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Ethno medicinal plants used in traditional health care by Chakhesang tribe of Phek district

Rinku Bharali*, Liza Bharali, D.Borkotoky and R.K.Singh

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, ICAR-NRC on Mithun, Phek, Nagaland

Email: rinku_bharali2003@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

*The study was carried out by randomly selecting eight villages under Pfutsero and Chozuba block of Phek district of Nagaland to determine the ethno medicinal plants used by Chakhesang tribe in health care. Questionnaires based survey with field observation along informal discussion with village elderly, local healers and key informants was the method adopted for the study. Plants used for common ailments with their local name, part used, method of preparation and route of administration was recorded and analyzed. Out of 30 plants recorded and identified, certain plants were used to cure a specific ailment while some were used against more than one disease condition. Leaf extract of *Oxalis corniculata* was found to be used against seven major diseases. Nine plants were noted to be used against gastrointestinal disorders while six of them were used as blood purifier. In the present study, plants were noted and identified that could cure dermatitis, jaundice, tonsillitis, fracture, hypertension, conjunctivitis, toothache, snake bite and even cancer. The knowledge of various indigenous plants from village elderly and local healers can of the essence to the herbal medicine researchers and local population.*

Key words: Medicinal plants, Chakhesang tribes, diseases, local healers

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INTRODUCTION

Phek is one of the distantly located districts to the south east of Nagaland. The district is inhabited by the Chakhesang and Pochury tribe known for their rich culture and tradition. The agro-climatic zone varies between Mild tropical hills (200-800m MSL) to sub alpine temperate zone (1500-3500m MSL). The hills of Phek district of Nagaland are the hoard of many medicinal plants and the indigenous people of the region widely practice the use of wild herbs for various ailments as well as for nutrition. However, there is paucity of information regarding their medicinal properties other than their traditional intellect. Villagers use various plants having medicinal value for treatment diseases like diarrhoea, blood dysentery, bleeding, wound healing, asthma, gastritis, influenza etc (Singh *et al.*, 2009). Their beliefs and folk practices are based on past experience with various diseases and their cures (Changkija, 1999). An attempt has been made to identify and document certain medicinal plants used by the villages for various diseases/ailments.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out by randomly selecting 8 villages under Pfutsero and Chozuba block of Phek district. Questionnaires based survey with field observation along informal discussion with village elderly, local healers and key informants was the method adopted for the study. Plants used for common ailments with their local name, part used, method of preparation and route of administration was recorded and analyzed. The plants were identified in Botanical Survey of India, Shillong, Meghalaya and SASRD, Nagaland University.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the present investigation 30 plants were identified and complied that were found to be used by local people for various ailments. Phek district of Nagaland is endowed with abundance of green biomass which harbors many plants with medicinal properties that remains unexplored. The present study presents facts on indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants of Chakhesang tribe of Phek district. The

details with regards to scientific name, parts used, indications and method of preparation are documented. Various ethno botanical studies in North eastern region of India have been made in the past to determine the usefulness of the wild herbs. Baruah and Sharma (1984) studied the medicinal plants used by Boro tribes of Assam. Similarly, ethno botanical study in Kamrup district was carried out by Bhattacharjee *et al.* (1980). Borthakur (1976), Gurung (2002) and Jamir (1997) studied the medicinal plants used by local people of Mikir hills, Sikkim and Nagaland, respectively.

Table.1 Traditional medicinal plants use by Chakhesang tribe of Phek district

Sl. No.	Local Name	Scientific name	Disease	Part used	Method of preparation and route of administration
1	Thiizo ciitu	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	Influenza, UTI, enteritis, diarrhoea, traumatic injuries, sprains and poisonous snake bites	Leaf	Leaf extract is taken orally.
2	Cirho	<i>Bidus pilosa</i>	Traumatic injury for blood clotting	Leaf	Leaf extract is applied on the injured portion
3	Nhicu Sahu	<i>Elsholtzia blanda</i>	Blood purification and indigestion	Leaf	Raw leaf extract taken orally for blood purification. Put in the naval to cure indigestion
4	Bailshe	<i>Passiflora edulis</i>	Hypertension	Leaf	Boiled leaves are eaten along with the extract.
5	Tiitsishe	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Blood purification, diabetes	Fruit	Crushed fruits are boiled and the extract is taken orally.
6	Ciikhushe	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	Headache, food poisoning and blood purification	Fruit	Crushed fruits are boiled and the extract is taken orally.
7	Gapre	<i>Centilla asiatica</i>	Skin infection and blood purification	Whole plant	Whole plant along with the root is boiled and taken orally.
8	Gapa	<i>Plantago major</i>	Blood purification and gastritis	Leaf	Boiled leaves are eaten.
9	Gakra	<i>Cardamin sp</i>	Blood purification and gastritis	Leaves and stem	Fresh leaves and stem are boiled and eaten.
10	Japan nha	<i>Eupatorium adenoporum</i>	Cough and gastritis	Leaf	Boiled leaf extract are used for cough. Dried leaves are crushed and one teaspoon of crushed leaves is mixed in one cup of boiled water and taken orally against gastritis
11	Ciivenu	<i>Gynura nepalensis</i>	Gastritis	Leaf	Boiled leaves are ingested.
12	Thiiccihushe	<i>Solanum khasianum</i>	Toothache	Fruit	Fruits are roasted and the fume is inhaled in the mouth for few seconds and thrown out. This is repeated for 5-6 times.
13	Ciiphoshe	<i>Docynia indica</i>	Jaundice	Fruit	Fruit juice is ingested.
14	Thomiilabi	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Gastritis	Sprout	Cooked colocasia sprouts are boiled and eaten
15	Vathinha	<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Gastritis and other stomach problems	Leaves	Leaves are eaten as raw or boiled
16	Thiiviithishe	<i>Polygonum hydropipiper</i>	Snake bite	Whole plant	Whole plant is burnt and the smoke is treated in the

					portion of snake bite.
17	Gadzii	<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>	Appendicitis and Dermatitis	Leaf	Boiled leaf extract is taken orally for appendicitis; raw leaf extract is applied against itching
18	Rulii	<i>Elshotzia cilata</i>	Blood purification.	Leaf and flower	Leaf and flower is boiled and the extract is taken orally
19	Thupupina	<i>Artemiria nelagarica</i>	Influenza	Leaf	Raw leaf extract is taken orally
20	Nha nhicu	<i>Elshotzia sp</i>	Dematitis	Whole plant	Fresh plants extract is used against itching.
21	Nacieso	<i>Commelina spp</i>	Tonsil,uterine disorder,conjunctivites	Whole plant	Plant is boiled in water and the extract is taken orally against tonsilitis and uterine disorder. The fresh stem juice is treated in the eyes against conjunctivitis.
22	Siihe	<i>Equisetum sylvaticum</i>	Uroliths		Boiled plant extract is taken orally
23	Sugarcane	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i>	Jaundice and chronic cough	Stem	Fresh juice is taken against jaundice. Roasted cane are eaten for chronic cough
24	Aloevera	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	Gastritis and skin dryness		The succulent stem juice is taken in raw for gastric, also applied as moisturizer
25	Tiikhochobi	<i>Curcoligo sp.</i>	Gastritis	Rhizome	Rhizome is boiled and the extract is taken orally
26	Kiitsiigaghie	<i>Persicaria capitata</i>	Fracture and dislocation	Whole plant	Whole plant is slightly crushed and dip in hot water and press at the portion of fracture with nerve dislocation frequently and placed it by bandage at the portion
27	Turalii	<i>Punica granatum</i>	Used for expelling tape worm from body	Leaves	Raw leaf extract is ingested
28	Aonla	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Cough, diabetes, cold, hyper acidity.	Fruit	Fruit extract is ingested
29	Tenga guti	<i>Hibiscus sabdariffa</i>	Offed condition	Petal	Boiled petal extract is taken orally
30	Murinusuh	<i>Taxus bacata</i>	Headache,cough and cancer	leaves	4 to 5 leaves are boiled and 1-2 spoon of the extract is taken orally.



1 Images of traditional medicinal plant use by Chakhesang tribe

CONCLUSION

There is an urgent need to survey the region comprehensively for more such folk medicinal plants. The knowledge of various indigenous plants from village elderly and local healers can be of immense importance to the herbal medicine researchers and local population.

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