

## Traditional Knowledge of Plants: Unconventional wisdom of an Ethnobotanist of a Khunti village.



## Botany

KEYWORDS :

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### ABSTRACT

*The village Bichna is located in the Khunti district of Jharkhand state which lies in the north eastern part of the Deccan Plateau. This village is flush with flora and fauna at its diverse best. An octogenarian herbalist, Mr. James Kiro was a renowned for his magnanimous knowledge of plants and their unconventional potentials as herbal cures. For instance, use of Moringa plant parts in the treatment of twenties of diseases including eye sores, papaya in sprain, Mustard in the treatment of block in the nose due to cold, cold, feel heavy in the head, back pain, epilepsy, Garlic in ulcer, banana stem juice in vomiting, mango in body pain, jackfruit in tuberculosis, etc. He had a similar list of about thirty common plants using which he cured about all the diseases of people in the locality. The idea behind the present work is to keep the good work of Mr. Kiro and similar other traditional herbalist alive even after these wise men go away and to apprise the society and younger generations of this knowledge and give them the confidence to go for a traditional way to good health. The reason for the present study are manifold. One, the outside world is oblivious of their wisdom. Two, the extent of their knowledge on food and medicine supplementing plants would mean a lot to the outside world. Above all since the knowledge passes orally only, it is under threat. Thus eventually perhaps, they will be taken over by the spree of modernization of the outside world and lose all the knowledge or they would lose their existence fighting the outside world.*

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the Indian traditional health care system (ayus- life, veda- knowledge, meaning science of life), is the oldest medical system in the world and is being revived in its complete form under the name of Maharishi Ayurved (Glaser, 1988). The World Health Organization has approved its efficacy (Zaman, 1974). This system provides an approach to prevention and treatment of different diseases by a large number of medical procedures and pharmaceuticals. Generally plant resources constitute an important natural wealth of a country. They play a significant role in providing primary health care services to rural people in addition to large number of economic products. According to the World Health Organization, more than 80 % of the world's population relies on traditional herbal medicine for their primary health care. These medicines are relatively safer and cheaper than synthetic or modern medicine. Herbal remedies used in folk medicine provide an interesting and still largely unexplored source for the creation and development of potentially new drugs for therapy which might help overcome the growing problem of resistance and also the toxicity of the currently avail-

able commercial antibiotics/pesticides and discovery of new bioactive compounds. Therefore, it is of great interest to carry out a screening of these plants in order to validate their use in folk medicine and to reveal the active principle by isolation and characterization of their constituents. Over the years of trial and errors, they have accumulated a great deal of knowledge on the utility of surrounding biodiversity. This traditionally occupied knowledge is transmitted by oral means and is mostly acquired through learning-by-doing approaches. The plant based resources form a large share on which rural communities depend for food and medicines. The traditionally occupied ethnobotanical knowledge is mostly, at present, restricted to far-flung areas away from invasion of modern cultural forces.

The knowledge of medicinal plants has mainly been gathered by the people in the form of tradition and experiences and inherited over the centuries to the future generation. It is extremely important to save this traditional knowledge of biological heritage and explore new resources.

The list of the plants and their medicinal uses are given below (Table I):

Sl.No	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Uses
1	Moringa oleifera	Moringaceae	Munga	<b>Leaf</b> <b>I.High Blood Pressure-</b> (1) Boil the leaf of munga and prepare soup from it. (2) To control high B.P. fresh leaf of munga is taken as vegetable. <b>II.Anaemia</b> – Vegetable of munga leaf on it flower is taken to overcome the lack of iron in our body. <b>III.Sore eyes</b> – Part of munga leaf is applied on eyes. <b>Root</b> <b>I.Pain in the cavity</b> – Prepare the soup from it root and wash mouth from it. <b>Bark</b> <b>I.Kindney stone:-</b> 15g of the bark is taken and boil it with half glass and prepare soup and drink it. When it becomes little hot.
2	Carica Papaya	Cariaceae	Papita (Papaya)	<b>Seed</b> <b>I.Worm in the Stomach:-</b> Paste of its seed and mixed with hot water and drink it before sleeping at night. <b>Fruit</b> <b>I.Increment in milk of mother.</b> <b>II.Increasing brightness for eyes.</b> <b>Leaf</b> <b>I.Nerve Pain</b> – Worm the leaf over fire and apply on the pain part of the body. <b>II.Sprain</b> – Make paste of it leaf mixing turmeric and apply on the affected part. <b>Latex</b> <b>I. Tooth Pain</b> – Latex of papaya is used on the pain teeth with the help of cotton.

3	<i>Musa paradisica</i>	Musaceae	Kela	<b>Flower</b> <b>I.Dysentry</b> – Soup of Banana flower <b>Stem</b> <b>I.Vomiting</b> – Juice of Banana stem mixing with honey
4	<i>Syzygium Cumini</i>	Myrtaceae	Jamun	<b>Bark</b> <b>I. Dysentry</b> – Juice prepared from Bark of Jamun or soup. <b>Fruit</b> <b>I. Stomach pain</b> – Juice of its fruit taking two times a day. <b>II. Piles</b> – Fruit of Jamun with salt eating 1-2 month continuously.
5	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	Anacardiaceae	Aam (Mango)	<b>Fruit</b> <b>I.Loo</b> – Roast Mango and pour cold water over it. When mango becomes cold then prepare juice from it and drink it per hour. Also rub roasted mango seeds left after preparing juice all over whole body and afterwards take bath. <b>Leaf</b> <b>I. Diabetes scurvy</b> – 1. Eating New Leaf of mango 2. Making Paste of new leaf of mango and eating two times a day with spoon. <b>II. Body Pain</b> – Boiled the old leaf of mango and take bath with that water. <b>Bark</b> <b>I.Jaundice</b> – Two spoon juice of root or Bark of mango and mixed with water taking three times a day for 3-5 days.
6	<i>Artocarpus integrifolia</i>	Moraceae.	Kathal(Jackfruit)	<b>Seed</b> <b>I.Tuberculosis (T.B)</b> – Take half ripe jackfruit in which seeds are covered. Keep that part in a glass jar adding equal proportion of brown sugar in it. Tightly pack the mouth of jar and keep it under the sun for 40 days till juices prepared from it. <b>Method of taking:-</b> One big spoon full of juice adding sprinkle of <b>Acorus colamus</b> paste and take it in empty stomach three time a day for 3-6 month. Also properly mix one egg in a glass of warm milk and two big spoon of brandy and take it in the morning.
7	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Rutaceae	Bel	<b>Leaf</b> <b>I.Typhoid</b> – Take two spoonful juice of leaf with honey three times a day till the fever has gone down. Also take soup of <b>cynodon dactylon</b> (doobi ghas) mixed with paste of triphal powder with honey take three times a day. <b>Fruit</b> <b>I.Peptic ulcer</b> – From young fruit take out the soft part and after drying it mix it with honey and consume. <b>II.Dysentry, gas :-</b> Crack the fruit and roast it. After roosting take out the soft part and mix it with brown sugar and consume it in empty stomach for 15 days.
8	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Amaryllidaceae	Pyaz(Onion)	Juice <b>I.Fever, Tonsil :-</b> Juice of onion, ginger and lemon is to be mixed with 15 ml of honey and is to be taken two or three times a day. <b>II.Ear Pain :-</b> Warm the juice of onion and put 4-5 drop in ear. Onion:- <b>I. Cholestrol, Heart diseases :-</b> Eat 1-2 onion everyday <b>II. Prevents heat stroke :-</b> Take onion with food. <b>III.When bee or worm bite :-</b> Cut the onion and rub the affected part. <b>IV.Fainting :-</b> Sniff the onion <b>V.Wound, Tumour:-</b> Make the paste of onion and mix it with oil and put on the affected part.
9	<i>Allicum Sativum</i>	Amaryllidaceae	Lahsan(Garlic)	Garlic <b>I.Tumour, Ulcer :-</b> Make paste of garlic and mix it with sweet oil (like coconut oil) and put it. <b>II.Typhoid :-</b> Fresh Juice of garlic with fruit juice. Take 2 spoon after every four hours. <b>III.Fever, dry cough, high blood pressure, asthma, worm in stomach diseases related to neck :-</b> <b>Method of preparing :-</b> Peel the Garlic and put in the glass jar and add honey and keep it for 40 days. <b>Amount :-</b> Two piece garlic with honey take in empty stomach. <b>IV.Clean the wound:-</b> Juice of garlic and water in ratio 1:1 and use it.
10	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	Rutaceae	Kari patta	Leaf :- <b>I.Diabetes, fat, cholesterol :-</b> Eat every morning 10 leaf. <b>II.Insect bite :-</b> Apply juice of Kari patta and lemon in equal quantity. <b>III.Cracks on the feet :-</b> Make paste of Kari patta, Mendhi, fresh Turmeric and milk of pepal in equal quantity and apply it before going to sleep for a week. <b>Discoloration around the eyes:-</b> Make paste of Kari patta with cheese and apply.

11	Brassica Juncea	Brassicaceae	Sarso	<p><b>I.Block in the nose due to cold:-</b> Put the drop of oil in the door of nose and outside the nose before sleeping. (For little children it is harmful)</p> <p><b>II.For vomiting when poisons are eaten:-</b> Make powder of 5-10 gm of sarso, add water and consume .</p> <p><b>III.Cold, feel heavy in the head:-</b> Add honey in the mustard oil and apply it on the lower part of leg.</p> <p><b>IV.For cleaning the wound:-</b> Put ghee in the powder of sarso and honey .</p> <p><b>V.Ring worm:-</b> Clean the affected area with hot water and apply the paste of sarso. After 10 minutes wash it.</p> <p><b>VI.Back Pain :-</b> Make paste of sarso, bark of Munga and Garlic of equal quantity. Add some vinegar and apply on the back.</p> <p><b>VII.Chest congestion, still neck:-</b> Warm the sarso oil and add some naphthalen balls and apply it on the body.</p> <p><b>VIII.Epilepsy:-</b> Mix sarso paste in cow urine and put all over the body.</p>
12	Zingiber officinale	Zingiberaceae	Adrak(Ginger)	<p><b>I.Ear Pain:-</b> Warm the juice of ginger and put 2-3 drop in the ear.</p> <p><b>II.Dysentery :-</b> (For children):- Put the juice of Ginger around the navel.</p> <p><b>III.Swelling:-</b> Take 15ml of fresh ginger juice with equal amount of milk and consume.</p> <p><b>IV.Cold:-</b> Make paste of 20 gm Ginger and mix it with one cup of water and keep it for one hour. Add honey in 15 ml juice of ginger. Take it after 30 minute.</p>
13	Cariandrum sativum	Apiaceae.	Dhaniya	<p><b>I.High blood pressure, cholesterol:</b> Take one spoon of dhaniya, boil it with one glass of water and drink it after every interval of time.</p> <p><b>II.Pimples, dry skin:-</b> Take one spoonful juice of dhaniya , add turmeric powder o and apply on the face.</p> <p><b>III.Bad breath:-</b> Eat the seed of Dhaniya.</p> <p><b>IV.Blood from Nose :-</b> (Specially is summer season) Put the drops of Dhaniya in Nose.</p>
14	Curcuma longa	Zingiberaceae.	Haldi (Turmeric)	<p><b>I.Peptic ulcer :-</b> In cold milk add haldi powder and take in empty stomach.</p> <p><b>II.Worm in Stomach:-</b> Mix the powder of haldi in one cup of hot water and add salt and drink before sleeping for 5-7 days.</p> <p><b>III.Cancer:-</b> Everyday eat 1.5 gm of haldi with food.</p>
15	Daucus carota	Apiaceae	Gajar (Carrot)	<p><b>I.Ulcer in intestine:-</b> Every day take 60 ml juice of Gajar.</p> <p><b>II.Worm in the Stomach:-</b> In breakfast only eat Gajar.</p> <p><b>III.Jaundice:-</b> Take one cup of Gajar juice in empty stomach.</p> <p><b>IV.Tooth Pain:-</b> After meal eat Gajar.</p> <p><b>V.Wrinkles in the face:-</b> Add honey in the Gajar juice in 1:4 Ratio and apply on the face and after half an hour wash it with warm water for one month.</p> <p><b>VI.Low blood pressure, for eye brightness, skin diseases, beauty:-</b> Add cucumber, 2 spoon lemon juice, one spoon honey, one spoon misre in ½ glass gajar juice and take it one cup morning and evening.</p>
16	Beta Vulgaris	Amaranthaceae	Salgam/Chukundar	<p><b>I.Piles:-</b> Boil 60 gm salgam in 2 glass of water and prepare decoction and take it before sleep.</p> <p><b>II.Anemia:-</b> Everyday before breakfast take one cup of salgam juice.</p> <p><b>III.Dandruff:-</b> Add vinegar in salgam juice , put in on head and wash it.</p> <p><b>IV.Diseases related to kidney:-</b> Take one cup of salgam, carrot, cucumber juice in equal quantity.</p>
17	Lycopersicon esculentum	Solanaceae	Tomato	<p><b>I.To gain fat:-</b> Mix lemon juice, onion and salt in raw tomato and eat empty stomach in the morning for three months.</p> <p><b>II.Gastic, Diseases related to liver:-</b> Take one glass tomato juice and add salt and some black pepper in it.</p> <p><b>III.Blood Purifier :-</b> Take Tomato juice</p>
18	Vitis venifera	Vitaceae	Grapes	<p><b>I.Anemia:-</b> Take 200 ml Grapes juice every morning.</p> <p><b>II.Forehead pain:-</b> Take little amount of Grape's juice for 15 days twice a day.</p> <p><b>III.Bruises:-</b> Make paste of sour juice and apply it on the affected part.</p>
19	Catheranthes roseus	Apocynaceae	Sadabahar	<p><b>I.Dysentery :-</b> Take 30-40 leaves of sadabahar and boil it with 2 glass of water and prepare half glass decoction.</p> <p><b>II.Fresh:-</b> Old bruises:- Apply paste of sadabahar leaves.</p> <p><b>III.Diabetes:-</b> Take everyday 5-9 flowers and 3-5 leaves in the morning.</p> <p><b>IV.Sting of Honeybee:-</b> Apply juice of leaves.</p> <p><b>V.Cancer:-</b> Prepare Decoction from all the parts and take 60 ml twice a day.</p> <p><b>Note :-</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For leukemia disease (Blood cancer) sadabahar plant is prepared for medicine.</li> <li>2. Taking more quantity of sadabahar is harmful.</li> </ol>
20	Ocimum sanctum	Lamiaceae	Tulsi	<p><b>I.Asthma (Preventive), Liver Diseases:-</b> Take one fist of black Tulsi leaf and boil it for 15-20 minute by covering and filter it.</p> <p><b>II.Preventing malaria:-</b> Boil one fist of Tulsi leaf and 7 black pepper powder. When it is cooled filter. Take it for 30 days.</p> <p><b>III.Skin diseases, blood purifier:-</b> Take one spoonful of tulsi juice with honey for one month.</p> <p><b>IV.Ear pain:-</b> Boil the tulsi juice and put 2-3 drop three times a day.</p> <p><b>V.Vomiting, worm in the stomach:-</b> Add salt in 2 spoon of tulsi juice and drink it.</p> <p><b>VI.Cold, block in nose, sneezing:-</b> Put 2 drop of tulsi juice in nose. Also apply 3-4 drops on forehead.</p> <p><b>VII.Boils :-</b> Apply tulsi juice</p> <p><b>VIII.Conjunctivitis:-</b> Put 2-3 drop of tulsi juice twice a day in eyes.</p>

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