

Plants used during Famine in Karauli District (Rajasthan)

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Abstract

Plants are being used by the human beings, since a very long time. A constant research is being done on the relationship between plants and man. Man's vital interest in plants, primarily as a source of food, shelter, and clothing dates back to the very origin of human civilization. Considering the richness of plant world, the knowledge of plants acquired by man is still meager. The wild plants of the famine affected area were also badly damaged and people explosively remained dependent on such wild plants which were being used during famine period. Approximately 32 plant species are utilized as famine food in the Karauli District. Important plant species are *Acacia nilotica*, *Achyranthes aspera*, *Capparis decidua*, *Cenchrus biflorus*, *Citrullus colocynthis*, *Cyperus rotundus*, *Ficus* spp., *Pedaliium murex*, *Prosopis cineraria*, *Salvadora persica*, *Tribulus terrestris* etc.

Key Words:- Famine, Wild plant, Karauli, Rajasthan

Introduction

Many times the State of Rajasthan has also been subjected to severe famine due to the absence of regular rainfall during rainy season. The history reveal that there had been such severe famine during 1868-1870 and 1899-1901 which were termed as "Trikal" famine and "Chhapania" famine respectively. Since there was no food, fodder and adequate water for drinking, about one million human beings and cattle died due to hunger and thirst.

There are reported in Vikram Samvat 1996 that almost each and early village, tehsil and taluka of State of Rajasthan were severely affected with scarcity of food, fooder and

drinking water and this resulted in to very significant migration of people from one place to the other in search of their basic requirement. Gupta *et al.* (1966), Kanodia *et al.* (1968), Bhandari (1974) and Sen and Bansal (1979) are important workers who give detailed information related to the plants used as source of food during scarcity. The wild plants of the famine affected area were also badly damaged and people explosively remained dependent on such wild plant which were being used during famine period.

Material and Methods

The present study has been carried out by performing field visit through advance planning, arrangement and preparation, several attempt were being made to interview men and women of different castes, age, and origin in order to collect valuable information. We have definite planned about particular place which is hot spot of district Karauli.

Results

The detailed of wild plants which were being frequently used during famine in Karauli district is given below:

1. *Acacia leucophloea* : The powder of seeds and stem bark are pounded and is mixed with flour and used for making chapati.
2. *Acacia nilotica subsp. indica* : Bark of stem and pods are eaten raw or roasted.
3. *Acacia senegal* : Seeds are pounded and mix with flour and eaten with grains.
4. *Achyranthus aspera* : Seeds are boiled with milk and Kheer is prepared which is eaten in famine.
5. *Aegle marmelos* : Fruits used as food supplement in diet.
6. *Asparagus-racemosus* : Roots used as vegetable during famine.
7. *Butea-monosperma* : Young and fresh leaves are eaten raw.
8. *Capparis-decidua* : Flower buds and fruits eaten as vegetable.
9. *Cassia tora* : Young and fresh leaves are consumed.

10. *Citrullus-colocynthis* : Seeds are washed many time with saline water to remove the bitterness then dried, grounded and mixed with flour of multitypes of grains.
11. *Chenopodium-album* : Whole aerial part of plants used as vegetable.
12. *Cordia-gharaf* : Powder of stem bark mixed with flour and fresh fruit eaten raw.
13. *Cyanodon dactylon* : Leaves and tender top culms are consumed as vegetable.
14. *Cyperus zotundus* : Dried tubes are mixed with flour for making bread.
15. *Diospyros melanoxyton* : Dry fruits are consumed after boiling.
16. *Euphorbia hirta* : Shoot part consumed as vegetable.
17. *Ficus benghalensis* : Dry fruits called "gol" eaten raw and receptacles mixed with flour and make chapati/bread.
18. *Ficus racemosa* : Barks, fruits are powdered and mixed with flour for making bread.
19. *Ficus religiosa* : Leaf buds and receptacles consumed raw.
20. *Holoptelea integrifolia* : Seeds are eaten raw.
21. *Maytenus emarginata* (Billi kanta): Unripe fruits consumed raw.
22. *Momordica balsamina* : Leaves and fruits used as vegetable.
23. *Mucuna pruriens* : Roasted mature seeds are eaten.
24. *Pedaliium morex* : Young and fresh leaves used as vegetable, and fruits powder mixed with flour for making bread.
25. *Prosopis cineraria* : Dried fruits and stem bark eaten.
26. *Salvadora oleoides* : Dried or fresh fruits consumed.
27. *Sesbania sesban* : Seeds and pods are consumed as vegetable.
28. *Sonchus oleraceus* : Young and fresh leaves consumed as vegetable.
29. *Tamarindus indica* : Roasted seed are powdered and mixed with flower for bread.

30. *Wrightia tinctoria* : Young and fresh leaves eaten as vegetable.
31. *Zizyphus mauritiana* : Stem bark powdered and mixed with flour for bread, powdered seeds used in chutney.
32. *Zizyphus nummularia*: Stem barks and seed pericarp used to making chatney and powder used in chapati.

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