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Wild vegetables wealth of North-east Manipur used as traditional folk medicines: A review

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Manipur, one of the easternmost frontier states of India, bordering Myanmar in the East and South-East, is within the “Indo-Burma centre of biodiversity hotspots” of global significance. Most of these hotspots are inhabited by people who are socio-economically poor, and include a large number of ethnic groups who hold a treasure trove of traditional knowledge on nutritional and medicinal value of natural bio-resources. 1200 species of medicinal plants are reported and the known local biodiversity includes 430 medicinal plants species. The dominant indigenous communities of Manipur include the Meetei, Naga, Kuki and other small communities like Manipuri Muslim. An eons ago, the indigenous local inhabitants have had a wide proficiency about the uses of traditional bio-resources, either food or medicine in their day-to-day life. The traditional healers, locally called “Maiba” for males and “Maibi” for females, play a crucial role in village health care. More than 90% of the village people are dependent on such traditional healthcare systems. In spite of that, the knowledge concerning ethno-medicine is vanishing along with “Maiba and Maibis” (old medicines men and women or local healers), due to the invading, so called modern culture which are alien to the community. Hence, the present review paper highlights more than 100 indigenous vegetables wealth and their uses as traditional folk medicine, a practice on the plight of peril in the region, by various ethnics group of Manipur since long before recorded history.

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