

SOME LESS KNOWN FOLK CLAIMS FROM CANDAKA TRIBALS OF ORISSA

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ABSTRACT: *The present communication deals with a detailed account of usage of 40 species of plants in various ailments by the tribal people of Chandaka forest area adjoining Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The author opines the importance of folk-lore claims in source of drugs through this article.*

INTRODUCTION

Chandaka, a wild life sanctuary, was a part of the erstwhile district of Puri, Orissa. As anywhere else in Orissa, Chandaka and its surrounding forest areas also have significant tribal population. Ethnically the tribe belongs to the Saora community. The Saora are one of the major tribes of Orissa. Despite its close proximity to the sprawling capital of the state the area still has thick forest cover owing to the tribal's love of forest.

People of Orissa in general and tribals in particular still resort to the so called 'old woman's' remedies of making use of plants around them for various ailments in their daily life. The tribals living in remote areas with no medical facility available around turn to the forests for crisis management. No wonder one comes across so many claims for accidental derangements, diarrhoea, dysentery, vomiting, fever etc. During ethno botanical studies.

While gathering hitherto unknown claims during the period from 1997-98 the author found a few claims highly convincing as demonstrated by the tribals.

Botanical names, local names, family and the usage of the drug as told by the people

are enumerated herewith, the plant specimens of the concerned claims are preserved in Botany Department of P.N. College, Khurda, Orissa. The following abbreviations are used in the descriptions: B: Botanical name L: Local name F: Family name.

Enumeration of the Folklore Claims

B: *Abrus precatorius* L.

L: Kaincha

F: Fabaceae

- (a) Fine paste of fruit is applied locally in the breast for pain due to mastitis locally known as 'Thana hara'. Dose 2-3 times a day.
- (b) Leaf paste is applied externally to reduce filarial swelling (Lymphangitis) locally known as 'Rakta gada'.

Note: A smear of castor oil is made locally before the above said application.

B: *Acalypha indica* L.

L: Chhai

F: Euphorbiaceae

Fresh leaf smeared with warm mustard oil is locally applied in boils for suppuration.

Note: A round hole is made in the centre of the leaf to expose the tip of the boil.

B: *Ampelocissus latifolia* (Roxb.) Planch.

L: Kauka

F: Vitaceae

Tender leaves made into a fine paste is applied locally on the boils for suppuration.

B: *Argemone mexicana* L.

L: Agara

F: Papaveraceae

Fresh root (3 gms) with 3 black peppers made into a fine paste is applied locally for ulcers in mouth in children.

B: *Atalantia monophylla* (L.) Corr.

L: Narguni

F: Rutaceae

(a) 2 gms of fresh leaves wrapped in a banana leaf are heated on fire for five minutes. Expressed juice of the leaves is instilled in ears for ear troubles.

(b) Stem is used as a walking stick by people suffering from Rheumatic arthritis as a remedy.

B: *Bambusa arundinacea* (Ret) Willd

L: Kanta banso

F: Poaceae

Young shoots are scratched on the surface with a sharp knife. The powder thus obtained is applied locally for immediate relief of pain due to extraction of a thorn from any part of the body.

B: *Benkara malabarica* (Lam.) Tirveng.

L: phiriki

F: Rubiaceae

Juice obtained from fresh root is given internally in empty stomach for chronic dysentery.

Dose: 10-15 ml once a day for 20 days

B: *Blumea lacera* (Burm.f) DC.

L: pokasunga

F: Asteraceae

Fresh root juice is given internally in empty stomach with honey for blood dysentery in children.

Dose: 5ml once a day.

B: *Calotropis gigantea* R.Br.

L: Ark

F: Asclepiadaceae

(a) Fresh root juice is given internally in empty stomach for three days during menstruation for sterility.

Dose: 19 ml once a day.

(b) Dried stem (a cigarette-sized) is smoked for headache due to colds.

(c) Fresh latex is applied locally for partial head-ache.

B: *Cassia tora* L.

L: Chakunda

F: Caesalpiniaceae

(a) 5 gms of fresh leaves wrapped in a banana leaf are heated for 5 minutes expressed juice of the leaves is instilled in ear troubles.

(b) 10gms of seeds and 3 gms f curds made into a paste is applied in paouasus.

Dose: 3-4 times a day.

B: *Chloroxylon swietiana* D.C

L: Bherua

F: Flindersiaceae

Fresh leaves are hung o drive away mosquitoes.

B: *Cleome viscosa* L.

L: Bana soriso

F: Capparaceae

Fresh leaves are pasted and applied on forehead for headache.

B: *Clerodendrum viscosum* Vent

L: Kumutia

F: Verbenaceae

Leaf of clerodendrum viscosum, piper betle L. (L.L: Pana) and nicotiana tabacum L (L: Tamaku) each are smeared wit warm mustard oil, placed on one another and wrapped a round the hydrocele to reduce pain and swellings.

B: *Commelina benghalensis* L.

L: Koinsiri

F: Commelinaceae

Exudate of fresh stem is applied locally for cuts

B: *Elephantopus scaber* L.

L: Mayurchulia

F: Asteraceae

Fresh root is made into a fine paste fried in castor al s applied and bandaged locally for bone fracture in animals.

B: *Euphorbia hirta* L.

L: Narahari

F: Euphorbiaceae

5 gms of fresh roots of Euphorbia hirta L. and Ficus benghalensis L. (L: Bora) each ground to a fine paste wit 10 black peppers is taken internally for piles.

B: *Ficus hispida* L.

L: Dimiri

F: Moaraceae

Latex of stem is applied locally for tooth-ache.

B: *Flacourtia indica* (Burm.f) Merr.

L: Balibhainso, Kantaikoli

F: Flacourtiaceae

(a) Juice extracted from fresh roots given internally in empty stomach to control dysentery

Dose: 10-15 ml twice a day

(b) Juice extracted from fresh root is also employed in empty stomach one hour before each food in anorexia.

Dose: 10-15 ml twice a day for 15 days.

B: *Grewia tiliifolia* Vahl

L: Dhamana

F: Tiliaceae

Mucilaginous substance present under the bark is smeared locally and the bark itself is warped around the deep cuts. It is claimed that the remedy is a sure cur however deep the cut may be.

B: *Hybanthus enneapermus* (L) F.V. Muell.

L: Madanamastaka

F: Violaceae

Fresh root is chewed like 'Pan' before retiring to bed as aphrodisiac by men

Dose: Once a day before bed for 230 days.

B: *Hyptis suaveolens* Poit.

L: Gaitulsi

F: Lamiaceae

Seed is soaked in water till thick mucilage formed and is placed below the upper eyelid. The eye is closed for sometime to remove the foreign body from the eye.

B: *Jatropha gossypifolia* L.

L: Baigab

F: Euphobiaceae

Fresh latex of tender twigs is instilled in carries of toot for relief of pain.

B: *Litsea glutinosa* (Lour.) Robins

L: Baghuari

F: Lauraceae

Mucilaginous gum present in the bark is applied for cuts and wounds. It is claimed that the cure is quicker than any other ointment.

B: *Luffa amara* Roxb.

L: Pita toroda

F: Cucurbitaceae

Pulp of fruit is rubbed all over the body for prickly heat, heat rash and minor skin infection.

B: *Mangifera indica* Linn

L: Amba

F: Anacardiaceae

Fresh swollen (pulvinus) portions of three leaf stalks are chewed well and washed down with water for burning micturition.

B: *Mimosa pudica* L.

L: Lajkuli

F: Mimosaceae

A mixture of equal quantities of root, rice and turmeric powder grounded to paste is applied locally for suppuration.

B: *Naringi crenulata* (roxb) Nicolson

L: Benthia, Baintha

F: Rutaceae

(a) Root grounded into a fine paste is taken internally in empty-stomach and also applied externally in joint pains and back-ache.

Dose: 5-10 gms once a day for 5 days.

- (b) Juice of fresh root is taken internally in empty stomach one hour before each meal as a demulcent.

Dose: 10ml

B: *Nerium oleander* L.

L: Konnieri

F: Apocynaceae

5ml latex mixed with a pinch of salt is smeared around the boil for suppuration

B: *Pergularia daemia* (Forssk.) Chiov

L: Urtali

F: Asclepiadaceae

Latex of stem is locally applied on boils for suppuration.

B: *Ricinus communis* L.

L: Gab

F: Euphorbiaceae

Bark of the root ground to a fine paste is inserted into the anus after defecation for piles.

Dose: 3-5gms once a day.

B: *Scoparia dulcis* L.

L: Ban ganjai

F: Scrophlariaceae

Dried whole plant is smoked as tobacco for mild sedation and also as an antiphlegmatic

B: *Semecarpus anacardium* L.f.

L: Bhallia

F: Anacardiaceae

Fresh juice of bark is applied locally for partial head-ache.

B: *Strebulus asper* Lour.

L: Sahada

F: Moraceae

Fresh bark is tied around deep cuts for quick healing

B: *Strychnos potatorum* L.F.

L: Kathaka

F: Strychnaceae

- (a) fresh paste of seed is applied on the boils for suppuration

- (b) Fine paste of seed is mixed with 100 ml water is taken internally in body pain as an analgesic

Dose: 5-10 gms with 100 ml water 2-3 times a day.

- (c) Powdered bark is applied locally for healing wounds and ulcers

B: *Tephrosia villosa* (L) Pers

L: Guacheru

F: Fabaceae

- (a) Fresh juice of leaf is instilled in eyes for conjunctivitis

Dose: 3-5 times a day for three days.

(b) Fresh paste of fresh root is taken internally in empty stomach as demulcent.

Dose: 5 gms one hour before each meal

(c) Juice of fresh root is given internally in empty stomach to children for its anthelmitic properties

Dose: 5-10 ml once a day for 10 days.

B: *Toddalia asiatica* (L) Lam

L: Tundpoda

F: Rutaceae

A mixture of dried leaves and old rice roasted in an earthen pot is pounded to a fine powder. The powder cooked with little water and salt is given as food to women after deliver to overcome

digestive problems associated with post natal conditions.

B: *Vitex negundo* L.

L: Begunia

F: Verbenaceae

Fresh leaves are chewed for leucoplakia, ulcers in the mouth.

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