

## A CHECKLIST OF SOME LEAFY VEGETABLES USED BY TRIBALS IN AND AROUND RANCHI, JHARKHAND

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Ranchi (23°20' N and 85°20' E), the largest city of Chotanagpur is inhabited by a number of tribes from time immemorial (Gupta, 1974). Although a fast growing cosmopolitan city, it has preserved the culture of its original inhabitants. The tribes, primarily food-gatherers, have learned by experience to depend heavily on locally available vegetables for their nutritional and medicinal needs.

Food is the one absolute need for humans and the history of man perhaps could be written in terms of diet. Nutrition as a biological process is fundamental for self preservation and the preservation of species. Food habits of men developed on the basis of experience and survival through successive generations (Richards, 1948).

Tribal traditional food supply is mainly based on collection, hunting, and crop cultivation. Local vegetables make one of the most important food item of the tribal people of Chotanagpur Plateau along with agriculture products like rice, cereals and millets (Gupta, 1974).

Tribal concept of health varies greatly. However, they have learned to use vegetables as a cure to and prevention of many diseases. Regarding the origin of such a tradition, practically nothing is known. Probably it developed by experience (Gupta, 1965).

Vegetables used by tribal people and sold in markets in and around Ranchi are reported here. They are still not commonly used by nontribals.

The authors have collected the leafy vegetables being sold in

Table 1. Leafy vegetables (Sag) used by tribal communities in and around Ranchi, Jharkhand

Botanical Name	Names in local languages				Habit*	Habitat**	Medicinal use	
	Common Name	Santhal	Oraon	Mundari				
Amaranthaceae								
1. <i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> Linn.	Katabhaji	Kanteli	Chawli	Achcharaxa	Achparara	H	WP	Blood Purifier, Colic, Piles.
2. <i>Achyranthus aspera</i> Linn.	Chirchiri	Chirchithi	Chirchithi	Chirchithi	Chirchithi	H	WP	Cough, cold, Colic, Dropsy, Eye complains, Laxative, Piles.
3. <i>Alternanthera sessilis</i> Linn.	Sarauchi	Gundri	Gandur	Gerunundi	Gerunundi	H	WL	Fracture, Eye complaints, Malaria
4. <i>A. philoxeroides</i> (Mar.) Griseb.	Hencha	-	-	-	-	H	WL	Urinary complains
5. <i>Celosia argentea</i> Linn.	Safedmurg	Siliari	Kim Araxa	Sirgiti Ara	Sirgiti Ara	H	WF	Blood purifier, Dysentery
Apiaceae								
6. <i>Centella asiatica</i> (Linn.) Urban	Brahmi	Bengsag	Muxaarxa	Chokeara	Chokeara	H	WL	Blood dysentery, Cooling, Leprosy, Eye complains.
Begoniaceae								
7. <i>Begonia picta</i> Sm.	-	Pakhanachatta	Pakhanchatta	Lundiara	Lundiara	H	WL	Colic, Dysentery, Ulcer in mouth
8. <i>Cordia dichotoma</i> Forst.f.	Losora	Buch	Dhanul	Bunch	Bunch	T	F	Colic, Cough, Dysentery, Jaundice, Ulcer.
Caesalpinaceae								
9. <i>Bauhinia purpurea</i> Linn.	Koinar	Singarak	Komaarxa	Singara	Singara	T	F, CL	Swelling, Pain.
10. <i>B. retusa</i> Roxb.	Kanla	Teor	Teor	Laba	Laba	T	F	Sores
11. <i>Cassia occidentalis</i> Linn.	Kasondi sag	Barka chakonda	Koha chakonda	Murang chakonda	Murang chakonda	H	WP	Gastric, Dropsy, Cough, Piles.
12. <i>C. tora</i> Linn.	Chakor	Chakonda	Sunny chakonda	Huring chakon	Huring chakon	H	WP	Intestinal disorder, Jaundice, Night blindness.

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Botanical Name	Names in local languages				Habit*	Habitat**	Medicinal use
	Common Name	Santhal	Oraon	Mundari			
Capparidaceae							
13. <i>Cleome monophylla</i> Linn.	Hurhuria	Hurhuria sag	Tota sirio	Charmani ara	H	WP	Pot herb against bile
14. <i>C. gynandra</i> Linn.	Hul hul	Sada hurhuria	-	Pundi charmani	H	WP	Ear complaints, Stiff neck
15. <i>C. viscosa</i> Linn.	Kan phutti	Hurhuria	Nal sirio	Marang charmani	H	WP	Boils Ear ache
Commelinaceae.							
16. <i>Commelina benghalensis</i> Linn.	Kenasag	Golgolau sag	Kena arxa	Undupu ara	H	WP	Laxative, Wounds
Convolvulaceae.							
17. <i>Ipomea aquatica</i> Forsk.	Karmi Sag	Karmi Sag	-	Karmi Ara	C	ST, WL	Pot herb.
Euphorbiaceae							
18. <i>Antidesma diandrum</i> Roxb.	Amti sag	Matha Arak	Kundui	Mata Ara	S	ST	Bilious complaints, Blood dysentery, Muscular pain.
19. <i>Euphorbia hirta</i> Linn.	Dudhi sag	Dudhia	Dudhia	Marang dudhi	H	WP, WF	Asthma, Cough, Joint Pain, Dysentery.
Moraceae							
20. <i>Ficus geniculata</i> Kurz	Putkal	Putkal	Putkal	Jait Putkal	T	F	Colic, Dysentery
21. <i>F. infectoria</i> Roxb.	Pakar	Phutkal	Phutkal	Hesa Putkal	T	F	Colic, Dysentery.
Nyctaginaceae							
22. <i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i> Linn.	Punarnava	Khapra Sag	Khapra Arxa	Kecho Ara	C	WP	Eye diseases, Dropsy, Oedema, Jaundice, Low blood pressure
Oxalidaceae							
23. <i>Oxalis corniculata</i> Linn.	Khatmithi sag	Amboti	Kisspunji	Pirijojo	H	WP	Appetizer, Cough, Eye complaints, jaundice, Rickets, Scurvy, Piles.
Polygonaceae							
24. <i>Polygonum barbatum</i> Linn.	Sake sag	Sake Sag	Sake arxa	Madara	H	WL	Piles
25. <i>P. glabrum</i> Willd.	Puror	-	-	Sukuripota	H	ST	Anthelmintic, Fever
26. <i>P. plebeium</i> R. Br.	Chimti Sag	Chimti Sag	Pok Arxa	Muiara	H	WP	Cough, Dysentery, Lactation, Gastric complaints.
27. <i>Rumex vesicarius</i> Linn.	Banpalak	Tissa Palak	Tissa palak arxa	-	H	WP	Laxative
Portulacaceae							
28. <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> Linn.	Golgola sag	Golgola sag	Addota txa arxa	Dailara	H	WP	Blood purifier, Fever, Prickly heat and Burning sensation
29. <i>Portulaca quadrifida</i> Linn.	Noni sag	Garujib sag	Addota txa arxa	Golgol Ara	H	WP	Burns, Ulcers.
Rubiaceae							
30. <i>Vangueria spinosa</i> Roxb.	Sarla sag	Sarla Kanta	Sarla Achch	Serilia Ara	S	F	Dysentery
Vitaceae							
31. <i>Cissus adnata</i> Roxb.	Khata sag	-	-	-	C	F	Blood purifier, Diuretic, Piles.
Marsileaceae (Pteridophyte)							
32. <i>Marselia minuta</i> Linn.	Sunsonia sag	Sushni shak	-	Catam ara	H	WL	Pimples, Eye complaints, Fever.
Ophioglossaceae							
33. <i>Ophioglossum reticulatum</i> Linn.	Sugga sag	Jibhia	-	-	H	WL	Boils, Hair tonic.

\* Type of Plant: H - Herb, S - Shrub, T - Tree, C - Creeper.

\*\* Habitat: WP - Waste Places, CL - Cultivated, WF - Weed in Agricultural Field, DL - Dry Land, WL - Wet Land, ST - Near streams, F - Forest.

markets in and around Ranchi for two years. The vegetables have been identified with the help of the flora by Haines (1921-25) and for up-to-date nomenclature Ghosh (1971) has been consulted. For their nutraceutical properties and medicinal values Jain (1991) has been consulted.

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Rhododendron, E. *Buransa-phool*), leaves and flowers of *Rumex hastatus*, D. Don. (E. Almodo, U. *Amlodo*, G. *Chalmodo*), leaves of *Raphanus sativus*, L. (En. Radish, E. *Mooli*), *Brassica juncea*, Hook.f. et T. (En. Indian mustard, E. *Rai*), *Coriandrum sativum*, L. (En. Coriander, E. *Dhandya-patta*), *Spinacia oleracea*, L. (En. Spinach, E. *Palinga-patta*), *Trigonella foenum-graecum*, L. (En. Fenugreek, E. *Methi*) and tender branches of *Lathyrus sativus*, L. (En. Grasspea, E. *Tukhla*).

In the early spring season, the wives of grass-cutters mix all the items of this nutrition-rich diet with special salt (*Peesyon-lwond*) on a stone (*Raimodi-dhungo*) especially fixed in the forest to prepare this native Himalayan dish. However, in district Uttarakashi only the petals of *Rhododendron* and *Rumex nepalensis*, Speng. (U. *Amlodo*) are separately eaten with salt. A folk song inviting the persons to enjoy this delicious wild salad is sung throughout the parts of the Garhwal Himalaya.

'Awa dagadyo, awa bhai bando  
Tai jungle joola, raimodi meelai kholla'

It is said that some decades ago, the village daughters-in-law were given very less nutritious diet and even sometimes were not allowed to take complete diet. In those circumstances knowledge of making *raimodi* was adopted by these intelligent women to fulfil their nutritional requirement. But now, since most families depend on ration supplied from the market, the traditional use of valuable and common wild plant resources has been decreasing at the rate faster than ever. The spread of diseases like breast and ovarian cancer, pernicious anaemia, blood pressure, diabetes, heart diseases in remote areas are some of the direct and discernible effects of adopting modern food habits.

Lack of public awareness about the benefits of using wild herbs is also a cause for concern. Now the Himalaya needs conservation of itself along with the restoration of dwindling cultural, social and traditional sustainable practices gained by the ethnic and tribal communities through generations.

Abbreviations used: E. - Ethnic; En.- English; G. - Gairsain block in Chamoli District; U. - Uttarakashi District.

### NOTE

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## ETHNOBOTANY OF WILD SALAD (RAIMODI) IN GARHWAL HIMALAYA

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Most temperate valleys in the high altitudes of Garhwal Himalaya are inhabited by ethnic communities. Khasas and Doms are two such communities who are traditionally rich in various social, cultural and religious rituals that are performed throughout the year. However, due to many anthropocentric developmental ideas, many of these wise social sustainable practices have been lost and a surviving few cultural resources are on the verge of extinction. The tradition of making wild salad (*Raimodi*) by the Himalayan women in the forest is one of the few surviving traditionally-rich cultural skills. The plants used in making *raimodi* are petals of *Rhododendron arboreum*, Smith (En. Tree-