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Study of Indigenous Knowledge, Attitude and Practice in Primary Health Care in Tribal Communities of Oyan Village of East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The richness of the flora of north eastern region is well known to all. This region is a part of the Himalayas is ranging from the eastern part of Nepal, passing through Sikkim, Darjeeling part of West Bengal, Bhutan, Abor hills of Arunachal Pradesh and ultimately coming down to the plains in Myanmar. This region represents an important part of the Indo-Myanmar biodiversity hotspot, one of the 25 global biodiversity recognized currently. The Northeastern region of India is a home to a myriad tribal and other ethnic indigenous group of people. As they are tribe, their association with forest is intimate and plays an important role in their daily life, their culture, religious belief and practices, worship of nature, folklores and cosmologies of most of these indigenous societies maintain a conservationist ethos in order to sustain their natural resource base.

The East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh has a vast biodiversity of floral and faunal wealth, because of its typical eco-climatic conditions. Due to its varied topography, climate and altitudinal conditions, this region is blessed with a matchless wealth of Medicinal plants which grow wild and are enormous in numbers and varied in characters. Oyan village of East Siang district is a hilly region with rich diversity of medicinal plants which are used by Arunachalee tribes as their traditional home remedies.

Methodology included a survey on the traditional herbal treatment of the Arunachalees was initiated by the number of families of medicine men engaged in tribal medical practices. Data collection and analysis by comprehensive questionnaires containing the local names of plants, parts used, dosage, method of preparation and administration were carefully documented through interviews with them and knowledgeable persons of the locality.

However, due to the lack of systematic study, the valuable information is still within the barrier of traditional folklore. Hence, an attempt is made in this paper to focus certain ethnomedicinal plants which are used traditionally by Oyan villagers of East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.

This study thus underlines the potentials of herbal practice and the need for documentation of indigenous knowledge pertaining the medicine utilization for the greater benefit of mankind.

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Introduction

The northeast region of India comprising the seven states, popularly known as seven sisters can be physiographical categorized into the eastern Himalayas, Northeast hills and the Brahmaputra and Barak valley plains. Northeast India is the home for more than 166 separate tribes. The northeast India- rich in plant diversity are a part of the biodiversity hotspot in Eastern Himalayas. Out of the recorded over 10,000 species of plants living on the Himalayas 31.6% are known to be endemic. Innumerable human activities cause wide scale modifications or loss of

natural habitat rendering these plant resources difficult to find ways for normal survival.

Arunachal Pradesh is a hilly region with rich biodiversity and is habitat of the different tribes, races and communities of human population. These groups of people use the medicinal plants and utilize herbal medicines for the treatment of various diseases. It is to such beliefs and practices regarding health and disease, which are products of indigenous cultural development and not explicitly derived from the conceptual frame work of modern medicine, that the term "Ethno-medicine" is applied according to Hughes (1968). With keeping view in this regard this study attempts to document on the ethnomedicinal plants used by the folkmen of Oyan village of East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh and also to highlight the indigenous knowledge and beliefs of the communities with respect to nature have reflect their life, activities, skill, value addition, cultural and ritual practices.

The villagers protect the landscape out of fear of a deity and due to the presence of traditionally used plant materials from the forest, which are also economically important and a good reason for the conservation of biodiversity for the future, R.K. Bhakat(1990). As aptly pointed out by Tribhuwan and Gambhir (1995), every culture, has its own beliefs and practices regarding health and disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 4 billion people or 80 percent of the world's population use herbal medicine for some aspect of primary health care. According to Ved Prakash (1998), more than 20,000 species of higher plants are used as medicines in the traditional treatment practices of indigenous cultures living around the world. Investigations on growth performance of medicinal

Asian Resonance

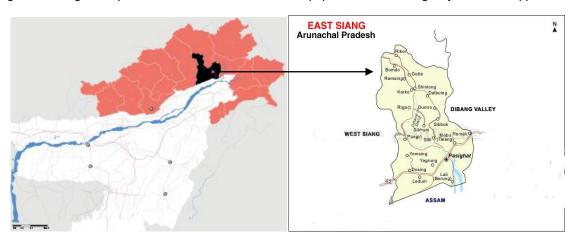
plants have gained adequate attention in India. Historically, the tribal community of India has adopted the nature as their habitats. Their subsistence pattern, economic, social institutions, beliefs and practices have been close linked with the environment. Since time immemorial tribal have been living in the forest, hills and naturally isolated regions, known by different names. The popular names are Adivasi (first-settlers), Vanyajati (castes of forest), Vanvasi (inhabitants of forest) Amitabha Sarkar & S. Dasgupta (2000). But, the fear of fallibility in the use of the clandestine knowledge in locating, identifying plants with associated modalities of their use has increased, due to the lack of attention of young adults, for the slow creeping of modernism into their capsule-like closed society; and those may vanish even, S. Das, S.K. Dash & S.N. Pandhy. Also, the Ethnomedicinal plants for women health care are common in this part of the world, P.C. Trivedi & N.K. Sharma (2004). So, it is important to identify the bioactive compound present in plant and its proper medicinal use, Anonymous (2005).

Objectives

Objective of the study was to document the herbal medicines used by indigenous people of Oyan village of East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. To identify the medicinal plants in different habitat, the procedure of the preparation and the use of the medicine by the traditional healer.

Study Area

The study area, Oyan village of East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh lies between 27°43' and 29°20' N Latitude to 94°42' and 95°35' E Longitude. The altitude of the area is 155m above sea level. The population of the village Oyan is 2600 approx.



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Methodology

Methodology included a survey of the number of families of medicinal man engaged in traditional medicine practices. During the course of investigation, the entire and adjoining areas both forest and non forest of the locality of Oyan village was surveyed.

Information regarding the ailment, dosage, method of preparation, administration, plant identification etc. was carefully documented through interviews, questionnaires, discussion and observation of knowledgeable and experienced persons, villagers, headmen of the village, foresters and local medicinal healers. Quadrate sampling technique was followed for the study of diversity and the abundance of plant population in the Oyan village and the neighbouring areas of East Siang district.

Result and Discussion

Present study includes information recorded by interviewing of traditional herbal healers from adjacent areas of Oyan village of East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The East Siang district is harbours of numerous varieties of medicinal plants of which only thirty plant species are recorded here.

Medicinal healer, out of their own experience and knowledge they can easily define the disease that a patient suffers from. Observing and recognizing the symptoms are most reliable methods of diagnosis for the healer. Feeling the patient's pulse of heart beat is the first step in starting the diagnosis. For diseases like Jaundice, Leucorrhoea, Diabetes, Stomach ache etc. the patient's urine colour tests are also done as a process of diagnosis. For broken bones or intestinal disorders, they may also touch and feel the aching **Data Collection:**

(A) Identified Medicinal Plants

Scientific Name Used for Part used Local No. Name Aada Modified stem Zingiber officinalie Cold and Cough Akon Gum Calotropis gigantea Septic Amita Fruits Carica papaya Gastric, antifertility Amlokhi Emblica officinalis Fruits Skin disease Terminalia arjuna Heart weakness Arjun Bark Ban jaluk Whole plant Oldenlandia corymbosa Gastric Belipoka Stem Thadiantha cordifolia Anti-fertility

part.

Different parts of plants are processed in several ways before its administration to a patient as a paste, juice, infusion, or tea, as powder, decoction and plants are also used in the form of syrup linctuses, pills and tablets etc. The quadrate study also reveals that semi natural habitat of Oyan has moderate amount of medicinal diversity. increasing population pressure of Oyan also leads to the loss of various medicinal plants and most of the people ignore the significance of medicinal plants. The quadrate sampling studies in ten selected sites shows that the diversity of medicinal plant is higher in the natural habitat than the semi-natural habitat, since natural habitat is less exposed to the human interferes than the semi-natural habitat. The density, frequency and relative abundance shows that the medicinal plant is in moderate amount in both semi-natural and natural habitat. The density represents the number of plants in a particular area, the calculated value of density is 1.002 individuals/m2 is clearly indicates that more competition is there within the species, because the density of the medicinal plant is higher in study sites which grown along with other plant species.

The utilization and exploitation of the medicinal plant is very frequent. Sometimes the people for using barks as medicine they take out the whole plant. The local practitioner always collects a good number of medicinal plants from their habitat for preparing medicine daily. If such type of activities and exploitation is continue without taking any conservation measure it will be detrimental to the medicinal plant diversity of Oyan village of East-Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh.

P: ISSN No. 0976-8602

E: ISSN No. 2349 - 9443

Asian Resonance

Date: 24- 12-2009

8.	Bel	Fruits	Aegele marmelos	Gastric
9.	Bon amlokhi	Whole plant	Phylanthus niruri	Gastric
10.	Bongali ara	Gum	Jatropha curcus	Swollen Gum
11.	Bon kopahi	Leaves	Abroma augusta	Septic
12.	Chalkunwari	Leaf and Leaf pulp	Aloe vera	Burns, wounds and cut
13.	Chotiona	Bark	Alostonia scholaris	Jaundice, Malaria
14.	Daalim	Bark	Punica granatum	Tapeworm
15.	Dimoru	Leaves	Ficus glomerala	Asthma
16.	Halodhi	Modified stem	Curcurma longa	Body pain
17.	Jaaluk	Fruit	Piper nigrum	Sore throat, Arthritis
18.	Jetuka	Leaves	Lawsoria inermis	Skin disease, headache
19.	Kalmegh	Leaves	Andrographis paniculata	Fever, dysentery
20.		Whole plant	Cantella asiatica	Stomach pain
21.	Modhuri	Tender leaves	Psidium guayava	Dysentery
22.	Narji phool	Leaves	Tagetes patula	Cuts and Wounds
23.	Neem	Leaves	Azadirachta indica	Skin disease
24.	Panitenga	Leaves	Marsilea quardrifolia	Kidney stone
25.	Papal	Fruit	Piper longrum	Body pain and Bronchitis
26.	Pudina	Leaves	Mentha viridis	Stomach and indigestion
27.	Sajeena	Bark	Moringa oleifera	Antifertility
28.	Sewali	Leaves	Nyctanthes arbor-tristis	Malaria, diabetes
29.	Teteli	Fruits	Tamarindus indica	Fever
30.	Tulsi	Leaves	Ocimum sanctum	Skin disease

(B) Quadrate sampling Quadrate no. 1

Place- Oyan (VKV) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of Plants	Remarks	
No.						
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	12	Herbs	Average	
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	23	Herbs	Average	
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	08	Shrubs	Average	
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	12	Herbs	Average	
5.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	10	Herbs	Average	
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	13	Shrubs	Average	
7.	7. Bon kopahi Abroma augusta		09	Herbs	Moderate	
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia anetala	12	Shrubs	Moderate	
	Total no. of individuals		99			

Date: 19- 01-2010 Quadrate no. 2

Place- Oyan (River bank) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

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SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants Habits of plants		Remarks	
No.						
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	11	Herbs	Average	
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	20	Shrubs	Average	
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	11	Herbs	Average	
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	15	Herbs	Average	
5.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	19	Herbs	Average	
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	17	Shrubs	Average	
7.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	14	Herbs	Average	
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia anetala	12	Shrubs	Average	
	Total no. of individuals		119			

P: ISSN No. 0976-8602

E: ISSN No. 2349 - 9443

Asian Resonance

Date: 28- 01-2010 Quadrate no. 3

Place- Oyan (Village area) Altitude- 1		ea) Altitude- 155 m	Re	marks- Average	
SI.	Local Name	cal Name Scientific Name		Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	14	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	22	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	11	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	11	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	12	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	14	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	07	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	ukurajar <i>Celosia anetala</i>		Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		102		

Date: 13-02-2010 Quadrate no. 4

Place- Oyan (Lower river bank) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name No. of Plants Habits of plant		Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	20	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	12	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	08	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	15	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	12	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	17	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	14	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	12	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		100		•

Date: 15- 02-2010 Quadrate no. 5

Place- Oyan (VKV) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	12	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	11	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	11	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	12	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	18	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	12	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	10	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	08	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		94		

Date: 21-02-2010 Quadrate no. 6

Place- Oyan (Village area) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	18	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	12	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	11	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	13	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	14	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	07	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	12	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	13	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		100		

Asian Resonance

Date: 04- 03-2010 Quadrate no. 7

Place- Oyan (VKV)				ks- Average	
SI.	Local Name Scientific Name		No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	15	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	20	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	14	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	06	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	11	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	09	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	11	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	13	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individ	duals	99		

Date: 06- 03-2010 Quadrate no. 8

Place- Oyan (Forest area) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	12	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	20	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	13	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	06	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	13	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	13	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	12	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	11	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of indiv	iduals	100		

Date: 18- 03-2010 Quadrate no. 9

Place- Oyan (Lowland area) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	12	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	23	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	06	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	10	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	08	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	12	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	10	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia cristata	10	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		91		

Date: 27-03-2010 Quadrate no. 10

Place- Oyan (River bank) Altitude- 155 m Remarks- Average

SI.	Local Name	Scientific Name	No. of Plants	Habits of plants	Remarks
No.					
1.	Manimuni	Cantella asiatica	11	Herbs	Average
2.	Dubori bon	Cynodon dactylon	12	Herbs	Average
3.	Bonguti	Chrysopogon aciculatus	15	Shrubs	Average
4.	Panitenga	Marsilea quardrifolia	07	Herbs	Average
5.	Bon jaaluk	Oldenlandia corymbosa	19	Herbs	Average
6.	Kachoo	Colocasia escluenta	11	Shrubs	Average
7.	Bon amlokhi	Phyllanthus neuri	12	Herbs	Average
8.	Kukurajar	Celosia anetala	11	Shrubs	Average
	Total no. of individuals		98		

Evaluation

Site no. 1 Total no. of Individuals 99 Site no. 2 Total no. of Individuals 119 Site no. 3 Total no. of Individuals = 102 Site no. 4 Total no. of Individuals 100 Site no. 5 Total no. of Individuals 94 Site no. 6 Total no. of Individuals 100 Site no. 7 Total no. of Individuals 99 Site no. 8 Total no. of Individuals 100 Site no. 9 Total no. of Individuals 91 Site no. 10 Total no. of Individuals 98

Total number individuals in 10 (Ten) sites = 1002

To study the population of medicinal plant diversity we need Density, relative abundance, Frequency and Relative frequency as follows:-

(A) Density = No. of Individual of the selected species/Sampling unit area = 1002 / 1000 m² X 10 = 1.002 Individuals / m²

(B) Relative abundance = Total no. of Individuals

of the selected species /Total No. of individuals on the sampling X 100

= 1002 / 1002 X 100

= 100 individuals / sampling
(C) Frequency = Total no. of individuals in

 Total no. of individuals in all the samplings / no. of Samplings

= 1002 / 10

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(D) Relative frequency = Total no. of individuals all the samplings / No. of Samplings X 100 = 1002 / 10 X 100 = 10020

We have calculated the Density, Relative abundance, Frequency, and Relative frequency for Manimuni, Scientific name- *Centella asiatica*, which are as follows:-

Total number of individuals in 10 (Ten) samples = 12 + 20 + 14 + 20 + 12 + 18 + 15 + 12 + 12 + 11=146 = 146

(a) Density = $146 / 1000 \text{ m}^2 \text{ X } 10$

= 1.46 Individuals / m²

(b) Relative abundance = 146 / 1002 X 100

=14.60 Individuals/sampling

(c) Frequency = 146 / 10

= 14.6 no. of Individuals/ sampling

(d) Relative frequency = $146 / 10 \times 100 = 1460$

Data sheet for understanding exploitation / utilization of medicinal plants:

Date: - 07- 04-2010

Name and address of the Informer:

1) Mr. Santiram Pao Vill. - Oyan. P.O. - Sille Dist. East Siang (Arunachal Pradesh)

Place:- Oyan, Age:- 41 yrs

2) Mr. Sundar Bori Mr. Santiram Pao Vill. - Oyan. P.O. - Sille Dist. East Siang (Arunachal Pradesh) Place:- Oyan, Age:- 55 yrs

SI.	Local Name	Scientific	Quantity	Frequency of	Parts Used	Remarks
No.		Name	No./Kg	Collection		
1.	Neem	Azadirachta indica	100gms in 1 time	Frequent	Leaves	Destructive
2.	Amita	Carica papaya	2-4 seeds in 1 time	Frequent	Seeds	Non-destructive
3.	Manimuni	Centella asiatica	10-15gms in 1 time	Frequent	Whole plant	Destructive
4.	Chotiona	Alostomia scholaris	1-2kg in 1 time	Frequent	Bark	Destructive
5.	Belipoka	Thaladiantha cordifolia	1 creeper at 1 time	Occasionally	Stem	Non-destructive
6.	Sajeena	Moringa oleifera	1-2kg at a time	Occasionally	Bark	Destructive
7.	Bongali ara	Jatriopha curcus	5-10gms at a time	Occasionally	Leave stalk	Non-destructive
8.	Jetuka	Lawsoria inermis	3-4 roots at a time	Occasionally	Roots	Destructive
9.	Sewali	Nyctanythus arbortritis	10-20gms at a time	Frequent	Leaves	Non-destructive
10.	Bel	Aegele marmelos	2-3 seeds at a time	Frequent	Seeds	Non-destructive
11.	Tulsi	Ocimum sanctum	10-30gms at a time	Frequent	Leaves	Destructive
12.	Bon amlokhi	Phylanthus niruri	20-40gms at a time	Frequent	Leaves	Destructive
13.	Modhuri	Psidium guayava	5-10gms at a time	Frequent	Tender leaves	Non-destructive
14.	Daalim	Punica gunatum	0.5-1kg at a time	Occasionally	Bark	Destructive
15.	Pudina	Mentha viridis	10-20gms at a time	Frequent	Whole plant	Destructive
16.	Arjun	Terminalia arjuna	1-2kg at a time	Occasionally	Bark	Destructive
17.	Jaaluk	Piper nigrum	10-20gms at a time	Frequent	Fruits	Non-destructive
18.	Chalknowri	Aloe vera	5-10gms at a time	Frequent	Leaf and pulp	Non- destructive
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Conclusion

It has been concluded from the study that the indigenous people always try to utilize the medicinal plant which are easily accessible to them. For this reasons each tribe have its own ethnological medical knowledge system according to which they exploit the nature for their well being. But unfortunately, because of the over exploitation, shrinkage of forest areas and

many other reasons, this traditional knowledge have been diminishing for which collection and documentation of this knowledge in of utmost importance before this knowledge is lost forever.

The benefit of indigenous knowledge can be improved upon by its appropriate use, establishing the knowledge with the modern technology by separating the effective compounds and also by encouraging the

herbal practitioner as well as villagers for their cultivation which will lead to its conservation and socio-economic development.

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Asian Resonance

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