

Non-Timber Forest Products: source of food, medicine, and livelihood

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Abstract: Even in the 21st century, the whole world faces the challenges of getting good-quality food, medicines and a sustainable livelihood based on nature. All are available in our forest in the form of non-timber forest products (NTFP). Therefore, keeping this in view, an attempt has been made to enumerate the common NTFP collected by tribal communities of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha, India. Survey was carried out during 2021-2022 and enumerated 15 common NTFP used by the Santhal community. Results revealed that all reported NTFPs have economic value. Therefore, the present study suggests to do value addition of enumerated NTFPs to get organic foods and medicines that could be useful to provide a livelihood.

Keywords: Value addition, food, medicines

Introduction: “Human health will bear the brunt” & “Adequate nutrition is the absolute foundation for health throughout the lifespan,” both phrases show the need of the world. Getting adequate food and medicine is a burning issue, particularly in developing countries, even having lot of resources in our forest. In addition to the direct health effects of hunger, malnutrition, and lack of a basic medicine, there are indirect consequences. Poor nutrition in pregnant women can have a devastating intergenerational effect, lack of immunity, in cognitive development, vulnerability to disease, and educational development (McColl 2008). Researchers throughout the world are working on above issues with government and non-government organisations still need much efforts. There is a need to screen new food and medicine sources from our glorious past practices of tribal communities to get sustainability in life. Keeping this in view, an attempt has been made to document the non-timber forest produces (NTFP) used by the Santhal tribe of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha state, India. A survey was carried out during 2021-2023 and enumerated the used NTFPs. Some other researchers are also reported the NTFPs from different parts of the world. In 2003,

Senaratne and his co-workers reported NTFP of Sri Lanka. In 2011, Ahenkan and Boon reported the role of NTFP in Ghana and they stated that NTFPs continue to be an important source of household food security, nutrition, and health. In 2012, Morsello and his co-workers reported the NTFP of Brazilian and Bolivian Amazon. They stated that partnership may enhance the financial outcomes of the local communities. Boog et al. (2017) reported the knowledge of NTFP among the children. In 2018, Cooper and his co-worker reported the NTFP of Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, and Ghana. Recently Masoodi and Sundriyal (2020) reported 811 NTFPs from Himalayan regions whereas Gurung et al. (2021) reported 278 NTFPs from Upper Madi Watershed of Nepal. The present study highlights the importance of NTFP in developing products for improving the livelihood of local communities.

Methodology: A survey was carried out in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha during 2021-2022. Santhal community was selected for discussion on NTFPs used by them. The local name, uses and availability was questioned on different types of NTFPs. The plant, mushroom and faunal species were identified by Dr. Sanjeet Kumar, Ambika Prasad Research Foundation, Odisha, India.

Results and discussion: NTFPs are important component of tribal communities and play a vital role in their day-to-day life. Present investigation revealed that Santhal community of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha commonly use products of 14 taxa directly or as by-product. They are also source of food, medicine, life stuffs and petty cash. They were sabai grass, rugda & patra mushrooms, red weaver ant, fresh water crab, mud snail, kalmegh, kendu fruits, resin of sal tree, leaves of sal tree, broom of local grasses, edible flower, edible tuber, and edible seed with bark rope. Details are listed in Table 1 and Plate 1. It was noticed that all enumerated NTFPs have economic values. Out of them, 10 have food values and 11 have medicinal uses. Some researchers of the Odisha state also reported the NTFP and their role in tribal life. Kumar 2015, documented 67 life supporting plants to the tribal communities of Similipal Biosphere Reserve, Odisha. Sahoo et al. (2020) reported the role of NTFPs in tribal life of Southern Odisha. Through literature survey, it was observed that need extensive works on NTFPs of Odisha state.

Conclusion: In the contemporary situation, finding new food and medicines in a sustainable manner is the most important task. In this aspect, NTFP play an important role. The present study highlights the NTFP in economy, food, medicinal and ecological aspects. It is also noticed that there is need to do the value addition of commonly used NTFP in regional level to upgrade the livelihood and balancing the life with nature.



Plate 1: Some common NTFP; 1) Bhuian nimba; 2) Kurkuti & Beng sag; 3) Phula Jhadu; 4) Genda; 5) Girli phool

Table 1: Non-timber forest products (NTFP) of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha state, India

Name	Local name	Food	Medicinal	Economic
<i>Eulaliopsis binata</i>	Sabai	NIL	NIL	√
<i>Astraeus hygrometricus</i>	Rugda	√	√	√
<i>Russula rosea</i>	Patra chatu	√	NIL	√
Leaves of <i>Shorea robusta</i>	Sala patra	NIL	NIL	√
<i>Oecophylla smaragdina</i>	Kurkuti	√	√	√
<i>Barytelphusa cunicularis</i>	Kankada	√	√	√
<i>Filopaludina bengalensis</i>	Genda	√	√	√
<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>	Bhuin nimba	NIL	√	√
<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>	Kendu	√	√	√
<i>Thysanolaena latifolia</i>	Phula Jhadu	NIL	NIL	√
Resin of <i>Shorea robusta</i>	Jhuna	NIL	√	√
<i>Indigofera cassioides</i>	Girli	√	√	√
<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Beng saag	√	√	√
<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>	Pita aalu	√	√	√
<i>Phanera vahlii</i>	Siali	√	√	√

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