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Impact of Covid- 19 on Herbal Sector; an Opportunity for Development of Traditional Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Based Natural Products for Rural and Societal Development

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Abstract

In the wake of novel Covid 19 pandemic the entire mankind is suffering as there is no proven medicine available as of now, therefore it would be good to take immunity booster medicine as a preventive medicine. As herbal products are considered safer than synthetic modern drugs all over the world. Hence with the Covid-19 outbreak, the use of herbs as herbal ingredients in the formulation of herbal medicines as well as other herbal products around the world is anticipated to increase significantly. This provides an opportunity for promoting MAPs sector for sustainable development. Looking at the importance of medicinal and aromatic plants based natural products for rural and societal development. Herbal Research and Development institute (HRDI) Gopeshwar, Uttarakhand, India made experimental studies on development of models of herbal gardens suited to various habitats of a region for developing range of herbal products. The results of experimental study demonstrated the development of concepts of innovative herbal gardens like aquatic herbal gardens, rock herbal gardens, orchid herbal gardens and ornamental herbal gardens besides the traditional home herbal gardens like demonstration herbal gardens, home herbal gardens etc. Also the results of field study based on primary and secondary data collecting traditional medicinal and aromatic plants led to the development of six categories of herbal products viz pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmeceuticals, aromaceuticals, herbal disinfectants, repellents and culinary herbs based natural products. These herb based products have been displayed in “Herbal Museum” at Mandal, Gopeshwar. With the covid-19 outbreak the species which came into limelight are *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Andrographis paniculata*, *Withania somnifera*, *Glycyrrhia glabra*, *Ocimum sanctum*, *Asparagus racemosus*, *Adhatoda vasica* etc. It is expected that the development of such herbal products would help in promoting awareness for cultivation, conservation of indigenous rare and endangered medicinal plants for rural and societal development across the world. Further there would be a need for research on herbal medicine on Covid19 like diseases; as traditional medicinal and aromatic plants based natural products would also help in treating such diseases and common health problems like colds etc.

Keywords: HRDI Gopeshwar, Herbal gardens, Herbal museum, Societal development, Covid 19