

Gopegarh- A Place of Historic Interest and A Treasure House of Endangered and Dye Yielding Plants

Dr. Goutam Bhakta

Assistant Professor, Department of Botany, Pingla Thana Mahavidyalaya.

Email: gbhakta777@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Gopegarh is a place of historical place situated in Paschim Medinipur District of the state West Bengal. Gopegarh is 3Km away from Midnapore District Headquarter towards west and nearly Nepura village. It is under Kotwalli police station and Mouza No 148 JL and the elevation is 211 ft or 64.3 mt. The adjoining village is Kankabati, Nepura, Khairulla, Golapichak, Rangamati, Nichgope, Dherua etc. It lies between 22°57' 10'' North latitude and 87°16' 50'' East longitude.

It has been cited in Mahabharat Gopegiri a hill 3km away from Midnapore sadar and that Gopegiri was the south Gogriha of the king of fish named Birat Raja. It has also been mentioned in Aini Akbari Gopegriha is a fort and was surrounded by a parikha and inside of it, there was palace of Birat Raja. Gopegiri, a Gogriha has been damaged at present due to non habilitization since past, then a Zaminder of Telenipara had build up a large building which has also been damaged at present. A triangular Pillar of Reptiles presents here a religious consciousness. At the foot of Gopegiri hill and by the side of Bombay Road a Temple of Gopenandini is situated. Raja Narendralal Khan of Narazole had built up a beautiful palace 1 km away from Gopegiri hill expending few lakhs of money at that time. At presents it is Womens' college, Known as Raja Narendralal Khan Womens' College.

Gopegarh is covered by dense jungle but human population encroaches the forest range and disturbing floral development.

In the last decade of 20th century state Govt. established a heritage and Nature Ecotourism Centre "Eco-park", Children Park, Medicinal plant Garden, picnic Spot, Food Plaza, and Boating arrangement have been established in Eco-park.

Key Words: *Gopegarh, Climate, Temperature, Rainfall, Soil, Endangered Species, Dye Yielding Plants.*

Introduction

Gopegarh is a place of historic interest and is a deciduous forest belt. Changeable environmental factors, biotic factors, several other threats create a pressure upon the floral development resulting in the extinction of species from Gopegarh forest range forming dry, bare rocky area. In this situation we should take initiative to save Gopegarh where some plant species becoming rare or endangered.

Material and Methods

During the course of investigation on various localities of Gopegarh of Paschim Medinipur district of W.B, several collecting trips were planned in winter, summer and rainy season in order to cover all the area had been made out. For collection of specimen and taking field data motor cycle, rickshaw and assistance of local people were taken.

Result and Discussion

Climate: The Gopegarh comes under the tropical Monsoon Regions of world. Three main seasons can be recognized, **A].** The Winter season, NOV. to January **.B].** The Summer season-Feb to June, **C].** The Monsoon season or Rainy season- July to October.

As it is situated at the tropic the winter is distinct and prominent. The winter is pleasant but for a short span the night temperature reaches to a minimum. Frost never is formed. Summer temperature is quite high, adversely affects the vegetation and plantation. Hot wind, the LOOS experienced all over the tracts. Monsoon generally breaks during July, Pre-Monsoon showers during late May or early June is common. The rainy season ends in October. There is short winter-rain during January and February.

Temperature plays a major role in governing the growth, development and distribution of plants. As the summer is extended for a longer period in the district it affects the vegetation to some extent. The temperature in Winter is 10⁰C in the Summer 43⁰C, in the Rainy season there is an appreciable cooling temp. 32⁰ C -35⁰ C.

Rainfall: The annual rainfall on average is about 1500 mm to 1750 mm. The wet season starts from the last week of May extending to 1st week of October. The month of July appears to be the hottest month receiving maximum precipitation. The South West Monsoon wind blow speedily and heavy precipitation occurs. In the month of Nov. to Dec. cyclone may formed in Bay of Bengal and causes infrequent depression for few days.

Soil: Gopegarh belongs to laterite soil. Reddish brown and yellowish brown soil is prominent in the upland and grey soil occurs in some low lying pockets of field. The generally acidic P^H (5.0), calcium, potassium, phosphorous are lower in content. Due to presence of high percentage of sand water holding capacity of soil is low. The soil run off is fairly high in first few rains of the summer monsoon. The uplands are covered with light soils with shallow to moderate depth. The degree of soil erosion varies from sheet erosion to form deep gullies. Due to heavy grazing the soil flow is almost bare of any vegetative cover or covered by dead fallen leaves.

Table 1: Endangered Plants

S. No.	Scientific Names	Family
1.	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> (Linn.) Sweet	Malvaceae
2.	<i>Acalypha indica</i> Linn.	Euphorbiaceae
3.	<i>Helicteres isora</i> Pers.	Sterculaceae
4.	<i>Hibiscus vitifolius</i> Linn.	Malvaceae
5.	<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i> Linn	Fabaceae
6.	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i> Pers.	Fabaceae

Table 2: Dye Yielding Plants

S. No.	Scientific Names	Family
1.	<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i> Linn.	Fabaceae
2.	<i>Jatropha curcas</i> Linn.	Euphorbiaceae

Conclusion

The marginal people from the villages particularly the tribal people always cutting the trees and branches. The forest is easily accessible and due to unrestricted hacking and overexploitation of some plants by animals including human beings continued for years –the flora have been reduced to scrubs. Details and thorough research works are essential right now to know the present situation about the loss and causes of ecofloristic destruction. It is noted 2 species are dye yielding and 7 species are becoming rare or endangered. Govt. should take the initiative to save Gopegarh. Hope future research works will direct a new way for ecorestoration of Gopegarh.

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