



## ETHNOMEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY PAHARIA TRIBE IN SANTHAL PARAGANA DIVISION OF JHARKHAND

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The present ethnobotanical study was carried out in Santhal Paragana division of Jharkhand state, which has been vividly recognized as the dense forest area and is dominated by tribal communities like Paharia, Santhal etc. The present work comprises the survey of ethno medicinal plants and their parts most commonly used by the Paharia tribe for preparing herbal medicines to cure various ailments. This ethnic community inhabits in the forest area and use effective and potential plants for health care. These herbal healers are commonly known as KAVIRAJ OR GUNNIA. The composition of different parts of plants for preparing medicines is based on the traditional knowledge acquired by these herbal healers. The present study includes compilation and documentation of 24 medicinal plants belonging to 23 genera and 19 families along with their floristic study including botanical names, local names, and parts used along with their pharmacological role for mankind.

**Key Words:** Ethnomedicinal, Santhal Paragana, Paharia, Herbal.

Human beings have been using plants as drug to cure various kinds of ailments since ancient time. Utilization of plants in the field of medicine is as old as human race itself. India, the land of Charaka and Shushruta, is endowed with the knowledge of traditional medicine next to China in the World. Indigenous knowledge is still utilized in the many remote pockets, where the modern medical science is not feasible. Plants represent the eternal kindness to nature by all means which can easily be seen in varied human culture. India in general and the lower gangetic plain in particular is being known to be the rich repository of medicinal plants which have been used for prevention of diseases and other kinds of ailments since Rigvedic period. Being enriched with ancient knowledge of health care, various kinds of ethnic and rural communities have traditionally preserved a bulk of indigenous knowledge of utilization of medicinal plants growing in their vicinity from centuries. Utilization of plants for the treatment of diseases in human being is as old as put into practice as the human race itself. Medicinal plants are invariably used in local health system in traditional societies.

**Santhal Paragana:** The herbal heritage of Jharkhand is vividly recognized as dense forest

area with huge mass of biodiversity. Due to being a natural sanctuary, the British ruler adopted Santhal paragana tenancy act to save the forests as well as ethno-medico-botanically important drug plants. This area was inhabited by a number of ethnic communities like Santhal, Paharia, Ho etc. These ethnic communities convert their deep faith in super natural powers of the abundant biodiversity by their intense knowledge of century old traditions. The common curing process involves phyto-diversity, touch and contact therapy, Jadu-Tona etc. to relieve the general man of the locality. So a group of herbal healers in the popular name of KAVI RAJ, OJHAS, MANJHIS or GUNNIA developed in these communities to give relief to masses.

Santhal Paragana, the land of Baidyanath, is the home land of Paharia tribe who have native and ethnic knowledge about ambient vegetation around their dwelling areas. They collect various parts of herbal plants parts like roots, stem, flowers, fruits, leaves and seeds for meeting their day to day needs and health care. They are expert in folk medicines and use a number of ethno botanical plants for curing a number of ailments like, post delivery complications, bone fracture, abortions, preventing miscarriages,

chicken pox, jaundice, fever, headache, prevention of sunstroke, reduce rheumatic pain, intricacies of newly born babies etc.

Santhal Paragana, an integral part of the lower Gangetic plain is a hub of medicinal plants. It is a hot spot for traditional ethnomedicine. This division is dominated by tribal communities having very rich traditional knowledge of medicinal plants. The tribals, forest dwellers and rural people have rich herbal knowledge but is facing lack of organisation hence many problems.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is a part of regular ethno botanical survey of Paharia rich areas of Pakur, Sahibganj, Godda, Dumka and Deoghar district in Santhal Paragana division which lies at 24°30' North Latitude and 87°15' East longitude. The Paharia people of these areas are socio-economically very backward and they work hard to fulfill their daily needs. Some of the herbal People with indigenous knowledge of herbal plants were also contacted for the knowledge of the vernacular names and parts

of medicinal plants used for remedial purposes.

However, information of plants and their use co-evolved with human society.. In this study, use of ethnobotanically important local plants has been documented.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regular frequent survey of the area shows the dependency of many people on these herbal plants due to better result and complications due to intake of medicines of modern medical science. These flora are most commonly used as anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic, laxative, purgative and so many medical complications as well as used as food and fodder by the poor mass of people.

The most frequently used plants and their parts by paharia tribes in Santhal Paragana division for the treatment of a number of chronic and acute diseases have been enumerated below:

### CONCLUSION

Forest flora seems to be very useful in enhancing the healthy atmosphere by using them as traditional medicine and at the same time they

**Table 1**

Botanical & Local Name	Family	Parts Used	Uses
<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> (Chirchiri)	Amaranthaceae	Roots	Small pieces of the roots of this plant along with the roots of <i>Smilax proliфера</i> and stem of <i>Psidium guajava</i> are tied in a cloth and hanged or fixed above the main entrance of the home to keep the diseases and evil spirits away from the home.
<i>Calamus latifolius</i> (Ghorua)	Arecaceae	Branches	Delicate branches are coiled around neck against leprosy.
<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i> (Khejur)	Arecaceae	Roots	A root piece is tied to the hair of expectant mother to induce labor pain and makes delivery easy.
<i>Pistia stratiotes</i> (Jalkumbhi)	Araceae	Leaves	Anti-arthritis, anti inflammatory, curative of skin disease
<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (Akand)	Asclepiadaceae	Leaves	Few leaves stitched together as leafy cap is kept on head to alleviate fever.

<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Akand)	Asclepiadaceae	Leaves, fruits	Most frequently used in rheumatic pain.
<i>Capparis sepiaria</i> (Paitha)	Capparaceae	Roots	Root piece is stuck to the lock of hair of pregnant women to induce abortion.
<i>Cayratia pedata</i> (Ghoda bichati)	Vitaceae	Roots	3-5 cm root piece are tied as an amulet on the wrist to reduce fever.
<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i> (Bharn)	Verbenaceae	Roots	About 3 cm small piece of root along with 3 grains of Rice are tied in a cloth and hanged in the ear to overcome toothache, the ear is of same side having toothache. This packed cloth is kept for 2-3 days or pain is alleviated.
<i>Entada rheedii</i> (Hanumanmura)	Mimosaceae	Roots	Twigs kept in cattle sheds to ward off the disease.
<i>Euphorbia pulcherima</i> (Khirsagar)	Euphorbiaceae	Leaves	Warm leaves placed on the abdomen to cure burning sensation of micturation.
<i>Putranjiva roxburghii</i> (Putranjiva)	Euphorbiaceae	Seeds	Allergies due to “Pitta Dosh” is cured by using seed of fleshy fruits.
<i>Helianthus annuus</i> (Surajmukhi)	Asteraceae	Roots	Root piece is tied around neck and arm of the patient to check convulsions and also used in curing malarial fever.
<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i> (Kurai)	Apocyanaceae	Roots	In vomiting & diarrhea.
<i>Paederia foetida</i> (Gandhali)	Rubiaceae	Roots	About 5cm root cut part is tied on the arms to cure diarrhea and indigestion.
<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Seeds	Severe headache is relieved by using 5cm root piece as amulet.
<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> (Chitrak)	Plumbaginaceae	Roots	Fever and pain is relieved when 3-5 cm long root piece is tied as an amulet on the wrist.
<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> (Gokhru)	Zygophyllaceae	Fruits	Hemicrania is relieved by wearing fruit on opposite earlobe.
<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i> (Dhatki)	Lythraceae	Stem	Spermatorrhoea and general weakness is cured by wearing neckles of stem around neck.
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (Doob grass)	Poaceae	Leaves	Used in general weakness, improves appetite and health.
<i>Dendrocalmus strictus</i>	Poaceae	Stem	Used in Kohninga or weeping sickness of children.
<i>Mentha spicata</i> (Jungli pudina)	Lamiaceae	Leaves	Sedative, digestive and carminative.
<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i> (Peeli booti)	Ranunculaceae	Leaves	Anti-inflammatory, anti-pyretic.
<i>Centella asiatica</i> (Thankuni)	Apiaceae	Leaves	Carminative, in gastro-intestinal infections, memory booster, anti-carcinogenic, anti-inflammatory etc.

may solve the problem of unemployment by commercial cultivation and proper marketing system. Santhal Paragana is enriched with great range of biodiversity and there is need to conserve it and develop a plan on large scale so that paharia and other tribes residing in this area may utilize the forest product on large scale for betterment of human civilization. It is necessary to encourage herbal medicine sellers and herbal healers to avoid the complications of modern medical system.

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