



**CHANGING SOCIO-POLITICAL SCENARIO
OF NORTH-EAST INDIA :
A STUDY IN WIDER PERSPECTIVE**



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Conclusion:

However, due to lack of management system and with a negligible investment, production of fish per unit area from rice field is moderate and often vary erratic. It is high time to create the awareness among the farmers on role of fish as bio-controlling agents, maintenance of soil health, nutrient recycling etc. on priority. Furthermore, training of local farmers to orient for rice-fish culture and economic subsidy through bank loan and other incentive may play important role to change the farmers' motives towards this sustainable agro-farming practice. Out of all the water resources beels provide greatest scope for the expansion of culture based fishery. The seasonal paddy fields and flood plain wet lands can be effectively utilized for rearing of air breathing and ornamental species. This practice can not only boost up the overall production and but also generate employment opportunities in rural area.

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USES OF MEDICINAL PLANTS AND HERBS IN THE INDIGENOUS MEDICAL TREATMENTS IN ASSAM

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Introduction :

Kâlidâsa, Greatest poet of Sanskrit literature says,¹
"The blossoms come first, then the fruitage;
First the rising up of clouds, afterwards the shower.
This is the true sequence of the cause and effect.

But my fortunes have had their courses in advance of your favour."
Just like it, medicine (bhesaja) was created first by God in order to remove diseases and then came Medical Science (Ayurveda). Before the introduction of the Western Allopathic system in India all the people were compelled to seek refuge for curing diseases in the indigenous medical treatments grown out of Âyurveda.

The descriptions of the uses of many medicinal plants and herbs and their properties and qualities are found in the Âyurveda. Following that Ayurvedic tradition the indigenous medical practitioners are curing millions and millions of people of the diseases like fever, dysentery, dropsy, leprosy, diabetes, asthma, hiccough, tumour, rheumatism, constipation, ulcers, cancer, piles, elephantiasis, diarrhea, jaundice, acute-gout, ear-ache etc. The indigenous medical treatments are keeping pace with the modern medical science. The medical facilities in Assam are scanty in comparison with other states in India.

Role of Indigenous Medical Treatments in Assam :

A large section of people cannot be provided with the modern medical facilities in proportion with the increasing population of Assam. Moreover a large section of people remain untreated in those medical centres on account of poverty. They have to solely depend on the

Ayurvedic and indigenous medical treatments rendered by kavirajas, sanniyasis, vaidyas, vejas, gunins, ojhas, trantrikas, gypsies, hakims, dhanvantaries and quacks etc. and other experienced persons of their localities.

Those indigenous medical practitioners and the vaidyas treat the diseased people using either raw plants and herbs or the medicines produced from plants and herbs and also the branded Ayurvedic products of the companies like Dabur, Vaidyanath, Patanjali Divya Pharmacy, Hamadard, Carak Pharmaceuticals and Himalayan Drugs etc. Besides these, a large section of people use quack remedies in their domestic medical treatment only by reading Ayurvedic books and taking the advice of the aged experienced persons. All those indigenous medical practitioners and Ayurvedic physicians owe much to the Vedas in which the properties and qualities of the plants and herbs are mentioned. Those medical practitioners are searing the torch of the Ayurvedic knowledge in the scientific super-computer age in the remotest corners of Assam and saving the millions and millions of people of Assam.

Medicinal Plants and Herbs used :

In this Paper, for want of scope and space only a few common plants and herbs are chosen to show their uses in treating the people of Assam.

1. পান - English - Betel-leaf.²
Botanical name - Piper betle Linn.
Family - Piper piperaceae.

Chemical Composition- (a) Phenolic compounds viz. chavicol, hydroxychavicol (b) Vitamin viz. ascorbic acid. (c) Enzymes (d) Essential oil.

Parts used:- Leaf, juice.

Diseases cured of:- Abscess, hair-louse, sore-caused by water, birth control (obstructor of pregnancy)

2. বেল - English - Bengal Quince.³

Botanical name - Aegle marmelos.

Family - Rutaceae.

Chemical composition (a) Alkaloids, (b) Coumarins, (c) Sterols, (d) Triterpenoids.

Parts used: Leaf, flower, skin, root, fruit.

Diseases cured of : Cold, cough, controlling extreme sexual passion, diarrhoea, piles, weak-heart, spermatorrhoea.

3. আম - English- Mango,⁴

Botanical name - Mangifera indica Linn.

Family - Anacardiaceae.

Chemical composition (a) Vitamin viz., Vitamin A, B, C and D, ascorbic acid, (b) Carotenoid pigments, (c) Glycosides, (d) Other constituents, (e) Ethylgaliate, phenol, starch.

Parts used: Leaf, fruit, kernel of the seed, juice, gum, bark.

Diseases cured of : Dysentery, premature graying hair, hair falling, tooth falling, haematemesis, dandruff, indigestion, leucorrhoea.

4. হলধি - English- Turmeric⁵

Botanical name - Curcuma longa Linn.

Family- Zingiberaceae.

Chemical composition - (a) Colouring matter viz., curcumin, (b) Alkaloid viz, Zingiberine, (c) Antiseptic oil containing p-toylmethl carbinol, Ketonic and alcoholic constituents.

Parts used:- Root.

Diseases cured of:- Urinary affection, worm, bacterial infection,

stammering, liver disorder, elephantiasis, asthma, sprain pain, boil, leech, poisonous sore.

5. দুৰি বন – English- Bent grass⁶

Botanical name:- *Cynodon dactylon* (Linn) Pers.
Family – Gramineae.

Chemical Composition: (a) Terpenoid constituents, (b) Sterols, (c) Fattyol.

Parts used:- Whole part.

Diseases cured of:- Haematemesis, rickets, dysentery, leucorrhoea, failure in conception, hair falling, strangury, diseases attacked by virus.

6. নিম – English- Neem/margosa⁷

Botanical Name- *Azadirachta indica*,
Family – Meliaceae.

Chemical composition:- (a) Alkaloids viz., nimbin, nimbinin, nimbidin, nimbosterin, nimbecetin, bakayanin, (b) Fatty acids, (c) Highly pungent essential oil.

Parts used:- Leaf, branch, seed, bark, seed oil.

Diseases cured of:- Blood sugar, hair-graying, birth-control (checking of pregnancy), nocturnal emission, jaundice, worm, toothache, night-blind.

7. পিঁয়াজ – English- Onion⁸.

Botanical name – *Allium cepa* Linn.
Family – Liliaceae.

Chemical Composition:- (a) Organic sulphide viz., alkylsulphides, allyl propyl disulphide (b) Phenolic constituents viz., catechol, protocatechuic

acid (c) Amino compounds viz., different amino acids (d) Essential oil.

Parts used: Root, flower, stick.

Diseases cured of :- Cough, cold, piles, hiccup, nasal bleeding, boil, sore.

8. নহৰু – English- Garlic⁹

Botanical Name:- *Allium sativum* Linn.
Family- Liliaceae.

Chemical composition:- (a) Organic sulphides viz., allyl propyl disulphide, diallyl disulphide, allicin, allisatin-I, allisatin-ii, (b) Sulphur bearing amino acid (c) Essential oil.

Parts used : Root

Diseases cured of:- Dislocation of bones, fracture of bones, giddiness, worm, leprosy, night-blind, kidney and gall-stones, rheumatism, spermatorrhoea, emphisema, arteriosclerosis, headache, high blood pressure, sore throat, diphtheria, pharyngitis, amoebic dysentery, typhoid, para-typhoid.

9. আদা – English- Ginger¹⁰

Botanical Name- *Zingiber officinale* Rosc.
Family – Zingiberaceae.

Chemical composition:- (a) Terpenoids viz., camphene, betaphenadrene, cineol, citral, borneol, gingerol, shogaol (b) Salt viz, potassium oxalate (c) Traces of essential oil.

Parts used:- Root.

Diseases cured of:- Diarrhoea, hiccup, pox, dysentery, loss of appetite.

10. বাহক – English- Vasaka¹¹

Botanical Name: *Adhatoda vasica* Nees.

Family – Acanthaceae.

Chemical composition:- (a) Vasicine, (b) 1-peganine (c) Small amount of essential oil.

Parts used: Leaf.

Diseases cured of: Asthma, piles, menorrhagia, hiccup, worm, breathing problem, haemorrhage, scab.

11. তুলসী – English- Holy basil¹².

Botanical Name:- *Ocimum sanctum* Linn & *Ocimum basilicum* Linn.
Family- Labiatae.

Chemical composition:- (a) Phenolic constituents viz., eugenol, methyl eugenol, carvacrol, traces of phenol, (b) Terpenoids viz., caryophyllene, citral citronellal, citronellol, (c) Camphor (d) Traces of acid viz., acetic acid.

Parts used: Leaf.

Diseases cured of:- Cough, blood sugar, itch, ear-ache, liver disorder, bacteria, insect-bite.

Besides these, some of the medicinal plants and herbs used in the indigenous medical treatments are¹³ - মূলক (মূলা, Radish), হরীতকী (শিলিখা Myrobalan), জাম, Rose-apple), অর্জুন (অর্জুন, Arjun tree), এরণ্ড (এড়াগছ, Castor oil plant), ধূস্তর (ধঁতুৰা, Thorn apple), শৃঙ্গবাজ (ভুঙ্গবাজ, Trailing eclipta), দালিম (ডালিম, Pomegranate), তরুণী (ধৃতকুমারী, Aloe Vera), অশোক (অশোক, Mast tree), শাল্মলী (শিমলু, Red silk cotton) etc. all these and other medicinal plants and herbs are used in treating diseased people.

Indigenoys Treatment and Folk Culture in Assam:

The influence of the medicinal plants and herbs in the indigenous

medical treatment is felt everywhere even in this modern scientific age. Its impact is vividly marked in the folk culture of Assam. The properties of the medicinal plants and herbs are highly praised and preached by Dâkar Vacana. Some of them are cited here:

a.

কাল তুলসী বেলপাত
মুঠা সমে আনি খুন্দি পতাত
তপত কৰিয়া জলনি খাইব
তেবেসে নাৰীৰ দুধক পাইব।¹⁴

b.

অপৰাজিতাই কৃতে নহক মূল
জানিয়া দিয়া সমৰ মূল।¹⁵

c.

হৰীতকি লোণ জনি
তাক খায়া পিৰয় পানী।¹⁶

d.

ভীমৰাজ ঝিন্তি কেহে বাজৰ .
সকলো পত্ৰক গুণ্ডি কৰ
দিনে দিনে সুখি দিয়া খায়
পুঠ ভৈল গাৰ বাচিয়া যায়।¹⁷

e.

বিবিগু শাক গুণ্ডি কৰিয়া
বসন খণ্ডেৰে তাক বান্ধিয়া,
দন্তৰ গুৰিত ধৰিব ঝাণ্ডি
দন্তো নসৰে পোকো মৰন্তি।

Conclusion:

These innumerable Dâkar Vacanas prove that the indigenous medical treatments won the heart of millions and millions of people in Assam. The source of the indigenous medical treatment is Âyurveda. Âyurveda is eternal. In this context Carakasamhitâ says,¹⁹

“Âyurveda is eternal because of its self-existence, testified form by its own nature and unchanged permanent properties.”

Its proper justification is felt in the medical scenario and condition of Assam where millions and millions of people are benefited by the traditional Ayurvedic and indigenous medical treatments of Assam in this modern medical era. In spite of neglect and apathy from the Union Government and the State Government, the true worshippers of Âyurveda and the traditional indigenous medicine are directly trying to uphold the glory and honour of the Indian Medical Science by offering philanthropic services in the light and line of the Âyurveda lore that once illuminated the whole of India and still illuminates the mankind.

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