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SURVEY OF SOME IMPORTANT ETHNO-MEDICINAL PLANTS OF SILIGURI SUBDIVISION, DARJEELING, WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT:

Present survey was done for revealing the traditional knowledge used by the local ethnic peoples of Siliguri subdivision of Darjeeling District, West Bengal. A total 32 number of medicinal plants belonging to 26 families are found which are used successfully by the traditional healers to treat various disease and disorders of common people. However further experimental study is required towards the formulation of herbal medicines.

KEY WORD: *Survey, Ethnomedicinal Plants, Disease And Disorders, Natural Health Care.*

INTRODUCTION:

Medicinal plants are used in India as a potent medicine since ancient times. It is a well-established fact that plants serves an important role to treat various disease and disorders of common people. Medicinal plants are the precious gift of our mother nature for natural healthcare. Tribal communities throughout our country preserve their traditional knowledge into themselves. But their knowledge may useful for common people for better natural healthcare .For this reason search for their secret knowledge towards healthcare is very popular now a days. The survey area *i.e.* Siliguri subdivision is situated at 26°43'N latitude and 88°25'E longitude within the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, India. The subdivision contains rural areas of 22 gram panchayats under four community development blocks: Matigara, Naxalbari, Phansidewa and Kharibari, including Siliguri Municipal Corporation. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas, which comes under the Siliguri subdivision, is a part of the Terai region. A famous area, well known for its biodiversity .A variety of wild and natural plant species are found in this region. The ethnic group's lives in this region are Santhal, Kols, Munda and Oraon tribes. These ethnic groups have their own valuable traditional system of medicinal knowledge. As a part of this natural area they became very efficient to use their ethnic medicinal knowledge for their health care.

METHODOLOGY:

The survey based mainly on ethno botanical field trips in the blocks and areas of the Siliguri subdivision mainly inhabited by ethnic communities such as Santhals, Kols, Oraon and Mundas. This large ethnic populations have enormous ethno botanical knowledge. The plants used for healthcare purpose were recorded through personal interview with the local people, during field trips. Firstly 32 plants belonging to 26 families were observed and collected from this area. Collected specimens were preserved and worked out by following standard taxonomic methods and authentic literature (Prain.1903). Next step is proper identification of the collected plant species. The local older people were the primary informants who were interviewed during this field work and the data have been recorded along with their names, address and the medicinal uses are recorded from them.

RESULTS :**Table 1. List of medicinal plants found in Siliguri subdivision of Darjeeling, West Bengal**

S. No.	Scientific Name	Local Name	Family	Plant Parts Used	Medicinal Properties
1.	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Bael	Rutaceae	Fruits	Gastric problems, diarrhea and dysentery, respiratory disorder,
2.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	Meliaceae	Leaves, bark,	Skin problems, dental problems,
3.	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Chatim	Apocynaceae	Leaves and bark	Jaundice, Diarrhea and dysentery
4.	<i>Bryophyllum calycinum</i>	Pathar kuchi	Crassulaceae	Leaves	Urinary problems, piles,
5.	<i>Centrella asiatica</i>	Thankuni	Apiaceae	Leaves mainly, total plants	Diarrhea and dysentery, fever, blood purifier,
6.	<i>Acorus calamus</i>	Buch	Areaceae	Leaf, roots	Stomachic, stimulant, digestive problems
7.	<i>Calotropis procera</i>	Akando	Asclepiadeceae	Leaves	Acidity, flatulence, Asthma, dental problems,
8.	<i>Datura metel</i>	Dhuturo	Solanaceae	Leaf, root, seeds	Muscle pain, worms, wounds,
9.	<i>Ficus carica</i>	Dumur	Moraceae	Leaves, fruits	Diabetes, gastric problems
10.	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Vang	Cannabinaceae	Leaves, seeds	Any type of pain, nausea and vomiting
11.	<i>Ipomoea hederacea</i>	Kalmi sak	Convolvulaceae	Leaves	Menstruation problems, digestive problems, constipation
12.	<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Bethua sak	Chenopodiaceae	Leaves,	Worms, blood purifier, piles,
13.	<i>Amaranthus tricolor</i>	Lal sak	Amaranthaceae	Leaves	Blood purifier, anemia,
14.	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Amlaki	Euphorbiaceae	Fruits, seeds	Hair problems, indigestion, acidity, urinary problems,
15.	<i>Citrus aurantifolia</i>	Kagoji labu	Rutaceae	Fruits, seeds,	Digestive problems, collera, worm,
16.	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>	Kalmegh	Acanthaceae	Leaves mainly	Liver problems, bile problems, cold
17.	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Fulsi	Lamiaceae	Leaves, seeds	Cough and cold, fever, skin problems, diabetes, insect bite
18.	<i>Mentha piperita</i>	Pudina	Lamiaceae	Whole plants	Indigestion, vomiting, ear problems

S. No.	Scientific Name	Local Name	Family	Plant Parts Used	Medicinal Properties
19.	<i>Adhatoda vasica</i>	Basak	Acanthaceae	Whole plants	Cough and cold, asthma, bronchitis, scabies,
20.	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	Lajjabati	Mimosaceae	Leaves	Asthma, depression, nerve problems
21.	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	Susni sak	Marsileaceae	Leaves	Cough and cold, bronchitis, eye problems
22.	<i>Lantana camara</i>	Chotra	Verbinaceae	Leaves, flower	Antibiotic, antiseptic, skin problems
23.	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Kakmachi	Solanaceae	Fruits, seeds	Fever, cough and cold, acidity,
24.	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	Nisinda	Verbenaceae	Leaves	Muscle & Joint pain, anti-inflammatory, antibiotic
25.	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Halud	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Skin problems, antibiotic, indigestion,
26.	<i>Zizyphus mauritiana</i>	Kul	Rhamnaceae	Fruits	Acidity, thirst, bile problems,
27.	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Sojina	Moringaceae	Flower, fruit	Piles, worm, cough,
28.	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	Dhudul	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit, leaves	Acidity, bile problem,
29.	<i>Cajanus cajan</i>	Aorhar	Fabaceae	Leaves, seeds	Jaundice, bile problems, digestive disorder,
30.	<i>Paedonia foetida</i>	Ghandhamadan	Rubiaceae	Leaves	Diarrhea and dysentery, gastric problems,
31.	<i>Amaranthus oleraceus</i>	Bonnote	Amaranthaceae	Leaves	Skin problems, cough and cold, eye problems, pimples
32.	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	Hatisur	Boraginaceae	Leaves	Tension, insomnia, digestive problems, nervousness.

CONCLUSION:

This type of field investigation is extremely necessary to prepare a database of our precious indigenous medicinal plants and their traditional uses for humankind. The data is also useful for developing a project of cultivation technique for these economical important medicinal plants for improvement of these ethnic groups. As this is a field investigation further much more study is yet to be done in the laboratory to find out noble medicines, for a better tomorrow.

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