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Folk herbal medicine used for male sterility in Ranchi district of Jharkhand

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ABSTRACT

Ranchi is located in Jharkhand state. The total area is 7574.17 sq.km. Jharkhand state has been the reservoir of enormous natural resources including vegetational wealth. The population of the area has distinct traditions and taboos in their lives. Local people have good ideas about such plant which prevent many diseases – sterility, diabetes, jaundice, dysentery etc. The medical ethnobotany deals with the nature and application of plants used in traditional medical system and it involves the identification of plants used in traditional remedies. Ethnobotanical inventories are made by conducting interviews with the tribal people, formal surveys in the field, collection and identification of plant specimen used. The information on medicinal plants was gathered from experienced tribal vaidyas which are being used as preventive against male sterility.

Key words : Ethnomedicine, Male sterility, Tradition

INTRODUCTION

Ranchi is located in Jharkhand state. The latitude and longitude of the district can be mentioned as 23.23N and 85.28E, respectively. The total area is 7574.17 sq. km, whereas the height of this district from sea level is 2140 ft. There are mainly three climates namely summer, winter and rainy seasons.

The main tribes are Oraon and Munda. The important crops are rice, pulses and oil seeds. The languages which are normally spoken are Hindi, Nagpuri, Oraon, Mundari and kurmalii etc. Some important rivers that flow through the district are mainly Subarnarekha, South Koel and Sankh. In various tribal families the medicine system is coming down from generation to generation, by words or by practice. The knowledge about uses of herb is now confined to a few tribal families in remote areas of the region. Some plants are also used in the treatment of male sterility.

Male sterility means inability on the part of the male to produce any offspring. Male sterility causes due to defective seminal discharge that means no sperms or undeveloped sperms or a few sperms, non motile sperm. This may be due to some previous or present disease of the testis like mumps, tuberculosis, gonorrhoea, syphilis etc. Systematic diseases like diabetes, endocrine disorders, heavy smoking, alcoholism, nervous tension, psychological

problems etc. are responsible for male sterility. Aging above 45 can also causes this disorder.

People dwelling this area are having a very long and intimate association with the indigenous flora for their basic needs and cultural activities. They are dependent upon the local flora for the treatment of diseases and relief from the suffering.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

During the course of studies in 2008-09 field survey were conducted by contacting village Vaidyas and knowledgeable persons. They were interviewed to record the information about different plants used for treatment of male sterility. Plants specimen were collected with the help of tribal vaidyas. The tribals having a long standing practice in ethnomedicine were interviewed to obtain the information on the use of medicinal plants. Questionnaire was prepared which containing the information about the tribal vaidya.

The plants were correctly identified with the help of book of Botany of Bihar and Orissa Vol. I and II and Vol III. Scientific techniques were used to prepare herbarium specimens which were maintained in the university department of Botany. Photographs of some plants were taken during field tours. Generally the tribal are conservative in nature. So they do not want to leak their

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