



## ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDY OF THE GARO TRIBE OF SHERPUR DISTRICT, BANGLADESH

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**Key words:** Indigenous knowledge, medicinal plants, Garo Tribe, Sherpur, Bangladesh.

Eight native plants such as *Uraria picta* (Jacq.) Desv. ex DC, *Clausena excavata* Burm.f.; *Plumbago zeylanica* L.; *Desmodium motorium* (Houtt.) Merr.; *Tetrastigma angustifolium* (Roxb.) Planch.; *Tetrastigma leucostaphyllum* (Dennst.) Alston ex Mabb.; *Tinospora crispa* (L.) Hook. f. & Thoms; and *Glycyrrhiza glabra* L. are used by the Garo Tribe as medicine. These plants are also considered for ethical use and their religious believes in Sherpur District of Bangladesh. Their tribal names, Bangla names, families, locations, methods of use by the Garo were explored and presented.

Once a nomadic Tribe "Garo" of the Bodo group of Mongoloides now lives in different areas of north-east of Bangladesh, mostly in Sherpur, Tangail and Mymensingh districts. Tribal groups lack access to modern facilities and rely on medicinal plants for their primary healthcare needs prescribed by the old tribal people or tribal medicinal practitioners. The objective of the present study was to explore the ethnobotanical knowledge of plant resources used by the Garo Tribe residing in Sherpur district of Bangladesh. From the pioneering works of Hassan and Khan (1986), several workers such

as Alam (1992), Rahman (1997, 2003, 2010), Mia and Huq (1988), Rahman and Uddin (1998), Rahman *et al.* (1998, 2000, 2003, 2007), Partho and Hossain (2002), Yousuf *et al.* (2006) conducted ethnobotanical study on different tribes of Bangladesh. Rao (1981) worked on the ethnobotany of Meghalaya's medicinal plants used by the Khasia and Garo Tribe in India. In Bangladesh, Khan (1998) conducted a survey on Garo inhabiting Madhupur and Haluaghat in the districts of Tangail and Mymensing. Partho and Hossain (2007) did an extensive work on Mandi (Garo) ethnic community in Bangladesh. Present study deals with some medicinal and other uses of plants which were not reported yet but, commonly used by the Garo people of Jhenaigati and Nalitabari Upazilla under Sherpur District of Bangladesh.

The survey was conducted during the period from January, 2010 to December, 2010. Interviews were made with the help of semi-structured questionnaire and the field walks method as described by Martin (1995) and Maundu (1995). The collected specimens were kept in herbarium press and later preserved in the department of Botany, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Scientific name (SN) Bengali name (BN) Tribial name (TN) Family (F)	Methods of Use	Uses	Location	Collection No. and Figure
SN - <i>Uraria picta</i> (Jacq.) Desv. ex DC. BN- Vutnag TN- Shankar Jata F.- Fabaceae	Firstly the materials were converted into powder and then mixed with water to make paste. Root extract collect by boiling with water. In some cases dried plant body pieces were used.	The paste is applied to the sore mouths of children. The plant body is supposed to be a good antidote in worm biting and it is also a good antidote to the venom of <i>Echis carinata</i> . Root extract is used in cough and fever. The dried part of the plant body used as "tabiz" for incantation.	Garo pahar, Jhenaigati, Sherpur, Bangladesh. This species also found throughout India, Malay Island, Philippines and many other places in Bangladesh (Kritikar and Basu 1993).	1001/2010, Fig. A
SN - <i>Clausena excavata</i> Burm. f. BN- Pan Bilas TN- Pan Bilas F.- Rutaceae	Leaves juice rubbed on muscular pain. Stem infusion is given in colic.	The plant is used as diuretic tonic and as stringent. The decoction of leaves is taken after childbirth. The leaves are insecticidal and its juice is also used for stomach troubles.	Garo pahar, Jhenaigati, Sherpur, Bangladesh. It also found in Indian hills, Indonesia, China and Malaysia (Ahmed <i>et al.</i> , 2009c).	1002/2010, Fig. B

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SN - <i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L. BN- Shada chita TN- Chita, Chitrak F.- Plumbaginaceae	Root paste used in joints pain by taking a cotton cloth placed between paste and the skin to avoid any irritation.	Leaves paste used externally in scabies and ulcers. Root juice is applied for causing abortion in up to 4 months pregnancy and cauterize snakebite wounds. Leave and flower offer for pleased the Goddess of the Garo.	Garo pahar, Jhenaigati, Sherpur, Bangladesh. It also found in Dhaka, Jamalpur and Panchagarh district of Bangladesh and South Asia, Malaysia & Hawaii (Ahmed <i>et al.</i> , 2009b).	1003/2010, Fig. C
SN - <i>Desmodium motorium</i> (Houtt.) Merr. BN- Gorachan, Turutchandal. TN- Rahuchandal F.- Fabaceae	Dried stem part using as "tabiz".	The Garo believes, by using this stem with body one can get release from mental disorders.	Kakarkandi, Nalitabari, Sherpur, Bangladesh. It also found in India, Srilanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Philippines and Malaysia. (Ahmed <i>et al.</i> 2009a).	1004/2010, Fig. D
SN- <i>Tetrastigma angustifolium</i> (Roxb.) Planch. BN- Jangle angur TN- Nekung Riubi F.- Vitaceae	Leave, tender stem used by boiling.	Ripe fruits are edible. Tender stem and leaves are used as vegetable. The Garo believes by eating the fruits all diseases could be removed.	Garo pahar, Jhenaigati, Sherpur, Bangladesh. This species also found in India and Africa.	1005/2010, Fig. E
SN- <i>Tetrastigma leucostaphyllum</i> (Dennst.) Alston ex Mabb. BN- Horina lata TN- Horina lata F.- Vitaceae	Leaves and roots juice used with sugar.	Leave, rootstock juice is used for cold fever. Fruits and seeds are edible.	Garo pahar, Jhenaigati, Sherpur, Bangladesh. This species also found in Indonesia and India (Kritiker and Basu 1993).	1006/2010, Fig. F
SN- <i>Tinospora crispa</i> (L.) Hook. f. & Thoms. BN- Padma Gulancha. TN- Gulancha. F.- Menispermaceae	Stem extract collected by boiling with water and using as juice.	Leave extract is an excellent tonic during convalescence from exhausting diseases. Stem juice used in fever as quinine, as blood purifier and also in muscle pain. Paste of leaves used for control the bleeding.	Kakarkandi, Nalitabari, Sherpur, Bangladesh. It also found in Assam, Malay, Peninsula and Ceylon.	1007/2010, Fig. G
SN- <i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> L. BN- Jasti modhu TN- Jasti modhu, Klitaq F.- Fabaceae	Leaves powder mixed with water to make paste and juice collect through boiling with water.	Leave extract for eye disease, paste used for vomiting, increasing the softness of hair, remove tiredness, bron cure, and prevention of skin disease. The leave juice is also taking for voice clearing.	Kakarkandi, Nalitabari, Sherpur, Bangladesh. This species is not reported from Bangladesh yet.	1008/2010, Fig. H

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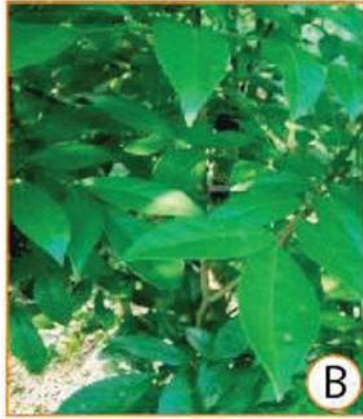
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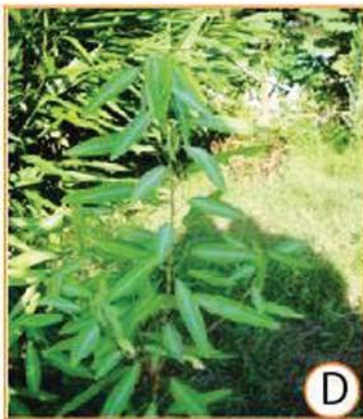
*Uraria picta*



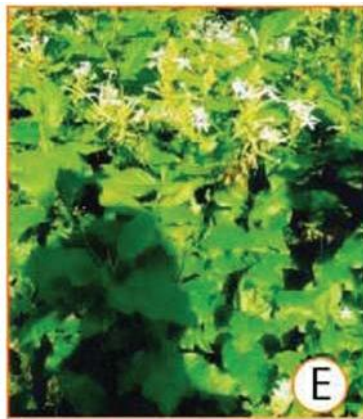
*Clausena excavata*



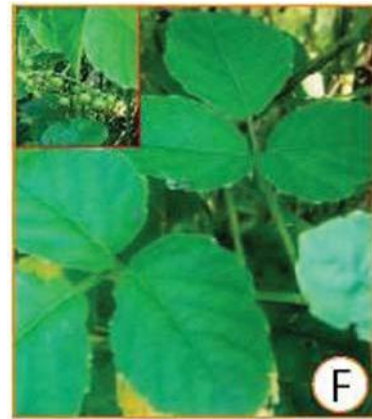
*Plumbago zeylanica*



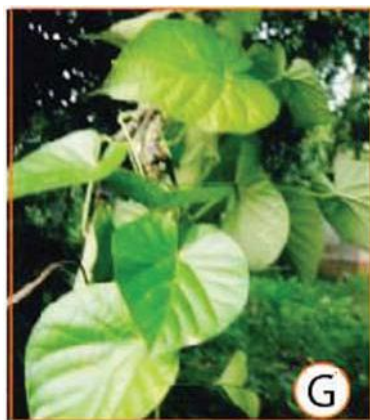
*Desmodium motorium*



*Tetrastigma angustifolium*



*Tetrastigma leucostaphyllum*



*Tinospora crispa*



*Glycyrrhiza glabra*

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