

Use of Aromatic and Medicinal Plants in Textiles for Sustainable Livelihood Management for Rural People

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India, with its varied agroclimatic conditions, provides an ideal habitat for several medicinal and aromatic plants. Since ancient times, these plants have been used as raw material in the Indian medicinal and cosmetic industry. With greater realization of health hazard and side effects of synthetic chemicals used in various aspects of textile industries, the interest for use of natural aromatic and medicinal plants is increasing worldwide. An estimated amount of US\$ 3000 million per annum is being earned from medicinal and aromatic plants from India. With the advancement of new researches and technologies, it has been observed that these herbal plants have a good scope in various fields of textile industries. The antibacterial properties of various natural medicinal products, such as clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*) oil, neem (*Azadirachta indica*) oil, tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) oil, and karanja (*Pongamia pinnata*) oil are used for getting bacteria-resist finish on fabrics in a completely eco-friendly way. Some plants like bamboo have many antibacterial qualities and are used for making fabrics for medicinal use (Medtech).¹ Many herbs are

being used for dyeing of textiles to make eco-friendly textiles by imparting medicinal values of herbs along with their natural color to textiles.

Uttarakhand, the 27th state of India, is famous for its rich resource of medicinal and aromatic plants. The occurrence of several valuable and economically important medicinal and aromatic herbs is due to the climatic, topographic, and soil diversity of this region. For example, in the epic Ramayana, Hanuman saved the life of Laxmana with *Sanjeevani Booti*, a plant that was available in Dronagiri Parvat situated in Uttarakhand Himalaya. This shows the potential of medicinal herbs of the region. Aromatic and medicinal plants, which are abundantly found in Uttarakhand, can be a good source of income for rural people if we explore their use in textiles, i.e., for the preparation of fabrics, finishing and dyeing of textile goods, etc. Thus, it is clear that Uttarakhand has inherent strength of natural aromatic and medicinal plants, which if utilized properly can contribute significantly to the foreign income.

1. Medtech textile is a technical textile used for medical and hygienic purposes.