



TRIBAL FOOD HABITS AND USE OF MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY DIFFERENT TRIBES OF LAKHIMPUR DISTRICT, ASSAM.

Geography

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ABSTRACT

Plant and people have an interdependent relationship. Plants are considered sacred in virtually every place where humans have settled, a sign of the deep relationship between people and trees and in case of tribal's these have emotional bonding as most of tribal's are having their inhabitations around natural surroundings. Tribal's are called by different names such as "Primitive", "indigenous", "aboriginal", native and so on. For centuries they have been living a simple life based on natural environment and have cultural patterns congenial to their physical and social environment. References of such tribal groups are found even in the literature on the ancient period, right from the Ramayana and Mahabharata periods. These Tribal groups have their own customs, traditions, and traits. They have enjoyed unique food habits. Food habits of these tribal's depending on Geographical location of that area. Tribal's of the study area also have enjoyed unique traditional dishes depending on availability of local food product and in their traditional dishes these people have used most of the medicinal plants which are available in their surroundings.

KEYWORDS

Medicinal plant, Lakhimpur District, Assam, Tribes, Different Diseases.

INTRODUCTION :-

Tribal people form a major portion of the world population. India is the second largest tribal dominated area after Africa. Geographically tribes are distributed in India in North East India, The Eastern India, Central and West India, Southern India and Islands. Unlike the other states of North-East India Assam is also a tribal majority state who are recognized as the primitive inhabitants of land and belongs to various tribal groups. The study area Lakhimpur is also one of the important District of Assam habited by major plain tribes. Among them major tribal groups are Mishing, Kachari, Deuri, Karbi, Khamti etc. These tribal groups have their own customs, traditions and traits. They have enjoyed unique food habits. Food habits of these tribes depending on Geographical location of that area. They used various fruits, roots of green seeds, fish, meat, rice beer, vegetables. The tribes of the area thinks that their traditional boiled dishes are of great nutrient value and easy to digest.

They avoid using any kind of oil or other packed spices. They use herbs and indigenous fresh spices. Some traditional dishes of these tribes are masor tenga, Khar, Dry fish, Kharoli, Pani tenga, sewa bhat, Silk worm, Khunda Mas, Banh Gaj, (Bamboo Shoots), Amin Oying, Patat diya thur, Lai sak diya Gahori mankho etc. In their Traditional dishes these people have used most of the medicinal plants which are available in their surroundings.

Methodology:- This paper is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through field survey using observation method and personal interview with the tribal people of Lakhimpur and the Secondary data is based on the books, Newspaper and Internet sources.

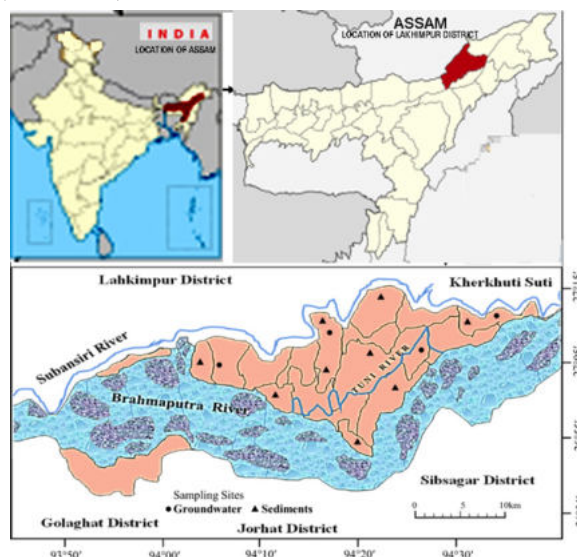
Study Area:- The study is conducted in Lakhimpur District located in North East corner of Indian state of Assam. The district is bounded on the North by Siang and Papumpare District of Arunachal Pradesh and on the East by Dhemaji District and Subansiri River. Majuli District stands on the Southern side and Biswanath District is on the West. The district comprises an area of 2277 square Kilometers. It is situated between 27° and 28° North latitude and 94° and 95° East Longitude. The district is located at about the height of 147 metres above the Sea levels.

The district is at the foothill of the Eastern Himalaya. The district is rich in the production of Bamboos and Reeds. The dense forest is found in a long stripe along the Northern boundary.

The absence of dry hot summer is the characteristics feature of the climate of Lakhimpur district. The prevalence of cold water, cold and pleasant spring is enjoyable. High humid temperature and heavy rains during summer, like the other district of Assam are experienced. The temperature rises high during South - West monsoon season which generally starts in the month of June and last till the beginning of the month of October every year. The cold season starts from the early part of November till late February. The winters are generally cold and foggy.

The Subansiri is the main river of the district with shallow beds and meandering courses. The river originally high on the mountains of Tibet and enjoys the continuous flow of water. Besides Ranga Nadi flows through the district rising from the Dafa hills. Dikrong, Ganga, Charikoria, Pichala, Mor, Chila are the other important rivers of the district.

The District is consisted of alluvial soil. The rivers have played a domineering role in respect of soil composition. Forest of the district are mainly tropical rain forest. Important reserved forests includes Ranga Reserve, Kakoi Reserve, Dulung Reserve and Pabha Reserve. Some varieties are Hollokh (Terminalia, myriocarpa), Ajahar (Longer Stromia speciosa), Simolu (Bombax ceiba or Salmalia malabarica), Sum (Machilus), Gomari (G Melina Arborea), Sisu (Delbergia Sissoo), Silikha (Terminalia Chebula), Neem (Azadirachta indica), Nahar (Mesua forrea) etc.



RESULT :-

The district is home to a good number of plants having medicinal uses. Asparagus racemosa (Satmul), curcuma aromatic (Ban-haladhi), Emblica officinalis (Bel), Terminalia species (Hilikha Bahera), Eugenia Jambolana (Loha Jam), Garcinia Species (Thekera), Holarrhina antidysenterica (Dudhkuri), Hydrocarpus Kurzii (Chalmugra), Litsea cubeba (Mejankuri), Ocimum Species (Tulsi), Phlogocanthus thyrsoflorus (Titaphul), Piper longum (pipoli), Saraca indica (Asoka), Wedelea calandulacea (Mahabhringraj), Zinziber officinalis (Adda) are some of the most commonly used plants in treatment of various ailments.

There are many plants and herbs in the district grown in wild or some

are recognized and domesticated. These plants have outstanding medicinal uses for ages. Some are consumed in various forms as spice herbs and are known for their beneficial effects in maintaining good health. The tribes of the study area used various fruits roots of green seeds , Vegetables, leaves, plants climbers, wild mushrooms, bamboo shoots, crabs, fish and meat. Some common local medicinal plants used in their regular dishes are colocasia esculenta, Blechnum orientale, Azadirachta Indica, Moringa olifera, Murraya kionigii, Emblica officinalis, Allium sativum, Amaranthus spinosus, Bacopa monnieri, Brassica juncea, Byttneria grandiflora, Cannabis Sativa, Centella asiatica, chenopodium album, cinnamomum tomato, clerodendrum colebrookianum, coriandrum sativum, curcuma

domestica, curcuma longia, dillenia Indica, Enhydrafluctuans, Garcinia cowa, Grewia hirsuta, Hedyotis Scandens, Ipomea criocarpa, Leuca's linifolia, Melia azedarach, Momordica dioica, Moringa Oleifera , Nyctanthus arbor-tristis, Ocimum basilicum, Phlogoeanthus thysiflorus, piper nigrum, Tamarindus indica, Thyponium trilobatum, viburnum colebrookianum, Vite negundo, Zinziber officinale, Ziziphus mauritiana etc.

There are several other plant species in the district which are used by the tribes traditionally for treating various disease condition. The different types of plant species used by the tribes of the study area along with the plant parts used is presented in the tabular form below.

Different types of plant species used by the tribes of the study area :-

SL. NO	ASSAMESE NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME AND FAMILY	PARTS USED PREPARATION	PROPOSED MODE OF ACTION/INDICATION
1	Bel	Aegle marmelos(L) correa ex Roxb. (Rutaceac)	Leaf Juice mixed with black paper is taken orally once daily.	To get relief from piles, dysentery.
2	Rasun	Allium satvum L (Liliaceac)	Bulb paste mixed with gently hot mustard oil is applied externally.	To reduce body ache.
3	Nim	Azadiracht a indica A.Juss.(Meliaceae)	Leaf and seed oil.	Against skin diseases, control diabetes, against worms, abortion.
4	Nayantara	Catheranthus roseus (L) G. Don.	Leaf paste is applied on forehead.	To reduce headache.
5	Tezpatta	Cinnamomum tamala Nees & Ebrem.(Lauraceac).	Bark and leaves are used.	In Diarrhea.
6	Aparajita	Clitoria ternatea L. (Febaceac).	Root juice mixed with milk is taken orally, seed used.	Against impotency, stomach trouble.
7	Haladhi	Curcuma domestica Valenton(Zingiberaceac).	Rhizome paste is rubbed on the injured body parts	To reduce pain.
8	Ghora Neem	Melia com dosita wild. (Meliaceac)	Leaf is useful.	Stomach and liver trouble.
9	Dalim	Punica granatun L. (Punicaceae).	Leaf Juice is taken orally.	Dysentery.
10	Arjuna	Terminalia Arjuna(Rox) Weight & Arn(Combretaceac).	Bark and leaf Juice is useful.	Liver Trouble.
11	Usipak, Aibika.	Abelmoschus manihot.	Flower are used.	To treat Chronic Bronchitis and toothache.
12	Latumoni	Abrus precatorius.	Leaves are used.	Helps in hair growth, fever and cough & cold.
13	Sohunibon.	Spilentes acmella.	Leaves are used.	To treat mouth ulcers.
14	Helechi	Enydra fluctuans.	Leaves are used.	To treat ring worm .
15	Tal japari	Nymphoides indica.	Plant juice is consumed.	For Treating Jaundice.
16	Bhuter Chira	Desmodium laxiflorum.	Leaves and stem are used.	To treat amenorrhoea and uterine infection.
17	Changlota, Nillota , Nilakantho	Thunbergia coccinea.	Root juice is used.	To treat stomach infection and sterility.
18	Kola Kachu	Colocasia esculenta	Corms and runners are consumed.	To treat piles and tonsillitis.
19	Bor-kachu	Alocasia macrorrhiza	seeds	Used to treat, Knee joint pain and Headache.
20	Dhekia	Blechnum orientale.	Leaves and stem	Use to treat stomachache , urinary bladder infection and skin diseases.
21	Ponownua	Boerhavia diffusa(Nyctaginaceae)	Paste , Curry .	To control carbuncle, to treat low blood pressure.
22	Doron Ban			To cure Dyspepsia, thread worm, constipation PNEUMONIA.
23	Brahmi	Bacopa, monnieri(Serophulariaceae).	Leaves and roots.	To control blood pressure , to increase memory , to treat ascites , to treat jaundice , insanity.
24	Jetuka, Mehendi.	Lawsonia inermis(Lythraceac.)	Juice of leaves paste.	To control enlarged spleen, to control hair damage, skin diseases, to control Jaundice, To treat small pox.
25	Kalmow	Pomea eriocarpa(Convulvulaceae).	Juice of leaves mixed with milk.	To treat small pox , to treat diseases of the breast.
26	Amlokhi	Kirganelia reticulate (Euphorbiaceae).		To reduce acidity, to control vomiting , to grow hair, Diarrhea, Anorexia Gastric ulcer.
27	Bhedeli lata	Hedyotis scandens (Rubiaceae)	Curry , Paste.	Dyspepsia, Piles, Ascites, to control Alargi, to treat paralysis.
28	Nilajibon	Mimosa pudica- (Mimosaceae)	Ass of leaves.	To treat burn skin.
29	Narasingha	Murraya koenigii (Rutaceae).	Curry of leaves.	Dyspepsia, to control Anamea, High Blood pressure.
30	Sewali phul	Nyctanthus arbor-tristi(Ollacee)	Juice of leaves	To control thread worm, to treat blood poisoning , leaves are useful in liver trouble, fever.

31	Tulashi	Ocimum basilicum (Lamiaceae).	Leaf Juice.	Cough, Dyspepsia, fever, to control thread worm.
32	Bhatghila	Oroxylum indicum(Bignoniaceae).	Seeds , root, bark.	Diarrhea, Dysentery, Stomach pain.
33	Tengeshi tenga	Oxalis corniculata (Oxalidaceae).	Curry , Paste.	To treat Laprosy, to treat Eczema, To treat Nervousness.
34	Tita phul	Phlogocanthus thyrsi florus(Acanthaceae).	Juice mixed with sugar twice daily for threee days, Paste.	To control Jaundice, Laprosy, To treat parturition disease.
35	Bhui Amlakhi	Phyllanthus urinaria(Euphobiaceae).	Juice	Jaundice, Diabetes, Malaria and liver diseases.
36	Jaluh	Piper nigrum(Piperaceae).	Paste mixed with salt used three times 3 days.	To cure Anorexia, Cough, Teethache, Thread worm.
37	Amora	Spondias pinnata(Anacardiaceae).	Fruits	Diarrhea, irregular menstruation, anorexia, indigestion and nausea.
38	Kolajamu	Syzygium cumin(Myrtaceae).	Young leaf juice is taken once daily in empty stomach.	To check blood sugar in diabetes. Seed powder is given in diabetes.
39	Teteli	Tamarindus indica (Caesal pinaceae).	Seed with butter paste.	Diarrhoea, Anorexia, Constipation, To threat small pox.
40	Arjun	Terminalia Arjuna(Combrataceae).	Bark, Juice.	To treat heart diseases, to treat Backache, to control Tuberculosis.
41	Hilikha	Terminaliachebu(Combretaceae).	Fruit	Diarrhoe, indigestion, Dyspepsia.
42	Posotia	Vitex negundo(Verbenaceae).	Juice of leaves daily 12 Gram for one week, paste.	To control Enlarged spleen, to control Allargi, Carbuncle.
43	Ada	Zinziber officinale(Zingiberaceae).	Roots	To reduce dyspepsia, Anorexia, to control Vomiting.
44	Matikanduri	Alternanthera sessilis (Amaranthaceae).	Stem and leaf paste is applied.	Against snakebite.
45	Sal Konwari.	Aloe barbadensis (Liliaceae).	Gels.	To control piles, Blood Pressure, Skin diseases, liven, to treat burn skin, damage hair.
46	Satiana	Alstonia Scholaris(Apocynaceae).	Ass of the stem, Paste.	To treat Enlarged spleen, Leprosy.
47	Mahanim	Azadirachtaindica (Meliaceae).	Paste, Juice , curry.	To control pediculosis, To control curbuncle, to control Leprosy Scabies.
48	Akan	Calotropis PROCERA (Asclepiadaceae).	Paste	To treat carbuncle.
49	Manimuni	Centella asiatica(Apiaceae).	Curry , Paste.	To control Blood Pressure Dyspepsia, Piles, Dysentery, To control Flatulence, To treat carbuncle.
50	Jil Mil sah	Chenopodium album(chenopodiaceae).	Curry	Dyspepsia, to treat constipationEnlarged spleen, Flatulence.
51	Nepha-phu	Clerodendrum Colebrookianum(Verbinaceae).	Leaves.	Boiled leaves are taken to get relief from high blood pressure.
52	Jomla Khuti	Costus speciosus (Zingiberaceae).	Juice of roots.	To treat Jaundice.
53	Outenga	Dillenia indica(Dilleniaceae).	Fruits	To reduce anorexia, To smooth hair,Constipation.
54	Kenharaj.	Eclipta alba(Asteraceae).	Juice and paste.	To treat.....
55	Jarmoni ban	Eupatorium odoratum(Asteraceae).	Juice and Paste.	To control external bleeding.
56	Heju	Euphorbia neriifolia (Euphorbiaceae).	Juice of the stem paste.	To treat constipation, to treat fistulainano, to treat Abscess.
57	Kujithekera	Garcinia cowa (Clusiaceae).	Fruits	To treat constipation.
58	Bash	Acarus calamus(Araceae).	Oil Juice	To reduce Backache , to treat Epilepsy, to control bleeding due to abortion.
59	Tikani Barua	Byttneria Grandiflora. (Steruliaceae).		
60	Bhang	Cannabis Sativa(Cannabinaceae).	Leaves	To treat pain, spasms, asthma, depression and loss of appetite.
61	Khutura	Amaranthus Spinosus(Amarant haeae).	Stem and leaf(Curry).	Useful in dysentery.
62	Kuhum kata	Argemone maxicana(Papaverace).	Root Juice	Is useful in fresh cuts and wounds.
63	Simolu	Bombax ceiba (Bombacaceae).	roots	Used in Liver and stomach troubles, cholera, tubercular fistula , coughs, urinary complaints.
64	Akan	Calotropisiarreha(Asclepiadaceae).	Leaves, Flower.	Warm leaves are applied externally against rheumatism, Flower are applied in piles.
65	Kola-Dhatura	Datura Stramonium(Solanaceae).	Seeds	Seeds are taken once daily as the remedy for skin diseases.
66	Bhat karela	Momordica dioica (Cucurbitaceae).	Leaf Juice.	Is taken once daily in morning to control diabetes.
67	Nuni goss	Morus australis (Moraceae).	Fruits, roots.	Fruits are useful in cough, root is used in Jaundice.
68	Karabi	Nerium indicum(Apocynaceae).	Leaf	Leaf is used against skin diseases.
69	Banhgaj	Young Bamboo shoot(Bambosa Valgaris).	Shoot	Anti hypertensive, anti hyperlipidemec and anti diabetic.
70	Sookloti	Perilla ocimoides Linn. Family-Labiatac.	Leaves and stems are cooked along with pepper.	Helps fight Uterus infection, MC irregularly disappears.
71	Stomool	Asparagus racemoses wild, Family – Liliaceae.	Root Juice is taken along with milk & sugar in empty stomach in the morning.	Gives stamina, enhances fertility in both male and female.

72	Sojina	Moringa Oleifera Lamk. Family-Moringaceae.	Green Fruits, Seed and tender leaves are used.	Provide Energy , enhances fertility in male.
73	Nilakontho	Thunbergia coceinia Wall Family – Acanthaceae.	Root juice is taken .	All sorts of Stomach, infection, increase fertility.
74	Makorighila	Bauhinja Macrostachya wall. Family – Leguminosae.	Leaf and stem to be boiled with water.	Enhances fertility in male, gives stamina.
75	Modar	Erithrina indica Lim. Family-Leguminosae.	Root to be grinded and taken along with milk.	Helps in Conceiving, Provides stamina.
76	Mithi gooti	Trigonella foenugracum Lian. Family-Leguminosae.	Seed is grinded and taken along with milk.	Helps fight Uterus infection, provides stamina.
77	Keberaj	Echipta alba Hassak. Family-Asteaceae.	Leaf and Stem.	Irregularity in menstrual cycle disappears, relieves from labour pain.
78	Jesto Madhu	Ghycyrrhiza Glabra Linn. Family-Leguminosae.	Freash or dried root are used.	Provides enrgy , enhances fertility in male.
79	Jutulipoka/ Tachin-lain.	Rubus mohiccanus Linn. Family-Rossaceae.	Fruits. Young shoot(leavers and Stem) are taken .	Helps in enhancing fertility in female.
80	Iswarnool	Aristolochia indica Linn. Family-Aristolochiaceae.	Root (Alu) is grided and the Juice is taken .	Enhances fertility in male, quick healing of wounds.
81	Dubori Bon	Cynodon , Dactylon(L) Pers. Family – Gramineae.	Fresh grass is crushed and the juice is taken .	Menstrual bleeding stops, enhances fertility in male, quick healing of wounds.
82	Chotians	Alstonia Icholaris(L) R.Br. Family-Apocynaceae.	Milky juice extract is taken along with Perilla ocimoides in empty stomach.	Enhances fertility in both male and female.
83	Bosh gos	Acoras culamus Linn. Family-Anaceae.	The Rhizome is crushed and the juice is taken .	Irregularly in menstrual cycle disappappears. , excusive uterine bleeding stops.
84	Bogs –kash- moni. (Kamrimoni)	Coix lachrymaojobi Linn. Family-Grammineae.	Root juice is taken along with milk and honey.	For the treatment of all sort of ovary problems , and irregular menstrual .
85	Bandar Kekura	Mucuna puritan Hock, Family-Fabaceae.	Root is mixed with honey and milk.	For the treatment of all stops of ovary problems , as an energizer and enhancement of male fertility.
86	Boga Bhui Kumura(Chal Kumura)	Beniresa hispids(Thumb)Cong. Family-Fabaceae.	Fruits to be taken along with honey and Ghee.	Enhance male Fertility .

CONCLUSION :-

The District has a rich reserve of varieties of medicinal plants and herbs. Most of those plants and their medicinal application are known only to the tribes residing for ages on careful scientific seritinity and pharmlological screening these traditional knowledge can be harnessed to develop newer and safer drugs for effective cure of many ailments. Traditional food habits of study area are nutritious and balanced and can be developed to reduced growing pressure on the environment.

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Conflict Of Interest:-

Authors declare no conflict of Interest.

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