



## GEO-SOCIOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES WITH FLORA ON BAHAG BIHU BY TIWA TRIBE OF MORIGAON DISTRICT, ASSAM, INDIA

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### Abstract

The study on Geo-Sociological activities with flora on Bahag bihu by Tiwa tribes of Morigaon district of Assam has been conducted from March 2016 to April 2019 and 22 species of plant were identified. These plants are widely used in cattle care by the Tiwas of Morigaon district which are abundantly found in the study area due to favorable environmental condition. Numbers of these plants are gradually decreasing due to habitat destruction for the agricultural and other developmental activities in the study area.

**Keywords:** Geo-Sociological activities, flora, Bahag Bihu, Tiwa tribes and Morigaon district.

### Introduction

Lalung are indigenous people of Assam and forms a small ethnic group of North-East India. They are originated from the Bodo tribes. Lalung are like to call themselves as "Tiwa" and mostly found in Morigaon, Kamrup and Nagoan districts of Assam. The Tiwas of Morigaon district observed different rituals, taboos and festivals which are related with flora and fauna. The most important seasonal festival observed by Tiwas is Bihu. Bihu is the prime festival of agro-based rural societies of Assam and it is observed in three different seasons. Among those, Bohag bihu is observed in the month of April. Bohag bihu is celebrated on the last day of Chaitra and first day of Bohag month as an Assamese new year. Considering the socio-cultural heritage and floristic diversity of Assam, Tiwas are celebrated bihu with other communities using various types of plants in cattle care and other rituals observed in Bohag Bihu.

The Morigaon district is located in between 26.12° N to 26.30° N latitude and 91.98°E to 92.28°E longitude and total geographical area covered is 1704 km<sup>2</sup>, shearing 775874 total population of the state (2001). Out of the total population of the district, 15.4% of population belongs to scheduled tribe population. Following works are done by Issar(1981), Pal (1981), Geetha et al.(1996) and Sarma

(1996) in the field of folk vetanery and Jain (1963), Baishya and Mazumder (1980), Barthakur (1981) and Anonymous (1994) were done in the field of folklore.

### Materials and Methods

Study has been conducted from March 2016 to April 2019 and required information about plant species, method and aim of plant species used in cattle care were collected through interview and frequent field visit. Plant species were identified with the help of local Tiwa people and local name were listed. 22 species of plant species were used in cattle care by Tiwa people in bohag bihu and these species were belongs to 20 families. Botanical name, local name and used with families is tabulated in table no.1.

### Result and Discussion

The plants which are used by the Tiwa people in cattle care are mostly found in the Morigaon district. Alluvial sandy soil and sub-tropical humid climate support the luxuriant growth of these plants. These plants are gradually disappearing from the environment due to interference of man in environment. Most of forest areas are occupied by human for settlement, agricultural land and industrial development which resulted habit destruction and loss of plant spices permanently.

**Table 1:** Plant names and their use in cattle care by the Tiwas of Morigaon district

| Sl. No. | Botanical names                    | Family        | Local name | Use   |
|---------|------------------------------------|---------------|------------|---|
| 1       | <i>Alpinia nigra</i> (Gaerth) Burt | Zingiberaceae | Tara       | Fiber: on the day of Bihu, new rope is gifted to the cattle to tie in the caw-shaed. In this new rope making process for cattle, some pieces of this fiber is mixed with the <i>Corchorus capsularis</i> fiber.   |
| 2       | <i>Areca catechu</i> L.            | Arecaceae     | Tamul      | Sheath: it is use in packing of the collected <i>Solanum melongena</i> , <i>Lagenaria siecraia</i> , <i>Carallia brachiata</i> and <i>Curcuma</i> slices stitching with smooth stick made of <i>Bambusa jatiata</i> which is taken to near by river bank and pond where cattle are drive to bath on the occasion with traditional Bihu song and drum. |
| 3       | <i>Bambusa assamica</i> L.         | Poaceae       | Jatibah    | Middle portion: <i>Bambusa assamica</i> is cut into 30 to 35 long pieces in smooth triangular shaped stick and slices of fruits are stitch to it, becomes easy to handle at the time of throwing over the cattale body after bath on the river bank and pond with a mild speed. It is locally called "Shuttbari".                                     |

|    |  |                |            |   |
|----|--|----------------|------------|---|
| 4  | <i>Brassica campestris</i> (L.) claphan            | Brassicaceae   | Sariah     | Oil: while the cattles are prepering for bath oil is mixed with grinded <i>Curcuma longa</i> , <i>Phaseolus munga</i> and apply on the cattale body.  |
| 5  | <i>Calamus rotang</i> (H.Bent)                     | Arecaceae      | Bet        | Ash: to repel the fly, Gnarty louse, Tick from cattle body, cure infacted skin and care their hair this ash is mixed with <i>Brassica campestris</i> and stamped all over the cattles body with a small piece of <i>Musa gigantia</i> plant before bathing.   |
| 6  | <i>Carrallia barchiata</i> (Lour) Merr             | Phizophoraceae | Thepkera   | Fruit: slices of fruits throws over the cattle body with other fruits after bath because of its sour test may prevent cattle skin from fly, Gnat, louse, tick attack.   |
| 7  | <i>Clerodendrum indicum</i> L.                     | Verbinaceae    | Bhetai     | Stem and leaf: to beat and drive the cattle on the bihu and five days from the bihu stem with leaf of <i>Verbinaceae</i> use as sick. To prevent the cattle from the attack of fly and mosquito Gant, smoke and smell of <i>Verbinaceae</i> is given by burying the leaf at the gate and cow shed. The leaf taste bitter and its help in preventing the worm and insects.   |
| 8  | <i>Corchorus capsularis</i> L.                     | Tilaceae       | Marapat    | Fiber: on the day of Bihu, cattle are gifted new rope and new ropes are made by the fiber <i>Tilaceae</i> and tie the cattle with new rope at the cow shed. For the five days, bullocks are tie with three pices of new rope, cow and calf each are tie with one rope.  |
| 9  | <i>Curcuma longa</i> L.                            | Zingiberaceae  | Haladhi    | Rhizome: before both, grind <i>curcuma longa</i> mixed with <i>Barssica campestris</i> soil apply in the infected sking and massage the cattle body to grow hair and to repel fly, Gant, Louse, tick from the skin and after bath slice of <i>Curcuma longa</i> used to throw over the cattle body. <i>Curcuma longa</i> use in skin and hair care of cattle.   |
| 10 | <i>Cynodon dactylon</i> Pers.                      | Poaceae        | Dubari     | Leaf: on the day of bihu, in eveing, the legs of bullock are wash in the cawshed with water mixed with five leaf of <i>cynodon dactylon</i> and few rice in a pot.  |
| 11 | <i>Gossypium herbaceum</i> Linn.                   | Malvaceae      | Kapah      | Fiber: one to two inch long pieces of <i>Malvaceae</i> put in the new rope with on leaf of <i>Ocimum sanctum</i> in every new rope before tie tie the cattle in cow shed. In evening, <i>Malvaceae</i> is used in lighting using <i>Barssica campestris</i> oil.  |
| 12 | <i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> Standl.                 | Cucurbitaceae  | Panilaou   | Fruit: slices of fruits throws over the cattle body after bath with a traditional song "Laou kha -Bengena kha-Bachar-Bachar-Barhija-Baper saru-Mayer saru-Toi ha bor garu".   |
| 13 | <i>Litsea salicifolia</i> (Roxb) Ex.Nees., Hoof.f. | Lauraceae      | Dighallati | Stem and leaf: to beat and drive the cattle to the river bank or pond to bath and when beat the cattle with <i>lauraceaea</i> traditional song was sung " Dighal lati dighal pat, garu kubaou jat-jat". Leaf are brun with <i>Verbinaceae</i> at the gate and cow shed to give smoke and small to the cattle in the evening when cattle return to home to prevent the mosquito and gnat.  |
| 14 | <i>Murraya koenighii</i> Spreng                    | Rutaceae       | Nasingha   | Stem and leaf: cattles are beat by the stem of <i>Rutaceae</i> for five day from bihu to protect them from fly, gnat and thus give the sent over the cattle body to prevent from attack of Louse and Tick. Leaf are burn to give smoke and smell to repel the mosquito and gnat at cowshed.   |
| 15 | <i>Musa gigantea</i> Duthic                        | Musaceae       | Bhimkal    | Leaf: Aportion of leaf is use to keep all the collected fruits and rhizome items at the time of slicing .   |
| 16 | <i>Ocimum sanctum</i> Linn                         | Lamiaceae      | Tulasi     | Leaf: one leaf os <i>lamiaceae</i> put in new rope before tie the cattle in the cowshed in the evening on the day of bihu.  |
| 17 | <i>Oryza sativa</i> L.                             | Poaceae        | Dhan       | Straw, rice and seed cote: in the evening on the day of bihu, to give smoke and smell, straw and seed cote with <i>Xanthium strumerium</i> plant, <i>Vitex negendo</i> leaf, <i>Polygonum glabrum</i> plant, <i>Murry koenighii</i> leaf, <i>Litsea solilibolia</i> leaf , <i>Clerodendrum indicum</i> leaf burn at the gate od every family and in cow shed to the cattle, locally called "Jag" to drive away the fly, gnat and mosquito from the cattle body. |
| 18 | <i>Phaseolus mungo</i> L.                          | Leguminaceae   | Matimah    | Seed: In moring before bath cattle are massage with a peast made of grinded seed of <i>leguminaceae</i> mixed with <i>Barssica campestris</i> oil all over the body for skin and hair care and repel the tick and ouse. It is locally known as "Garu nuwa"  |

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|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---|
| 19 | <i>Polygonum glabrum</i> L.   | Polygonaceae            | Bihlangani | Whole plant: the plant is put in the "Jag" to give smoke and small to the cattle in the cow shed and gates of families to repel the mosquito and gnat.  |
| 20 | <i>Solanum melongena</i> L.   | Solanaceae              | Bengena    | Fruit: Slices of <i>Solanaceae</i> stitched with <i>Solanum melongena</i> , <i>Curcuma loga</i> , <i>Carallia barchiata</i> and throw the cattle body after bath on the river bank by singing a traditional song "Laou kha -Bengena kha-Bachar-Bachar-Barhija-Baper saru-Mayer saru-Toi ha bor garu". |
| 21 | <i>Vitex negenda</i> L.       | Verbinaceae             | Pachatia   | Leaf: few <i>Verbinaceae</i> leaf use in jag to give smoke and smell to the cattle's body to prevent the mosquito and gnat.   |
| 22 | <i>Xanthium strumerium</i> L. | Compositae (Asteraceae) | Agara      | Whole plant: two to three of this plants is put in the "Jag" to give smoke and small to the cattle in the cow shed and gates of families to repel the mosquito and gnat in the evening on the day of bihu.  |

### Acknowledgement

Authors are thankful to Dr. Sheemanta Jyoti Deka, Department of Botany, Goalpara College, Goalpara for providing help and suggestion in preparation of this paper.

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