

Contribution of Religious Elements in the Conservation of Plants in Tribal Area: A Study

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ABSTRACT

The most important subject in modern society is the conservation of plants. The world is seriously concerned with the issues of deforestation, depletion of forest resources. Serious and systematic measures are being taken to prevent this. A ray of hope is added when religious measures to tackle these issues are found to be effective in tribal area of Navapur Taluka. Study of flora of Navapur Taluka points to this unusual measure. It was found that customs, traditions, rituals and religious practices of the tribals in this area effectively contributed to prevent the deforestation and depletion of forest resources. The present article is an attempt to throw light on the conservation of plants through such tribal customs, traditions, rituals and religious practices.

INTRODUCTION

A study of traditional medicinal plants in the forests of Navapur Taluka gave an opportunity to see closely the customs, traditions, rituals and religious practices of tribals living in the forest and hilly areas. A surprising finding was noticed. This article deals in detail with that finding.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A systematic study of tribal customs, traditions, rituals and religious practices contributing to conservation of plants was conducted. In the study, total forty two plants are found to have been conserved by tribals of the area through generations. The tribals never cut these plants. These plants are indispensable in the various social traditional and religious events of tribals from birth to death. The tribals religiously preserve these plants. A list of such plants conserved by tribals is given in this article. Plants have been listed with their botanical names. Plants are identified with the help of available literature.

List of the plants used in religious ceremonies by tribals of Navapur

Sr. No.	Botanical Name of plant	Family
01	Calophyllum inophyllum L	Calophyllaceae
02	Bambusa bambos (L) Voss	Poaceae
03	Ficus benghalensis L	Moraceae
04	Adansonia digitata Linn	Malvaceae
05	Aagle marmelos (L) Correa	Rutaceae
06	Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) Miers. Ex Hook F.& Thomas	Ranunculales
07	Atlantia racemosa Wight	Rutaceae
08	Couroupita guianensis Aublet	Lecythidaceae
09	Ricinus communis L.	Euphorbiaceae

10	Magnolia champaca (L.) Baill. ex Pierre	Magnoliaceae
11	Strychnos potatorum Linn.	Loganiaceae
12	Ficus racemosa L.	Moraceae
13	Cocos nucifera L.	Arecaceae
14	Neolamarckia cadamba (Roxb.) Bosser	Rubiaceae
15	Tabernamontana divaricata (L.)	Apocynaceae
16	Annona squamosa Linn.	Annonaceae
17	Senegalia catechu (L.f.) P.J.H. Hurter & Mabb.	Fabaceae
18	Cedrus deodara (Roxb. Ex. D. Don.) G.Don	Pinaceae
19	Butea monosperma (Lam.) Taub.	Fabaceae
20	Pongamia pinnata (Linn.) Pierre	Leguminosae
21	Madhuca longifolia (L) J.F. Macbr.	Sapotaceae
22	Cordia myxa Roxb.	Boraginaceae
23	Phyllanthus emblica Linn.	Phyllanthaceae
24	Ziziphus mauritiana Lam.	Rhamnaceae
25	Ficus microcarpa L.f.	Moraceae
26	Diospyros malabarica (Desr.) Kostel	Ebenaceae
27	Albizia lebbek (L.) Benth	Fabaceae
28	Terminalia chebula Retz.	Combretaceae
29	Artocarpus heterophyllus Lam.	Moraceae
30	Citrus limon (L.) Burm. f	Rutaceae
31	Putranjiva roxburghii Wall	Putranjivaceae
32	Mangifera indica L.	Anacardiaceae
33	Bauhinia variegata L.	Fabaceae
34	Azadirachta indica A. Juss.	Meliaceae
35	Ficus religiosa L.	Moraceae
36	Ocimum tenuiflorum L.	Lamiaceae
37	Shorea robusta C. F. Gaerth	Dipterocarpaceae
38	Crateva adansonii DC	Capparaceae
39	Calatropis procera (Aiton) W	Apocynaceae
40	Tamarindus indica Linn.	Fabaceae
41	Terminalia arjuna (Roxb. ex. DC)	Combretaceae
42	Limonia acidissima L	Rutaceae

CONCLUSION

A deep and detailed study of the tribal customs, traditions, rituals and religious practices contributing to the conservation of plants seriously need to be under-taken at the level of Government. If these customs and practices are transformed into festivals, their celebration will enable the Government to reach the masses for effective conservation of plants. It will open up before the world new measures of religious practices for the conservation of plants. It will help the layman to associate his religious practices with the plants and help their conservation for generations to come.

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