

FOLK-LORE KNOWLEDGE ON MEDICINAL USAGE OF THE TRIBAL BELTS OF BIRBHUM DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Medicinal plants played an important role in various traditional systems of medicines of different countries such as Indian Systems of Medicines (Ayurveda, Unani, etc.), Traditional Chinese Medicines, Tibettian Medicines, etc. The World Health Organization (WHO) since 1970 is advocating preservation of national heritage of ethno-medicines and ethno-pharmacology and reintroduction of medicinal and aromatic plants in the primary health care system in their member countries. A perusal of literature, to date, warranted that the Birbhum district of West Bengal are not fully documented ethnobotanically. Intensive field work was conducted for five years covering all the seasons so as to collect detail information on plant species found useful in ethnomedicine as well as for the other local uses of the plants occurring in Birbhum district in West Bengal. Observations were made of the plant species with respect to their location, habit, habitat and other field characters. 227 numbers of plants have been recorded from Birbhum district. 8 number of plant species recorded as rare from Birbhum district. This study will enrich the data bank of ethnobotany of the Birbhum district and by incorporating new information about non-conventional uses of plant wealth.

KEYWORDS: Ethno-Medicinal Knowledge, Medicinal Herbs, Diseases