

Ethno – Medico – Botany of Chenchus of Mahaboobnagar District, Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT: *The present paper deals with the ethno-medico-botany of Chenchus of Mahaboobnagar district, Andhra Pradesh. About forty four plants are enumerated with knowledge of the tribals for their medicinal uses in curing different diseases and ailments.*

INTRODUCTION

An Ethnobotanical survey has been conducted during 1994-1996 in the tribal population of Mahaboobnagar district in Andhra Pradesh, India. This paper deals with the tribal Chenchus, their mode of living and herbal treatment.

Mahaboobnagar, one of the 23 districts of Andhra Pradesh lies between 16⁰ and 17⁰ latitudes and 77⁰ and 79⁰ longitudes.

CHENCHUS

The meaning of the word Chenchu is that in olden days the Chenchu live under the chettu (tree) that is why they are called Chenchus¹. Their medium of expression in Telugu. Very often they use Hindi and Urdu words. They live in small villages and they build their houses from the forest wood. They make use of the forest and its produce for their livelihood.

The Chenchus are black in colour and the lower part of their dress was only loin cloth to cover their shame, the upper garments was like a jubta. But to-day their way has changed. Now they wear pantaloons and shirts of various colours. Children wear either black or khaki shirts. The Chenchus do

not follow a uniform custom in respect to marriage ceremonies. Chenchus celebrate their social and religious festivals very jubilantly in their new cloths. They sing and dance together on occasions of the kind. They worship Mattanna Swamy (Lord Easwara) and Sammakka Sarlamma Jatara.

Even in the most modern age Chenchu people live in remote villages and use various herbs for their physical ailments. They are fundamentally sentimental. They never reveal their herbal treatment to others. They prepare medicine from various herbs and treat different diseases. They have their own herbal treatment even on occasions of accidents. They never hurry up to towns for treatment. They mainly depend upon herbs available in the forest areas and are able to treat and cure radical diseases.

The wealth of Medicinal Plants of the Andhra Pradesh was known us by the previous investigations of Vanamala Naidu^{2,3} Nisteswar and Kumar⁴, Singh et al.⁵, Prakasa Rao and Harasreeramulu⁶, Reddy et al¹, Hemadri⁷, Nagaraju and Rao⁹, Vedavathy⁹ and Krishnamohan and Bhiravamurthy¹⁰. Mannanur forest of Mahaboobnagar district was earlier surveyed by Singh et al⁵. for

medicinal plants and they reported medicinal uses of twenty nine species.

ENUMERATION

In the present paper forty four medicinal plants along with their families, local name (Ln), locality (L) and their local medicinal uses are enumerated. The specimens are deposited in the herbarium of Department of Botany, Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur.

Acacia leucophloea (Roxb.) Wild, (Mimosaceae). Ln: Tellatamma, L: Srirangapur, TDCK 13675.

The stem bark is used to prepare liquor by tribals. The stem bark is squeezed and inhaled to relieve cough and cold. The stem bark is also used to cure diabetes.

Albizia odoratissima (L.f.) Benth. (Mimosaceae). Ln: Telchu chakka. L: Farahabad, TDCK 15364.

The paste of leaves is applied in the eye to treat eye diseases. The decoction of the stem bark is used to relieve body pains.

Annona seuiamosa L. (Annonaceae). Ln: Seethaphalam. L: Mannanur, TDCK 16811.

The root is a drastic purgative and it is used in acute dysentery. The ripe fruit bruised and mixed with salt is applied to malignant tumour to hasten suppuration.

Bowellia serrata Roxb. & Colebr. (Bursaceae). Ln: Anduga. L: Mannanur, TDCK 15369.

The juice of this plant control cough. The paste of stem bark is given orally twice a day for one week to treat diseases.

Bridelia cinerascens Gehr. (Euphorbiaceae). Ln: Korramaddi. L: Molachintapally, TDCK 15397.

5 gms mixture of dried stem bark powder with sugar is taken orally twice a day for one month to treat rheumatism.

Cassia italica (Mill.) Lam. Ex. Andr. (Caesalpiniaceae). Ln: Nalanthangadu. L: Hajipur hills TDCK 13619.

The paste of fresh leaves is taken orally for constipation or dry leaves roasted, powdered and boiled. Decoction taken orally for 3 days as constipation purgative.

Coldenia procumbens L. (Boraginaceae). Ln: Hamsapadi. L: Molachintapally. TDCK 15317.

The fresh leaves paste is applied externally to treat rheumatic swellings.

Commiphora caudate (Wight & Arn.) Engl. (Bursaceae). Ln: Kondamamidi. L: Bourapur, TDCK 13652.

The paste of stem bark mixed with Ricinus communis oil is used in external applications for body pains.

Corallocarpus epigaeus (Rottl. & Willd.) Clarke (Cucurbitaceae). Ln: Brahadandi. L: Molachintapally, TDCK 15319.

Cordia dichotoma Forest. F. (Cordiaceae). Ln: Irkichattu. L: Kudichintalabilu, TDCK 15887.

The fruit is directly taken orally as astringent, diuretic and demulcent.

Costus Speciosus (Koen.) Smith (Zingiberaceae). Ln: Adavipasupu. L: Farahabad, TDCK 13659.

The rhizome paste is used as an antidote for snake bites.

Diospyros chloroxylon Roxb. (Ebenaceae). Ln: Illinda. L: Yarragondupenta, TDCK 13697.

The past of stem bark is taken orally thrice a day for two days to treat dyspepsis.

Diplocyclos palmatus (L). Jeffrey (Cucurbitaceae). Ln: Avvagodakayalu. L: Laxmapur, TDCK 13679.

The leaf extract is taken orally thrice a day for two days to treat fever.

Dodonaea viscosa (L) Jacq. (Sapindaceae). Ln: Pullavavili. L: Molachintapally, TDCK 15332.

The mixture of fresh leaves paste, turmeric powder and salt water is applied to muscle swellings and bone fracture for bone settings of men and cattle.

Elytraria acaulis (L.F.) Lindau. (Acanthaceae). Ln: Yanugupadamu, Anachodi, L: Gourammasari, TDCK 13694.

The leaves extract is given orally twice a day for three days to treat venereal diseases. Plant is squeezed and inhaled to relieve cough and cold.

Euphorbia fusiformis Buch-Ham. (Euphorbiaceae). Ln: Barrasapugaddalu. L: Rarahabad, TDCK 13665.

The paste of tubers is given internally for cows and cattle, it improves the milk yield.

Ficus amplissima J.E. Sm. (Moraceae). Ln: Brahamadi. L: Farahabad, TDCK 15396.

The paste of stem bark is taken internally twice a day for 4 days as astringent.

Gloriosa superba L. (Liliaceae). Ln: Pothidumpa. L: Hajipur hills, TDCK 13616.

Tubers are used in abortions.

Holarrhena pubescens (Buch-Ham.) Wall. (Apocynaceae). Ln: Kolamuchichakka. L: Gourammasari, TDCK 13698.

The powder of stem bark is given orally along with pure honey to the child suffering from cold and cough.

Hygrophila auriculata (Schum.) Heine. (Acanthaceae). Ln: Neerugobbi. L: Molachintapally, TDCK 15305.

The juice of leaves is given orally twice a day for two days to cure anaemia.

The paste of seeds mixed with sugar is given orally used for sexual energy.

Ipomoea staphylina Roem. & Schult. (Convolvulaceae). Ln: Teendra teega. L: Billakal, TDCK 13680.

The paste of young fresh leaves and green stem bark is applied to treat piles.

Jatropha curcas L. (Euphorbiaceae). Ln: Adavi amudamu. Ln: Farahabad, TDCK 15377.

The tender twigs are used for cleaning teeth. The decoction of leaves and roots is given for diarrhoea and skin diseases.

Leucas aspera (Willd.) Link (Lamiaceae). Ln: Thummi. L: Mannanur, TDCK 13604.

The juice of leaves mixed with milk is taken orally to treat skin diseases and rheumatic swellings.

Juice of whole plant about 3 teaspoons twice a day is given for about 5 days in case of fever.

Morinda pubescens J.E. Smith (Rubiaceae). Ln: Togaru. L: Jalupenta, TDCK 15312.

The decoction of roots and leaves is useful in the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery.

The fruits are eaten by tribals for strength.

Nauclea orientalis (L.) L. (Rubiaceae). Ln: Kadamba. L. Kudichintalabailu, TDCK 15376.

If the stem bark mixed with leaf squeezed and inhaled relieves cough and cold.

Squeezed fruits are applied on forehead to treat headache.

Nicotiana tabaccum L. (Solanaceae). Ln: Pogaku. L: Laxmapur, TDCK 15388.

Juice of leaf is applied to cuts and wounds.

Decoction of leaf juice is taken internally as an antidote for snake bites. Vomiting results are indicated.

Ottelia alismoides (L.) Pers. Hydrocharitaceae. Ln: Edakula mokka. L. Hajipur hills, TDCK 13650.

The fresh leaves extract is taken orally twice a day for one week to treat haemorrhoides.

Parkinsonia aculeate L. Caesalpiniaceae. Ln: English tumma. L: Dhararam, TDCK 13641.

Decoction of fresh rachis and leaflets is taken orally to cure anaemia and fatigue.

Pergularia daemia (Forsk.) Chiov (Asclepiadaceae.) Ln: Juttipalateega. L: Molachentapally, TDCK 13692.

The paste of leaves is given orally twice a day for one week to treat asthma. The paste of root is used as a remedy for diabetes.

The paste of root bark is used as a purgative and rheumatic swellings.

Premna tomentosa Willd. (Verbenaceae). Ln: Nagura chettu. L: Jalupenta TDCK 15350.

The leaf extract is taken orally twice a day to treat diuretic problems.

Randia dumetorum Lamk. Ln: Manga. L: Laxamapur, TDCK 13622,

If the paste of the stem bark is taken orally it can cure diarrhoea and dysentery and also fevers.

Scilla indica (wight) Baker (Liliaceae). Ln: Adaviulli. L: Mannanur, TDCK 15373.

The paste of bulb is taken orally to treat diarrhoea.

Spaeranthus indicus L. (Asteraceae). Ln: Bodataram. L: Mannanur, TDCK 13610.

The root is powdered, mixed with butter milk and is used to cure bleeding.

The whole plant extract is taken orally twice a day for one week to control gastric disorders.

Strychnos nux-vomica L: (Loganiaceae). Ln: Mushini. L: Vatvarlapally, TDCK 13656.

The paste of stem bark is used to cure dysentery, fevers and dyspepsia.

The seeds are highly poisonous.

Syzygium cumini (L.) Skeels (Myrtaceae). Ln: Naradu. L: Appapur, TDCK 15327.

The bark is made into a decoction and used as an antiseptic in cleaning wounds. The paste of fresh seeds along with honey is taken one dose in early morning for 40 days to cure diabetics.

Thespesia lampas (Cav.) Dalz. (Malvaceae). Ln: Adavipatti. L: Appapur, TDCK 13654.

The leaf juice cures loose bowels. The decoction of the stem bark is given internally for skin diseases. The past of seeds are used to cure diabetes.

Tiliacora acuminata (Lam.) Miers. (Minispermaceae). Ln: Kappa teega. L: Billakal, TDCK 15395.

The stem bark decoction taken orally twice a day for two days for fevers.

Tragia involucrate L. (Euphorbiaceae). Ln: Duradagondi. L: Mallalathertham, TDCK 15357.

The whole plant extract is given orally to control vomitings. The root powder is mixed with honey for free urination and bowel movement.

Tridax procumbens L. (Asteraceae). Ln: Caddichamanti, Nallagada. L: Farahabad, TDCK 15337.

The juice of the fresh leaves used as a styptic. The paste of fresh leaves are applied on the piles.

Vernonia cinerea (L.) Less. (Asteraceae). Ln: Sahadavi. L: Molachentapally, TDCK 15309.

The leaves extract is given orally to control phlegm.

Vitex negundo L. (Verbenaceae). Ln: Tellavavili. L: Jalupenta, TDCK 15318.

The paste of leaves is applied to treat eczema. A decoction of the leaves and the vapours are employed in baths for the treatment of rheumatic affection. The leaf juice is used to control diabetics.

Wattakaka volubilis (L.f.) Stapf (Asclepiadaceae). Ln: Doodipala teega. L: Sarlapally. TDCK 15325.

The fresh or dry root paste is used thrice a day as antidote for snake bites.

Wrightia tinctoria R. Br. (Apocynaceae). Ln: Palvaru. L: Mannanur, TDCK 13682.

The root bark powder is used thrice a day as an antidote for snake bites.

Zingiber roseum Rose. (Zingiberaceae). Ln: Adaviallamu. L: Farahabad, TDCK 15378.

The rhizome paste is used as an antidote for snake bite.

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