

Exploration of some Medicinal Plants used by natives of District Hamirpur (H.P.)

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Abstract- Hamirpur district is situated between 76°18'-76°44' East longitudes and 31°52'30" North latitudes. The track is hilly covered by Shivalik range and the elevation varies from 450-1,100 meters. This region is rich in diverse flora and suitable for studies related to Medicinal plants. Various plants are used for curing many diseases.

This district is surrounded by thick forest area. The plants in this area made the integral part of the routine health care system of the tribals residing in the small villages. In these areas people use different plants and plant parts for food, medicine, fodder, fuel, dye for festivals, rituals and various other functions. The local people have huge knowledge about the uses of plants and plant parts. Himachal Pradesh is very rich harbor with reference to diversity of plant species. And also India is one of the leading countries in Asia with respect to wealth of traditional knowledge system related to the use of plant species. The traditional knowledge of India is mainly used by the local peoples of small towns and villages.

An attempt has been made to explore traditional medicinal knowledge of plant materials belonging to various genera of the plant species which are readily available in Hamirpur district. The information on folk use was gathered through several visits, questionnaire, group discussions with local peoples and Vaidyas and Hakimas. During the study 22 plant species belonging to 15 family were identified to cure various diseases. These plant species are frequently used for diseases like Sour throat, Uterine stimulant, Toothache, astringent Regularizes menstruation flow snake bite, diarrhea, dysentery, inflammations, urinary infections and also some other like hair related problems, diabetes, rheumatism, bone fracture and dislocations, etc., the use and results of these plant species was encouraging but their scientific security is absolutely necessary before being used in unique natural products for development of medicines against various danger diseases and their industrial product development is very easy.

The present study deals with the folk uses of plants by the local people of Hamirpur district. We have been conducting the research work from last four years in different areas of Hamirpur district with the purpose of contributing to the knowledge and the preservation of a part of the national cultural heritage and finding out new or rare uses of medicinal plants, which could lead to the use of new plant-based medicines; as Etkin (2001) claimed a higher degree of interdisciplinary activity is needed in ethno pharmacological studies. This kind of research is much rare in Hamirpur district therefore this region was selected as local people are mainly dependent upon the local

flora for their livelihood andherbal medicines for curing the ailments and diseases. The study was carried out from April 2008 to March 2012. This paper records their botanical names, family, local names and ailments where it is used.

Index Terms- Folk use, Hamirpur district, local people, rheumatism

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of human civilization man has been using many herbs and herbal extracts as medicine. The classical Indian texts Rig-Veda, Athurveda, Charak samhita and Sushruta samhita are the evidence of the use of plants by our ancestors. It indicate that the herbal medicines have been derived from rich traditions of ancient civilization and scientific heritage. Among the ancient civilizations, India has been known to be rich repository of medicinal plants. The forests in India is the principal repository of large number of medicinal and aromatic trees, which are largely collected as a raw materials for manufacture of drugs and perfumery products. There are about 8,000 medicinal plants listed in different classical and modern texts on medicinal plants. About 960 medicinal plants are in active use in all India. Around 2,000 species are documented in Indian systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha (Dikshit, 1999). The all India ethanobotany survey estimated that over 7,000 plant species are used by 4,539 ethnic communities for human and veterinary care across the country. About 80% of population in developing countries depends directly on plants for medicines according to WHO (Pareek, 1996; Mukhopadhyay, 1998). The knowledge of these indigenous drugs has come through generations verbally is the main subject of ethonobotany (Dhiman and Khanna, 2001).

Ethanobotany can be defined as the total natural and traditional relationship and interactions between man and his surrounding local environment (Martin 2001). The plants which naturally contain certain chemical constituents having therapeutic properties are called medicinal plants.

In order to assess the consumption of traditionally important and indigenous medicinal plants survey was carried out in the different areas of Hamirpur district. These medicinal plants were used by local people of this region. The ethanobotanical information were gathered through several visits, questionnaire, group discussions with local peoples and Vaidya and Hakimas identified to cure various diseases

The local communities substantially depend on their surrounding areas for food, fodder, fuel, fiber, timbers and medicinal use. The local people of the area use maximum number of plant species for medicinal purpose. The medicinal value of these medicinal plants includes curing for many common human diseases and other health problems. This prompted the need to take up medicinal studies in the study area. The study yielded valuable information on traditional medicinal knowledge system of peoples and medicinal plants having therapeutic values.

II. RESEARCH ELABORATIONS

The floristic surveys were conducted throughout the study period in different area of Hamirpur district; among the local people. The plant specimens were collected during these surveys were identified and preserved. The field data was compared with the literature on the medicinal plants Himachal Pradesh; some literatures of ethnobotany have also been considered like Yadav and Suresh (2003) Pushpangadan and Kumar (2005). The medicinal placcation of 22 plants to 15 families were reported here which are used to cure different diseases and problems of tribe peoples like expectorant, cure cough and cold, treatment of dysentery, blood purifier, asthma, rheumatism, skin disease, etc.

The method used to collect the data:

1. Plants were collected and preserved.
2. The information was collected from the elderly persons of the area.
3. Interviews were conducted using structured questionnaire prepared for traditional Medicinal Practitioners .
4. Plant were identified and nomenclatured with the help of the "Flora of British India" (Hooker 1872-1897).

III. RESULTS

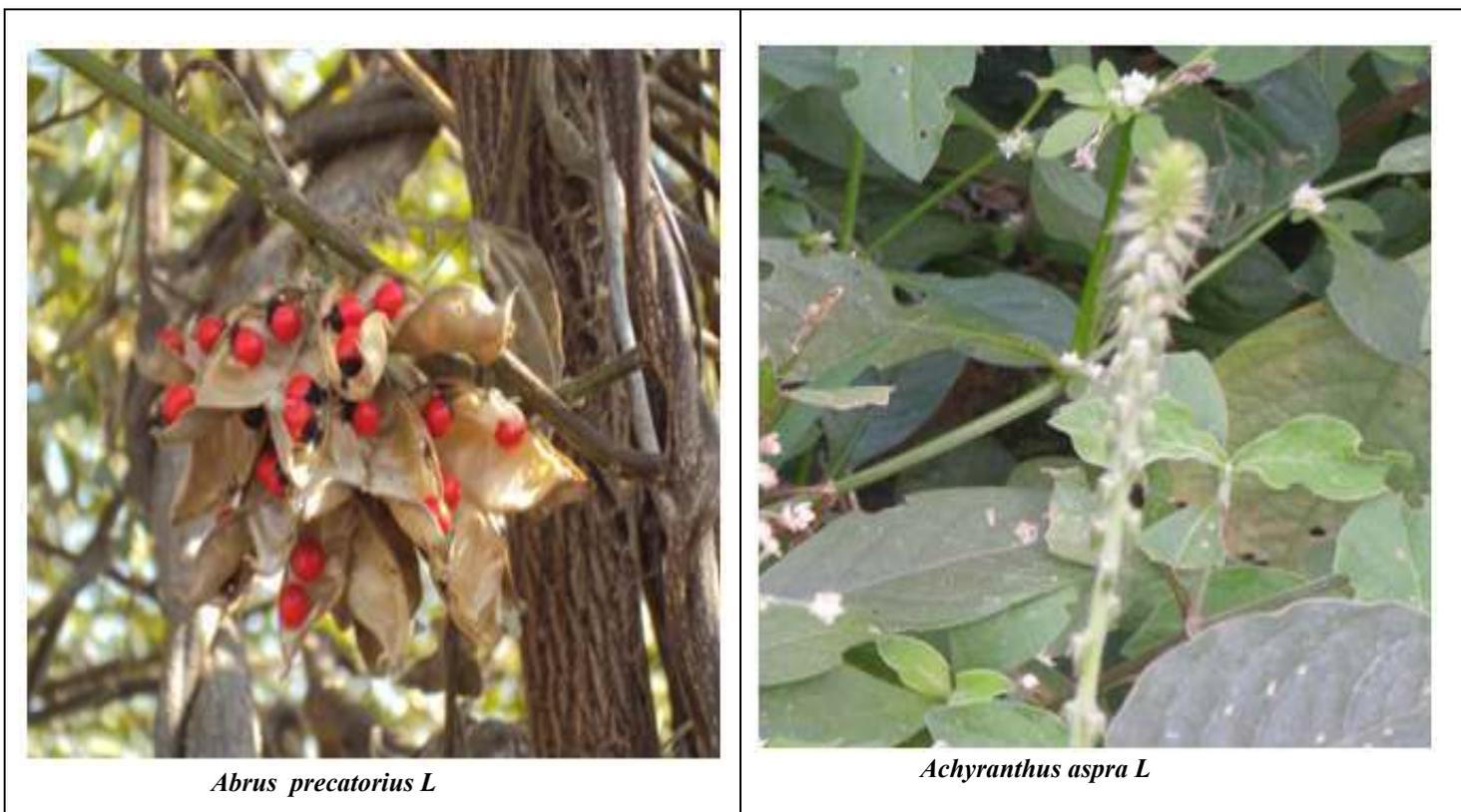
A list of local plants was prepared by enquiring from Vaidya, Hakimas and local people. Some medicinal angiospermic species which are found in different regions of this district have been given in table – 1.

Table – 1: List of some medicinal plants used in district Hamirpur (H.P.)

Botanical Name	Family	Local Name	Use
<i>Abrus precatorius L.</i>	Fabaceae	Rati	Uterine stimulant
<i>Acacia catechu L.</i>	Fabaceae	khair	Cough and sour throat
<i>Achyranthes aspera L.</i>	Amaranthaceae	Puth kanda	Toothache, astringent
<i>Adhatoda vasica Ness.</i>	Acanthaceae	Basooti	Expectorant, antispasmodic
<i>Aegle marmelos L.</i>	Rutaceae	Bilb	Blooded dysentery
<i>Argemone maxicana L.</i>	Papavaceae	Satyanashi	Antidot for snake-bite
<i>Azadirachta indica A.Juss.</i>	Meliaceae	Neem	Anti microbial, Insecticidal.
<i>Bauhinia vahilli Wight and Arn..</i>	Fabaceae	Torr	Regularizes menstruation flow
<i>Bauhinia variegata L.</i>	Fabaceae	Karal	Antifat remedy
<i>Bombax ceiba L.</i>	Bombacaceae	Simal	Control bleeding from nose
<i>Cassia fistula L.</i>	Fabaceae	Ali	Blood purifier
<i>Cassia occidentalis L.</i>	Fabaceae	Relu	Tooth-ache
<i>Celastrus paniculatus Willd</i>	Celasteraceae	Sankheeru	Antirhumatic
<i>Emblica officinalis Garten</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Amla	Skin infection

<i>Erythrena indica L.</i>	Fabaceae	Prair	Urinary tract infection
<i>Pistacia khinjuk</i>	Anacardiaceae	Kakarsingi	Beautification purpose
<i>Ricinus communis L.</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Arandi	purgative
<i>Sida cordifoli Ll.</i>	Malvaceae	Bla	Cure asthama
<i>Tridex procumbance L.</i>	Asteraceae	Kambarmodi	Antiseptic, insecticidal
<i>Viola serpens L.</i>	Violaceae	Banaska	Cough and cold
<i>Vites negundo L.</i>	Verbenaceae	Bana	Anti-inflammatory, analgesic.
<i>Withania somnifera L.</i>	Solanaceae	Ashwagandha	Rheumatism, anti-inflammatory

Photo Plate – 1: Photographs of some medicinal plants of district Hamirpur(H.P.)





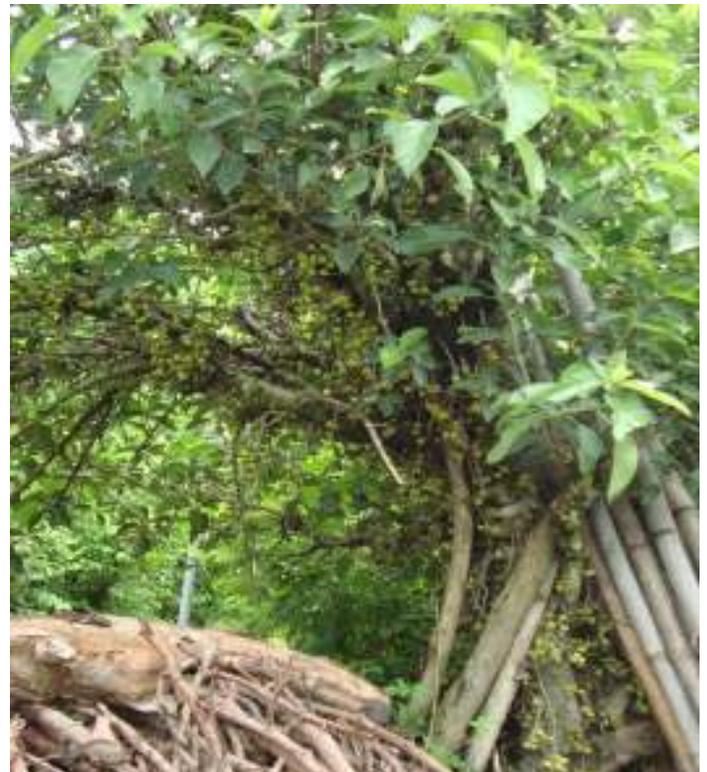
Cassia_occidentalis



Sida_cordifolia



Tridex procumbance



Ficus glomerata



Withania somnifera L

IV. CONCLUSION

Now a day it has been realized that the ethnobotanical studies of different are going to play an important role for future in social health system. The tribal medicine men i.e. Traditional Medical Practitioner and Vaidya of Hamirpur district possess considerable knowledge of the therapeutic properties of local plants as compared to younger generation which has poor phototherapeutic knowledge. The way to diagnose the disease is interesting as they use ear, eyes, nose, hands to diagnose the disease, because they live in interior areas and deficient in usage of modern scientific instruments; therefore they treat the disease by the use of medicinal plants. Generally they use leaf juice, root decoction, root extract, etc. of the plant specimen is administrated by Vaidyas and Hakimas in a proper dose. Local population has good knowledge about the usage of many plants. The plant part used vary from plant to plant. The traditional use of plants has declined due to scarcity of plant species, for the reason that of human activities and also by over grazing by animals. Therefore it is become need of an hour to conserve these plant species.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author is thankful to Vaidya, Hakimas and local people of Hamirpur district who gave this information. Our sincere thanks are also to Dr. A.K. Gupta, Reader, Department of Botany, Meerut College Meerut, for his extensive cooperation.

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Viola sepens.