).

Pounded roots are given internally. Also the roots are tied around neck in the case of allergic reactions due to fish poisoning.

Terminalia tomentosa W.& A. (L. Asan, S.Asana, P. Masanjore).

Its bark, stem and leaves are pounded and applied externally in the case of inflammations and fracture.

Uraria hamosa wall. (L. Mahadev jata, P. Kathikund).

Whole plant is pounded and missed with water filtered and filtrate is applied over eyes of bulls to improve eye-sight.

Thespsia lampas Dalz & Gibs (L.Bankapas, S. Vanakarpasa, P. Masanjore).

Roots or fruits or flower buds are pounded and taken internally in the case of muscle pulling.

Corchorus astuens (L. Tuymarich)

Its roots pounded with clove or black peper is taken internally in the case of general inflammation of the body of women (after delivery).

Vernonia Roxburghii Less. (L. Saurai).

The seeds are fried and taken internally in the case of indigestion and vomiting

Alstonia scholaris Brown. (L. Chhitvan, S. Sapta parna, P. Kathikund). Its stems are pounded and tied over fractured bone. The bone is said to be fixed very quickly.

Desmodium parvifolium DC. (LShukrisondha, P. Masanjore)

Tender leaves are pounded and applied externally to cure fistula.

Adhatoda vasica Nees. (L. Basak, S. Vasaka, P. Kunjabana).

Pounded leaves are taken internally as stomachic.

Calotropis procera Br. (L. Akvan, S.Arka, P. Kunjabana).

Warmed leaves are tied over injuries for quick healing.

Vanda roxburghii Br. (L. Banda, S. Rasna, P. Digal pahari).

Pounded roots of the plant growing on dead tree is mixed with mustard oil and applied externally in paralysis.

Mucuna prurita Hook. (L. Alkuji, S. Kapikacchu, P. Digal Pahari)

Grounded roots tied over fracture is said to fused it quickly.

Smilax prolifera Roxb. (L. Atkir, P. Digal Pahari).

Pounded roots are given internally in haematuria and painful urination.

Somyda febrifuga A Juss. (L. Roktarohan S. Rohini, P. Digal Pahari).

Pounded bark is applied as paste in bodyache and inflammation.

Hedychium sps. (L.Sirsamaro, P. Kathikund).

Pounded rhizome is given to pregnant woman as tonic.

Terminalia Chebula Retz. (L. Hare, S.Haritaki, P. Kathikund).

Fruits are used as stomachic.

Randia dumetorum Lamk. (L. Lato. S. Madanaphala, P. Kathikund).

Fruits are used as fish poison.

Lygodium flexuosum Sw (L. Lato. S. Madanaphala, P. Kathikund).

Fruits are used as fish poison.

Lygodium flexuosum Sw. (L.Durga jhap, P. Shikaripara).

Pounded whole plant over fracture is said to be fused it quickly.

Odina wodier Roxb. (L. Dhoka, P. Digal Pahari).

Paste of the bark is applied over injuries to check bleeding and quick healing.

Terminalia belerica Roxb. (L.Lapang, S. Vibhitaki, P. Digal Pahari).

Its fruits and those of T. Chebula are pounded together and taken internally for diarrhoea and dysentery.

Marsdenia tenacissima W.& A. (L. konga, S. Murva, P. Digal Pahari).

Pounded fruits are taken internally for irregular menstrual cycle.

Jatropha gossipifolia Linn. (L. Bhegda, P. Digal Pahari).

Juice of the leaves is applied externally over injuries to check bleeding.

Urginia indica kunth. (L. Kukuri, S. Vana Palandu, P. Digal Pahari).

Bulbs are pounded, warmed and applied externally for paralysis.

Clitoria ternatea Linn. (L.&S. Aparajita, P. Surma).

Pounded roots are taken internally along with sugar in leucorrhoea and haematuria.

Crinum asiaticum Linn. (L. Hathiakanda, P. Hiranpur).

Pounded tubes are taken internally along with sugar for leucorrhoea and haematuria.

Smilax macrophylla Roxb. (L. Atkir, P. Hiranpur).

The roots are pounded along with carum carvi black pepper and ajmoda and taken internally in haematuria.

Piper longum Linn. (L. Ranuran, S. Pippali, P. Hiranpur).

Its roots along with seeds of *Mallotus philippinensis* are fried in ghee and given , in small doses to children having intestinal spasms.

Vitex negundo Linn (L. Sindhur, S. Nirgundi, P. Hiranpur).

Its leaves are pounded along with garlic and applied externally in headache.

Pentapetes phoenicea Linn. (L. Baribaha, P. Hiranpur).

Its flowers alongwith those of kamal and kumudini are pounded together and given to females having general weakness after menstrual cycle.

Trewia nudiflora Linn. (L Panigambhar, P. Hiranpur).

Pounded bark is taken internally in snake bite.

Randia uliginosa DC. (L. Perara, P. Sunder pahari).

Fruits cooked in fire are taken internally in diarrhoea.

Vitex peduncularis Wall. (L. Simjamgha, P. Sunder pahari).

The decoction of leaves in water is taken internally in black-water fever.

Viscum articulatum Burm. (L. Banda, P. Sunderpahari).

About 10 gms. Of its dried leaves are given to filarial patients for 21 days alongwith black pepper in such a way that on first day it is 21 seeds and last day only one seed. It has been claimed to cure very old cases of filarial and elephantiasis.

Abbreviations

L-Local name

S-Sanskrit name

P-Place of collection

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