



Importance Of Plants In Different Festivals Of Hadoti Region, Rajasthan, India

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ABSTRACT :

India is the country of festivals. Many festivals are celebrated in different states of India in different ways. Rajasthan has its own specific festivals in different regions. Hadoti region has its specific festivals which are celebrated with specific ways and rituals. Plants play very important role in completing festivals directly or indirectly. Due to the abundances of festival in Rajasthan, it is said that “Nine festivals are celebrated in Seven days in Rajasthan”. In Rajasthan, festivals start from ‘Shravana teej’ while ends with ‘Chaitra Gangaur’. There is a proverb about it “तीज त्योहरा बावड़ी ले डूबी गणगौर”(Teej Tyoharan Bawadi le Doobi Ganguar). Certain plants are used in daily routine worship in Hadoti region of Rajasthan, while some are used in particular festival or occasion. Importance of plants in festivals of Hadoti Region of Rajasthan, have been communicated in present work.

KEYWORDS: Diwali, Festival, Hadoti, Holi, Ritual, Traditional, Worship.

INTRODUCTION :

Rajasthan has nine different regions, e.g., Dhundar, Godwad, Hadoti, Marwad, Merwara, Mewar, Mewat, Shekhwati, and Vagad. The Hadoti region is situated in the southeast part of Rajasthan. There are four districts in Hadoti region: Baran, Bundi, Jhalawar, and Kota. Many festivals are celebrated in the Hadoti region over the year. Different Gods and Goddesses are worshiped on different festivals. Plants have a very important role in the worship. Different flowers are dedicated to God in worship. Some plants are used in daily routine worship, like ‘Doob ghas’ (Durva grass), *Cynodon dactylon*, and ‘kel’ leaves *Canna indica* is commonly used in worship of Lord Ganesha, and ‘Bel patra’ leaves of *Aegle marmelos* are dedicated to Lord Shiva (On Shivling). The plants used in worship will never be destroyed; hence, these plants are conserved.

Conservation of plants has been the tradition and history of Rajasthan. The best example for the conservation of plants is the ‘Chipko Movement’. In 1730, about 363 people of the Bishnoi Community sacrificed their lives under the leadership of Amrita Devi Bishnoi against the deforestation of the Khejadi tree (*Prosopis cineraria*) in Khejarli village district, Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

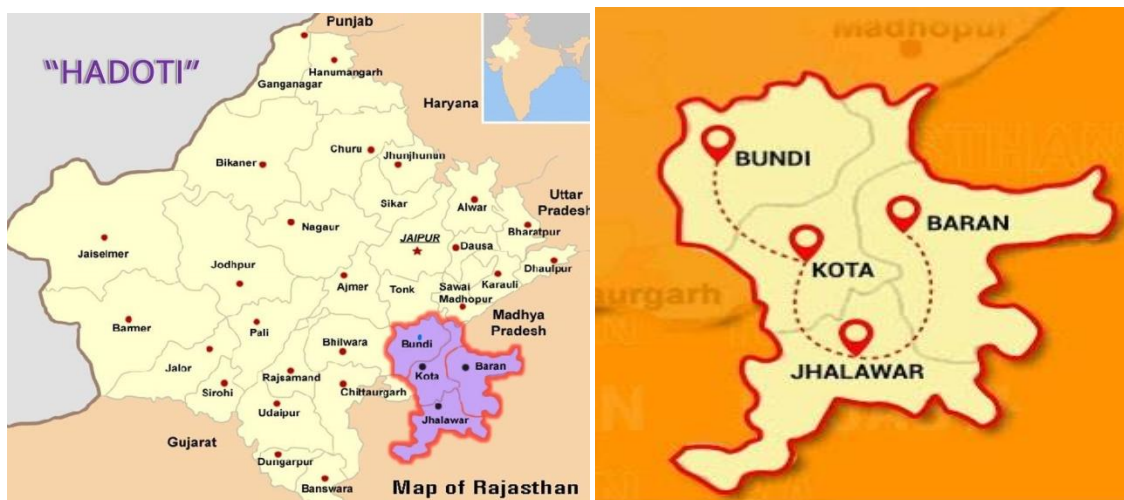


Fig A - Map of the Study Area

According to Hindu culture, all festivals are celebrated according to 'Tithis' (date). Every year is divided into twelve Hindi 'Mah' (month) namely 'Chaitra', 'Vaishakha', 'Jyeshtha', 'Ashadha', 'Shravana', 'Bhadrapad', 'Ashwin', 'Kartika', 'Margshirsha' (Agrahayana), 'Pausha', 'Magha', and 'Phalgun'. Every Hindi 'Mah' (month) is divided in 'Shukla paksha' and 'Krishna paksha'. Every Shukla paksha starts from 'Ekam' (pratipada or padwa) and ends with 'Purnima' while every Krishna paksha ends with 'Amavasya'. Hence the Hindi 'Mah' starts from Krishna paksha Ekam and ends with Shukla paksha Purnima.

Hadoti region covers Kota division of Rajasthan and includes Kota, Bundi, Jhalawar and Baran districts respectively. This is a part of south-east Rajasthan. Hadoti plateau is situated at the edge of the Malwa plateau at 23°45' to 25°53' N latitude and 75°9' to 77°26' E longitude in the south eastern corner of Rajasthan. The present paper deals with importance of plants in festivals of Hadoti region of Rajasthan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS :

The author visited many places, and observed the process of worship in different areas of Hadoti region of Rajasthan. The author prepared a list of plants used in worship for the particular festival. The author also discussed about the importance of plants, used for the particular festival. Many related literatures were reviewed. Research papers related with sacred grooves specially studied and many related information were obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS :

Most of festivals are participated by women. On the festivals women do 'Vrat' or 'Upwas' and worship particular God or 'Lokdevta'. For worship all women of the particular place or colony, collect at a place and process together where they listen myths stories related to the particular festival. Some festivals are celebrated at own home with family. Different plants or their plant parts are used in different festivals which are shown in Table -1 and Figure B, C, D and E.

TABLE – 1

Different plants or plant parts used in different festivals of study area

Sr. No.	Name of Festival	'Tithi'	Plant/ Plant part used	Botanical Name of the Plant Species
1.	Sheetala Ashtami	Chaitra Krishna Ashtami	Oliya: A food made up of rice and Soaked gram. These are offer to 'Sheetala Mata'.	<i>Oryza sativa</i> , <i>Cicer arietinum</i>
2.	Dasha Mata Pooja	Chaitra Krishna Dashami	Women worship Dasha Mata. They wrap a cotton thread around the 'Peepal' tree and also wear in their necks.	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> , <i>Gossypium hirsutum</i>
3.	Navratri Sthapana	ChaitraShukla Pratipada & Ashwina Shukla Pratipada	Barley seeds are sown in a clay pot in front of 'Maa Durga' idol.	<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>
4.	Gangaur (Isar-Gaur)	ChaitraShukla Tritiya	This festival is completely dedicated to women. On this day women worship Lord Shiv and Goddess Parvati. 'Doob ghas' (Durva grass) is important in this worship.	<i>Cynodondactylon</i>
5.	Durga Asgtami & Ram Navami	ChaitraShukla Ashtami & Navami, Ashwina Shukla Ashtami & Navami	'Diyadipoojan' means every lineage has its own plant as a deity that is worshiped on Ashtami or Navami e.g. Caperberry, Babool, Peepal etc.	<i>Capparis decidua</i> , <i>Vachellia nilotica</i> , <i>Ficus religiosa</i>
6.	Akshay Tritiya (Aakha Teej)	Vaishakha Shukla Tritiya	Seasonal fruits like Cucumber, and wheat grains, gram split grains are kept in worship and after donated.	<i>Cucumis sativus</i> , <i>Triticum aestivum</i> , <i>Cicer arietinum</i>
7.	Vat Savitri Vrat	Jyeshtha Krishna Amavasya	Banyan Trees (Vat Vriksh) are worshiped by women	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i>
8.	Nirjala Ekadashi	Jyeshtha Shukla Ekadashi	Women do not drink water on this day till the worship. After worship they donate a kalash full of water, mango and hand fan (Bijni- made up of date palm leaves) then drink water.	<i>Mangifera indica</i> , <i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>

9.	Devshayni Ekadashi (Dev sovaniGyaras)	Ashadha Shukla Ekadashi	Worship of holy basil (Tulsi) plant, on this day girls make cloth dolls and flow them in river. Boys catch the dolls from river then girls give them wheat 'Dhani'.	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i> , <i>Triticum aestivum</i>
10.	Hariyali Teej (Chhoti teej)	Shravan Shukla Tritiya	'Hariyali' means greenery. Plum plant (Ber) is worshiped on this day and soaked gram is offered.	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> and <i>Cicer arietinum</i>
11.	Raksha Bandhan	Shravan Shukla Purnima	On this day, sister ties Rakhi to her brother and give him coconut.	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>
12.	Kajari Teej/ Satidi Teej (Badi Teej)	Bhadrapada Krishana Tritiya	Margosa Plant (Nimadi) is worshiped on this day.	<i>Azadiracta indica</i>
13.	Shree Krishana Janmashtami	Bhadrapada Krishana Ashtami	Spiny gourd (Kikoda) vegetable is specially made on this day.	<i>Momordica dioica</i>
14.	Hartalika Teej	Bhadrapada Shukla Tritiya	Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are worshiped this day. Aak and Dhatura are used for worship.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> , <i>Calotropis gigantean</i> , <i>Datura innoxia</i>
15.	Ganesh Chaturthi	Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi	Lord Ganesh is worshiped on this day. 'Doob ghas' (Durva grass) and 'kel' and Banana plant leaves are commonly used in worship of Lord Ganesh.	<i>Cynodondactylon</i> , <i>Canna indica</i> , <i>Musa paradisiaca</i>
16.	Rishi Panchami	Bhadrapada Shukla Panchami	'Apamarga' plant (Andhijhada) is used in worship.	<i>Achyranthes aspara</i>
17.	Anant Chaturdashi	Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturdashi	Lord Vishnu and Goddess Laxmi are worshiped on this day and Anant Sutra is ties on wrist. A combination of five plants is used in the worship: Andhijhada, Ashoka (Ashapala), Ber, Doob grass and Kaans grass.	<i>Achyranthes aspara</i> , <i>Saraca indica</i> , <i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> , <i>Cynodondactylon</i> , <i>Saccharum spontaneum</i> .
18.	Pitrapaksh (Sraddh/ Shradh)	Bhadrapada Shukla poornima to Ashwina Krishna Amavasya	A ritual towards the Pitr (Dead Ancestors). Sponge gourd (Gilki) leaves are used to offer food in the worship.	<i>Luffa aegyptiaca</i>
19.	Sharad Poornima	Ashwina Shukla Poornima	Lord Chandra is worshiped on this day. Kheer is prepared and left in moonlight for the whole night and served next day.	<i>Oryza sativa</i>
20.	Karwa Chauth	Kartika Krishna Chaturthi	On this occasion women do '16 shringar' and worship 'Chauth Mata'. They also decorate their hands with henna (Mehndi).	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> .
21.	Dhanteras	Kartika Krishna Trayodashi	Lord Dhanwantari and Lord Kuber are worshiped on this day. Coriander and some medicinal uses plants and spices are kept in worship like Holy basil (Tulsi), Turmeric, Black pepper, etc.	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> , <i>Ocimum sanctum</i> , <i>Curcuma longa</i> , <i>Piper nigrum</i> .
22.	Diwali	Kartika Krishna Amavasya	Goddess Lakshmi is worshiped on this day. Lotus flower is very important in this worship. Other fruits like Jharber (bor), water chestnut (Singada) etc. and plant of sugarcane, sorghum (Jwar) are also kept in worship.	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i> , <i>Ziziphus nummularia</i> , <i>Trapa natans</i> , <i>Saccharum officinarum</i> , <i>Sorghum vulgare</i> .
23.	Govardhan Puja	Kartika Shukla Pratipada	'Govardhan ji' is made by cow dung. Bajara inflorescence and 'Apamarg' plant is kept in worship.	<i>Achyranthes aspara</i> . <i>Pennisetum typhoideum</i> .
24.	Amla Navami	Kartika Shukla Navami	Indian Goosberry plant (Amla) is worshiped on this day.	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> .
25.	Devutthana Ekadashi (Devathanigyaras)	Kartika Shukla Ekadashi	It is believed that on this day Lord Vishnu wakes up after four months	<i>Daucus carota</i> , <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> , <i>Ziziphus nummularia</i> ,

			(chaturmas). Carrot, Goosberry(Amla), Jharber, Gram etc. are used in worship.	<i>Cicer arietinum.</i>
26.	Tulsi Vivah	Kartika Shukla Dwadashi	'Mata Tulsi' (Holy basil) is married with Lord 'Shaligram' on this day. Turmeric paste and Sugarcanes are used in worship.	<i>Ocimum sanctum, Curcuma longa, Saccharum officinarum.</i>
27.	Makara Sakranti	14 January (The only Hindu festival that is celebrated according English calendar date.)	Lord 'Bhaskar' (Lord Sun or 'Surya Devta' is worshiped this day. 'Tilkutta' (Tilpatti) is prepared by sesame for worship.	<i>Sesamum indicum.</i>
28.	Holika Dahan	Phalgun Shukla Poomima	A Holika is made with dried wood and cow dung jug and fired it. Wheat ears and Gram plant are roasted in that fire and eaten for good health	<i>Triticum aestivum. Cicer arietinum.</i>
29.	Dhulandi (Holi)	Phalgun Krishna Pratipada	A festival of colors. People apply colors to each other. Colors are made with the flowers of different plants like Palash	<i>Butea monoperma.</i>
30.	Maha Shivratri	Phalgun Krishna Chaturdashi	Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are worshiped this day. Dhatura, Aak, Bel patra, and Bhang are offered to Lord Shiva.	<i>Calotropis gigantean, Calotropis procera, Datura stramonium, Aegle marmelos, Cannabis sativa.</i>



Fig B - Govardhan Poojan



Fig C - Women's Kalash Yatra



Fig D - Karawa Chauth Poojan



Fig E - Villager selling plants for 'Anant Chaudas Poojan'

In all Hindu festivals some flowers are commonly used for worship like *Tabernaemontana divaricate*, *Rosa species*, *Tegetes erecta*, *Tegetes petula*, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, *Magnolia champaca*, *Nelumbo nucifera*, *Nerium oleander*, *Cascabela thevetia*, *Chrysanthemum coronarium*, *Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium*, etc. Almost in all festivals some dry fruits, plant parts and plant products are used essentially in worship like 'Panchmeva', and others like Almonds (*Prunus dulcis*), Cashews (*Anacardium occidentale*), Kishmish (*Vitis Vinifera*), Makhana (*Euryale ferox*), Dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*), Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*), Betel (*Piper betle*), Cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*), Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*), Cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum*), Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), Areca Nut (*Areca catechu*), etc.

In most of festivals some seasonal fruits and other plant parts are commonly used in worship like Banana (*Musa paradisiaca*), Apple (*Malus domestica*), Guava (*Psidium guajava*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Custard apple (*Annona squamosa*), Grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), Ber (*Ziziphus mauritiana*) and Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*). Almost every festival woman does fast (upwas). Some special foods are prepared to eat in fast in which most of substances are plant products like Barn yard (*Echinochloa colonum*), Sago (*Cycus revoluta*), Potato chips (*Solanum tuberosum*), Banana chips (*Musa paradisiaca*), Kasava (*Manihot esculenta*), Ground nut (*Arachis hypogaea*), Water cashew nut (*Trapa natans*) and Amaranth (*Amaranthus cruentus*).

CONCLUSION :

Festivals are the source of happiness in human life. Lots of festivals are celebrated in Rajasthan. Hadoti region has its specific festivals which are celebrated with specific way and rituals. Plants play very important role in completing festivals directly or indirectly. The most important and big festival is 'Diwali' in 'Hindu' culture. In five day 'Diwali' festival many plants or plant parts are used in worship. Second big festival is 'Holi' in which colors are prepared from flowers or other plant plants. Festivals never be separated from human life and Plants never be separated from traditional Indian culture and festivals. In the present account, an attempt has been made to record and listed the different plants or their plant parts are used in different festivals in Hadoti Region of Rajasthan.

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