

# Role of plants in tribal's Fair and Festivals of Hindoli Tehsil, Bundi District (Rajasthan)

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**Abstract-** India is known as the country of festivals. In India, many festivals are celebrated in different states in different ways. Different festivals are celebrated in different time in different regions of Rajasthan state. Many plant species are play very important role in celebrating festivals directly or indirectly. In Rajasthan, festivals start from 'Shravana Teej' while ends with 'Chaitra Gangaur'. There is a proverb about it "Teej Tyoharan Bawadi, Le Doobi Gangaur". Role of plants in daily routine worship and festivals of Hindoli tehsil's tribal villages, Bundi district (Rajasthan) have been reported in present study.

**Keywords:** Hindoli, Fair and Festivals, Ghas Bheru Mahotsav, Tribals, Chariot.

## INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan state is divided into four main parts e.g., Western Rajasthan, Central Rajasthan, Eastern Rajasthan and South-East Rajasthan. South-East Rajasthan is also known as "Hadoti" region and it comprises Kota, Bundi, Baran, and Jhalawar districts. It

has rich heritage of culture and diversified habitat. Bundi district gives appearance of irregular rhombus shape. Bundi is a small city in the Hadoti region of Rajasthan in India. It is situated in the south-east of Rajasthan, which is famous for its beautiful forts, picnic places, and step-well reservoirs (local name: Baoris). Bundi District is situated at a distance of about 210 KM from Jaipur (The capital of Rajasthan). It is located between 75° 19' 30'' to 76° 19' 30'' E and 24° 59' 11'' to 25° 53' 11'' N having total area of 5,850.5 KM<sup>2</sup> It is bounded by Tonk district in the north and by Bhilwara district in the west, by Chittorgarh district in the south and by Kota district in the south-east. This accounts for 1.68 % of the total area of Rajasthan. Among the 33 districts of the state, Bundi district ranks 30th in terms of population and 22nd in terms of area. The river Chambal forms the south-eastern boundaries and separates Bundi from Kota ((Figure-1). There are 20.54 % Scheduled Tribe (ST) of total population in Bundi district.



Figure 1.1 Map of Rajasthan (Source-Rajasthan Census Bundi-2011)



Figure 1.2 Bundi Tehsil's Map (Source-Rajasthan Census Bundi-2011)

Bundi district is divided into 6 tehsils which are: Bundi, Hindoli, Nainwa, Keshoraipatan, Indergarh and Talera (Figure 2). The villages of Hindoli tehsils like; Badodiya, Nathawa, Beel ka Khera, Deva ka kheda, Kabul, Raghunathpura, Net, Danta, Khati khera etc. have schedule tribes 50% to 100%. Meena and Bhil constitute the major part of total tribal population in Hindoli tehsils of Bundi district (Rajasthan). Ethnobotanical study of this region (that is role of plants in tribal life) has not been much studied so far, hence this area was selected for present research work.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Ethnobotanical study were carried out in different selected villages of study area (Hindoli tehsil) in different seasons and at different times. First of all, cordial relationship was developed with tribals and local old people of the study area by interacting with them amiably and established a dialogue session with them to collect information. Information was gathered regarding role of plants in tribal's fair and festivals through interviews, group discussions. The documentation was made and discussed about importance of plants in worship for the particular festival. Many related literatures and research papers were reviewed related to ethnobotany and sacred grooves

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As we observed, tribals have faith in Hindu mythology. They observe festivals to bring life, gaiety and merrymaking. Such joyful event breaks the monotony of tribal life. In Rajasthan, festivals start from 'Shravana teej' while ends with 'Chaitra Gangaur'. There is a proverb about it "Teej Tyoharan Bawadi, le Doobi Gangaur". Festivals like; Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmasthami, Durgasthami, Ramnavami, Dipawali, Makar Sankranti, Mahashivratri, Holi, etc. all are celebrated by the tribals of Badodiya, Nathawa, Beel ka Khera, Deva ka kheda, Kabul, Raghunathpura, Net, Danta, Khati khera villages. The main festivals celebrated by the tribals of Hindoli tehsil of Bundi district are as follows;

1. Makar Sankranti: It is celebrated on 14th January when sun enters in Zodiac sign 'Makar'. On this festival, tribal people fly kites in the sky. From mythological point of view, this festival is very important, which leads one to heaven. The roasted seeds of *Sesamum indicum* (Til) mixed with jaggery,

in the form of laddoos are eaten on this day. The seeds of *Hordeum vulgare* (Jo) and *Triticum aestivum* (Gehun) are distributed to poor beggers and green fodders are provided to cows and other cattle. Thin strips of bamboos (*Dendocalamus spp.*) and Baru (*Sorghum halepense*) plant sticks are used to make kites. So even in merry making and gaiety also plants have important place.

2. Mahashivratri: It is associated with worshiping Lord Shiva and festival is celebrated with full fervour on Phalgun Krishna-chaturdashi. The plant of *Datura innoxia* is used in worshiping of Lord Shiva. During "Mahashivratri Poojan" flowers and fruits of *Datura metal* (Dathura) along with flowers of *Calotropis procera* (Aakra) (Picture 7 &9) and trifoliolate leaves of *Aegle marmelos* (Bel-Patra) (Picture- are offered to "Shiv-Ling" by tribal people. People offer raw fruits of *Ziziphus nummularia* (Ber), fruits of *Raphanus sativus* (Muli), *Daucus carota* (Gajar) and other seasonal fruits. The tribals of Hindoli tehsil prepare syrup from leaves of *Cannabis sativa* (Bhang) and sometimes they mix the seeds of *Datura innoxia* in it. On this occasion famous fairs are organised in rural areas like; Sindhkeshwar mahadev, Lakhadeshwar Mahadev, Rameshwar mahadev (Hindoli) and Dhundleshwar Mahadev fairs. (Picture 3))

3. Holi: The tribals of Hindoli tehsil's villages celebrate every festival with ful of zeal. On holi a pole ('Holi ka Danda') made up of the *Prosopis cineraria* (Khejri) or *Acacia leucophloea* (Sub-abool) or *Acacia nilotica* (Deshi-babool) is used to commemorate the victory of virtue over the evil. Tribal people plant the pole ('Holi ka Danda') on 'Maghshukhla poornima' a month before the festival day. Idol of "Pralhad" made from stem branch of *Prosopis cineraria* (Khejri) or *Ziziphus nummularia* (Ber) is kept in the centre of Holi pole and is removed when roll is lit by the young ones (who are newly married), believing that their married life will be happy and prosperous. The ears of *Hordeum vulgare* (Jo) or *Triticum aestivum* (Gehun) from fresh harvest are roasted, offered to others and eaten. On Dhulandi tribals throw colours on each other and smear "Gulal" made from flowers of *Butea monosperma* (Palash).

4. Sheetla Asthami - All the tribes and nomads of Hindoli tehsil celebrate this festival on large scale. No freshly prepared food is taken and no hot drinks are

consumed on this day. It is a practice among tribal ladies to worship deity with “rabri” prepared from *Pennisetum americanum* (Bajra) or *Triticum aestivum* (Gehun) flour, boiled grains of *Pennisetum americanum* and rhizome of *Curcuma longa* (Haldi). ‘Rabri’ of *Zea mays* (Makka) flour is also used for worshipping the deity. This festival is locally known as “Basoda” and celebrated on the eight day of Chaitra month (Chaitra Krishna-Asthmi). This festival is celebrated for deity of small-pox known as “Sheetla Mata” and this deity is associated with *Azadirachta indica* (Neem) tree.

5. Sharad Poornima: The start of winter, when a full moon night ‘Poornima’ (Ashwin month) occurs, this festival is celebrated in moon light. It is believed that Lord Krishna performed his ‘Maha Rass’ on this day. On this day moon-rays are believed to improve eyesight, tribals put thread in needle in moon light. Small pieces of *Cocus nucifera* fruits, ‘Kheer’ (prepared from milk and grains of *Oryza sativa* (Chaval) are kept overnight in moon light and consumed later to keep eyes healthy.

6. Dusshera: This festival is celebrated on the 10th day (Dashmi) of Shuklapaksha of Asoj (Ashwin month) to commemorate the victory of Rama over Ravana, as narrated in the epic. This is also considered as a symbolic victory of ‘Good’ over Evil. An effigy of Ravana is prepared, the final act of the epic is enacted and the effigy is burnt. On this occasion people worship the tree of Khejri (*Prosopis cineraria*) (Picture-11).

7. Diwali: This festival falls on the Amavasya of Kartik month and is celebrated for obtaining the favour of ‘Lakshmi’ the Goddess of wealth. Everybody cleans the house. Every dwelling is outlined with burning oil lamps. The potter’s wheel ramble for weeks to bring out tiny earthen lamp called ‘diya’ with which every home illuminate itself on this great occasion. Oil of *Brassica campestris* (Sarson) or *Sesamum indicum* (Til) is used for lighting purpose and *Gossypium* spp. (Cotton) are used for making cotton wicks. Fruits of *Zizyphus mauritiana* (Ber) and *Cucumis callosus* (Kachra) (Picture 4 &10) are offered in Mahalaxmi puja on Diwali. At an auspicious hour, the Goddess is worshipped. All the edibles or grains of cash crops are essential offerings in ‘Laxmi Poojan’. Ladies cook

grains of *Vigna radiata* (Moong) and *Oryza sativa* (Chaval) and treat with ‘Dal’ or ‘Khata’ prepared from seeds or flour of *Cicer arietinum* (Chana) respectively.

8. Govardhan Pooja: This festival celebrated on the next day of Diwali. Govardhan pooja is carried out in the open portion of the house. Women prepare an image of ‘govardhan’ using cowdung, which consists of ‘Lord Krishna’ laying on his back. Fruit of *Zizyphus nummularia* (Jhar-ber) (Picture 4), parched grains of *Sorghum vulgare* (Jowar) and *Oryza sativa* (Chaval), are offered by women on the night of Diwali. A burning earthen lamp is also placed in the centre. They also decorate the calf and cow by printing hand marks of *Lawsonia inermis* (Mehandi). In evening, women cook all the new vegetables of the season together known as ‘gadda’ along with boiled grains of *Triticum aestivum* (Gehun), *Pennisetum americanum* (Bajara) and offer to God in temple on this particular day which is known as ‘Annkut’.

9. Bhai Duj Mahotsav: Ghas Bhairu Mahotsav is celebrated on the occasion of Bhai Duj on the second day of Diwali festival in various villages including Barodiya, Sathoor, Tickerda of Hindoli tehsil area. Barodia Ghas Bheru Festival is a unique example of folk culture. Every year thousands of people used to come here to see the amazing feats of riding a ghasbheru. In which tourists were also involved. The youth tribals and rural people of the village decorated tableaux (Jhankia) at prominent places. Many arts were performed, including water coming out of the Shiva statue, walking the wheel, floating stones in the stepwell, hanging heavy stones on yarn. In the evening, with a dozen pairs of bullocks, the villagers look out the ride of Ghasbheru and wish for the development of the country and the state's prosperity. Deshi babool (*Acacia nilotica*) wood used to make chariot for Baba Ghasbheru ji sawari which is taken to the the main market for the procession. (Picture 1 & 2)). This sawari program is organised by the Barodia village panchayat for the general public.

Other important festivals are; Akhateej, Basant Panchami, Krishna-janmasthmi Navaratra, Ganesh Chowth, Ramnavami, Teej, Karva-Chowth Dev Uthani Gyaras etc, which are celebrated by the tribals. It has been with full of enthusiasm and zeal following customary traditions.



Picture-1 Baba Ghasbheru ji sawari, Baroudia (Hindoli) chariot for Baba Ghasbheru ji



Picture-2 Deshi babool (*Acacia nilotica*) wood used to make Ghasbheru ji sawari, Baroudia (Hindoli) Fair of Baba sawari, Baroudia (Hindoli)



(A)



(B)

Picture-3 Mahashivratri fair of Sindhkeshwer Mahadev at sathur (Hindoli)



Picture-4 Fruits of *Cucumis callosus* (Kachra)



Picture- 5 Fruits of *Cucumis callosus* (Kachra)



Picture-6 Ber-bordi (*Zizyphus nummularia*)



Picture-7 *Cassia fistula* (Amaltas, Golden Shower), Datunda



Picture-8 *Oscimum sanctum* (Tulsi) Gangrawal ji ki Bani (Hindoli)



Picture- 9 *Calotropis gigantea*, (Safed Akra) Baroudia Chatarganj (Hindoli)



Picture-10 *Zizyphus nummularia* (Jhar-ber) (Hindoli)



Picture-11 *Prosopis cineraria* (Khejri), Narayanpura

## CONCLUSION

Festivals are the source of happiness in human life. Many festivals are celebrated in tribal regions of Hindoli tehsil of Bundi district (Rajasthan). The main festival is 'Diwali' celebrated in 'Hindu' culture. Diwali festival many plants or plant parts are used in worship. Other big festival is 'Holi' and Dhulandi tribals throw colours on each other and smear "Gulal" made from flowers of *Butea monosperma* (Palash). Festivals never be separated from tribal life and plants never be separated from traditional rituals and festivals. The present study highlighted the ethnic communities residing in the Hindoli tehsil of Bundi district retain a rich repository of traditional knowledge. To conclude, the traditions of tribes followed by tribals indirectly support ecosystem balance in the study area.

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