



## THE MEDICINAL PLANTS FOUND IN THE SCARED GROVES OF KHASI HILLS:A STUDY OF THE TRADITIONAL HEALING METHOD

Rameses Mawrie<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Manu Sharma<sup>2\*</sup>

### Abstract

The tribal people have generally developed a deep understanding and knowledge on the medicinal herbal plants that surrounds them. Also the importance of these plants to the indigenous people medicinally, spiritually, even culturally have been mentioned and stated in their folklore. The traditional or folk knowledge of using the medicinal herb plants in healing various sickness and diseases have been passed down from generation to generation, from the earliest days till modern day. There are sacred groves that the indigenous tribes have reserved or set aside in the forests. They could be large or small areas. These sacred groves have played an important role in the socio-cultural and religious society of these tribes as a way of preservation and protection of these medicinal herbal plants. The traditional knowledge serves as the best foundation for effective *in situ* conservation, which calls for precise and current data on the status of medicinal plant populations, the extent and type of local communities' plant use, and the resource base's ability to support various economic activities. The focus on this paper will be on how oral tradition played a significant role in passing down the knowledge of traditional healing to the younger generation and also how to use the herbs for its medicinal purpose. The Khasi people's usage of medicinal herbal plants goes far beyond simple medical care; it is also closely linked to their cultural identity and spiritual beliefs.

**Keyword:** - Conservation, Healing Method, Medicinal herbs, Oral tradition, Scared Groves

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<sup>1</sup>Master in History, Department of History, School of Humanities, Lovely Professional University, Punjab India, Email-rmawrie99@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>\*Professor, Department of History, School of Humanities, Lovely Professional University, Punjab India, Email-manu.16179@lpu.co.in

**\*Corresponding Author:** - Dr. Manu Sharma

\*Professor, Department of History, School of Humanities, Lovely Professional University, Punjab India, Email-manu.16179@lpu.co.in

**DOI:** 10.48047/ecb/2023.12.si10.005

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since ancient times, health and illness have played a significant role in people's lives and have been interpreted from an ethereal and sociolect-anthropological perspective. At that time, magical and religious beliefs, which were central to ancient cultures and civilizations and are still present to some extent in many known cultures, dominated medicine. Every civilization has its own unique medical system, and the history of medicine is one aspect of cultural history. Many communities still practice the fundamentals of primitive medicine, which was originally entwined with superstition, religion, magic, and witchcraft. Treatments were based on pacifying gods through prayers, ceremonies, and sacrifices as well as exorcising evil spirits from the human body utilizing witchcraft, amulets, and medicinal herbs. A group's ability to survive is based on how well it can adapt to its surroundings and overcome obstacles. Since each group's ability to maintain the health of its members is a prerequisite for survival, each group accords great priority to maintaining and improving its own medical systems. Due to the value put on health, traditional medicine, and its practitioners held a prominent and admirable position in every community.

Traditional medical treatment, which includes a foundational concept along with a series of guiding values, is the earliest type of organized treatment. It is the medical system from which all subsequent medical systems, like Chinese medicine, Graeco-Arabic medicine, and of certainly, contemporary medicine from the West, evolved. Despite the fact that the archaeological record for traditional medical care can be traced back to about 6000 B.C., its roots are likely much earlier than that, from semi-nomadic and agricultural tribal communities. The practice of traditional healing was originally an essential component of these societies.

A traditional medical practitioner or traditional healer is someone who is conceded by the community in which he lives as adroit to provide health care by using medicinal herbs, and certain other methods based on the social, cultural, and prevailing knowledge-regarding physical, mental, and social well-being as well as the causes of disease and disability in the community. They create a variety of medical formulae using organic materials (vegetables, minerals, and animals). They have a deep knowledge of understanding of the nutritional and therapeutic uses of plants and

herbs. Since the beginning of time, people have used plants for food, fiber, medicine, shelter, and other things. Tribal people all around the world continue to treat a wide range of health issues with the help of herbal medicines.

The majority of conventional medical ideas place a strong emphasis on qualities that are holistic, preventative, and socially and spiritually conscious. Traditional medical procedures frequently include the healer's personal engagement, a secrecy policy, and an incentive system. In many countries around the world, including India, traditional practises have been widely practised. The use of conventional medical treatments is widespread throughout the nation and is particularly common in rural areas. Traditional practices have long been practiced in several parts of the world, including India. The practice of traditional healing methods of medicine has become widely recognized in the country and is especially widespread in rural areas.

According to "Park, J.E.& Park. (1977) mentioned that the long history of medicine's development covers the prehistoric through modern eras. The practice of healing dates back thousands of years, when prehistoric man used his little knowledge to try and relieve his family's suffering. Diseases and calamities were attributed to gods, the invasion of the body by bad spirits, or the malevolent influence of stars and planets in the absence of an explanation for what caused them. It is clear from this that in the prehistoric past; the practice of healing was coupled with superstition and supported by the administration of nearby herbal cures.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2008), around eighty percent of the global population relies on traditional medicine for primary health care. Traditional health care practices have been commonly followed in different parts of the world including India. The practice of the traditional healing method of medicine is well known in the country and is more prevalent in rural areas.[27]

Meghalaya, also known as the "Abode of Clouds," is one of India's youngest states in the northeastern region, having split from Assam in 1970 and forming its statehood in 1972 with Shillong as its capital. It covers an area of 22,429 km<sup>2</sup>. It is located between 25°47" and 26°10"N latitude and 89°45" to 92°45" E longitude. It is

bounded on the north, east and west by Assam and on the south by Bangladesh borders. Meghalaya is dominated by three tribes: the Khasi, who live in the Khasi hills, the Jaintia, who live in the Jaintia hills, and the Garo, who live in the Garo hills, each with their own language. Meghalaya is a matrilineal society in which descent is traced back to the mother. Meghalaya is home to three distinct tribes: the Khasi, the Jaintia, and the Garo, who live in separate hill districts around the state. These tribes are believed to be members of the Indo-Chinese language family and have been believed to have wandered to northeast India as invaders.

Following the continual development of this Indo-Chinese language family, two subfamilies, the Mon Khmer and Tibeto-Burman, emerged. It is believed that the Khasis, Jaintias and Garo are descendants of the former subfamily. Although there is no definitive documentation earlier to this time, it is possible to trace the origins of the people of Meghalaya back to the first half of the sixteenth century. Because they originated through the Indo-china region, these people were already familiar with the usage of the local plants, and their rich folklore has helped to preserve this knowledge. (Gurdon, 1907)[10]



Fig 1. The geographical map of Meghalaya

Despite the invasion and influence of contemporary society, traditional healing continues to be prevalent in Meghalaya. The oral transmission of this extensive traditional wisdom and its applications occurs between generations. The Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos are three distinct ethnic and tribal groups of Meghalaya that have a strong connection with the natural world, which includes a wide variety of herbs, shrubs, and medicinal plants. Khan et al. (1997) stated that out of the total 3,331 plants species being found in the forest, 834 of them have medicinal values. They are used by traditional physicians for a variety of medical purposes, including the treatment of deadly snake bites, a therapy for muscle disorders, and the improvement of the body's overall immunity[14]. According to WHO Plan 2024 for ensuring access to decent medical care for everyone, traditional healers make a significant contribution to primary healthcare that has to be acknowledged and possibly incorporated into the formal medical system.

#### SCOPE OF STUDY

The study of traditional healing practices encompasses studying the social dynamics and cultural importance of these practices. Researchers investigate how traditional healers function within their communities, how information is passed down through generations, and how globalization and cultural shifts have affected traditional healing practices. Studying sacred groves involves integrating environmentally friendly, cultural, and conservation viewpoints. It provides chances for interaction among ecologists, anthropologists, sociologists, experts in religious studies, and environmentalists. Understanding sacred groves may further our knowledge of how people interact with the natural world, encourage the upholding of customs related to culture, and advance sustainable land-management techniques that respect both natural and ethical principles. The identification and documentation of botanical species with therapeutic characteristics are the focus of the study of medicinal plants. To find out what herbs are employed in different conventional medical practices around the area, experts conduct

ethnobotanical investigations and botanical surveys. Their preparation, utilization, and dosage are all covered in the traditional knowledge they have about these herbs. This study contributes to the development of thorough records of herbal remedies and their traditional use.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- i. To study the role of oral tradition in passing the knowledge of healing practices from generation to generation.
- ii. To understand the utilization of the herbal medicinal plants in traditional healing practices.
- iii. To create awareness for preserving the sacred groves from extinction.

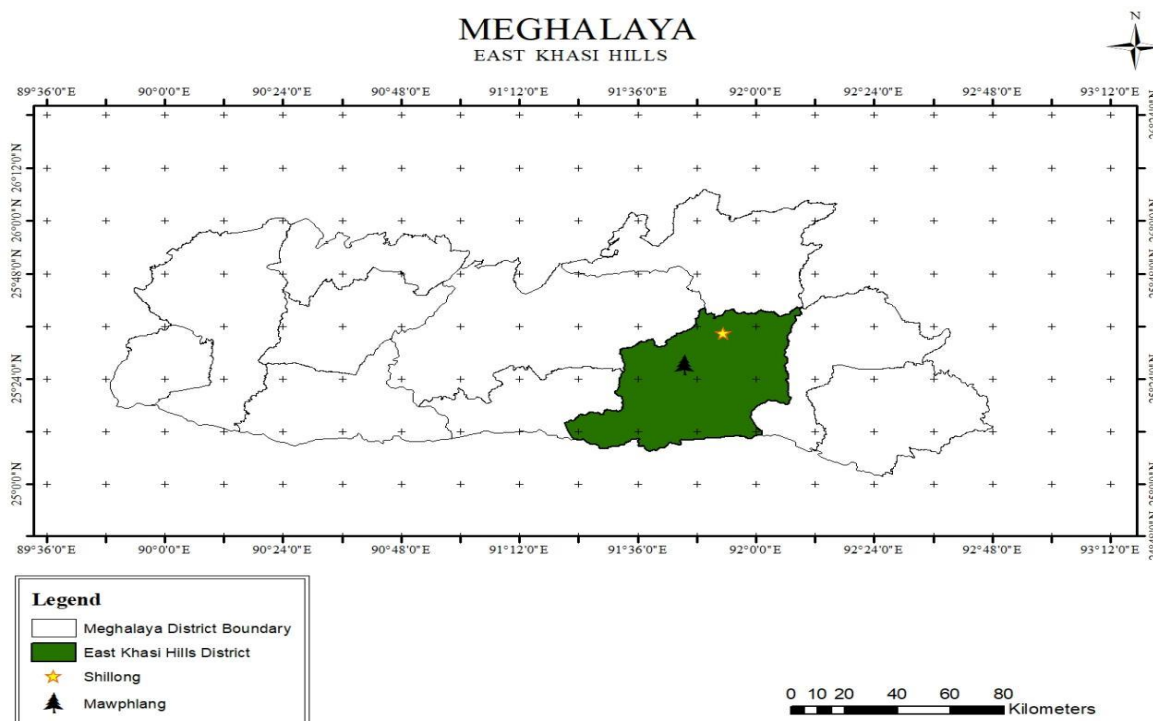
### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative methodology approach, is dependent on the environment, and it primarily rely on the secondary sources of information for its data. Secondary sources data are obtained from research paper, article, journals, newspaper, books etc on which work was have been done for data analysis.

### AREA OF STUDY

The research is being carried out in East Khasi Hills, one of Meghalaya's 12 (twelve) districts.s. The district is 2,748 square kilometers in size and is located between 25°07 and 25°41 in latitude and 91°21 and 92°09 in longitude. It is bordered to the north by Ri-Bhoi District, to the north-east by Karbi Anglong District, to the east by Jaintia Hills District, to the south by Bangladesh, and to the west by West Khasi Hills District. According to the 2011 Census Report, the District has an estimated population of 8,25,922 people and a total of 923 settlements. The data was obtained from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Meghalaya, in 2019.[25].

The State's vast plant wealth has not yet been completely exploited commercially. The farmers in the area might gain greatly from such utilization. In reality, due to its optimal agoclimatic conditions and adequate soil, the area offers significant potential for cultivating medicinal plants. Meghalaya was gifted with a distinctive variety of vegetation from tropical and subtropical to temperate or near-temperate regions by nature, which is generous in its abundance. (Gatphoh, 1937; Kanjilal et al., 1982; Elias, 1994; Kharbuli et al., 1999),[12].



**Fig2.**East Khasi Hills map showing its geographical location  
The map is made from Arch Gis

### THE THERAPEUTIC HERBS IN KHASI HILLS

The use of medicinal herbs and plants have been one of the most important part in the tradition and  
*Eur. Chem. Bull.* 2023, 12(Special Issue 10), 38 - 48

culture of the Khasi where they have played a role in providing health care to the people, where the knowledge on how to utilize the herbs for healing purpose have been passed down orally through

generation. Since the dawn of time, indigenous healers have traditionally utilized these native plants to treat a wide range of illnesses, including arthritis, diarrhea, malaria, rheumatism, skin conditions, jaundice, etc. These therapeutic plants are usually found in historically kept “Sacred Forests,” which have remained unspoiled for millennia due to indigenous people's religious beliefs. These “Sacred Forests” constitute the region’s culmination vegetation, and they are home to numerous indigenous and valuable medicinal plant species. The “Nong-ai Dawai Kynbat’as they are known locally or traditional healer are some of the healers in the district who are widely known and offer basic healthcare to the locals where each of them would practice at home or would go to the weekly market where the people would go and consult them or get treated from them. Khasi traditional medicine is unique and popular within the indigenous traditional medicines of the region.

The Khasi healers are a diverse group who cure a variety of ailments. They are renowned as experts in treating ailments of the body, although their treatments for disorders of the musculoskeletal

and the biomedical system do not have clear connections. The practitioners also portray themselves as adapting biomedicine's short comings, both the universal flaws of allopathic treatment and the unique regional limitations in rural healthcare

Lalramnghinglova, H.& Jha, L.K (2000) mentioned that tribal tribes with extensive traditional knowledge systems continue to rely on plants for their healthcare. This relationship has developed through many generations as a result of experience and customs.[17]

Dutta, B.K & Dutta, P.K.(2005) mentioned that there is a wide variety of medicinal plants with both pharmaceutical and traditional medical uses in the northeastern states, which are home to more than 130 significant indigenous populations. Over 1,350 plant species have been used in the area for ethno medical purposes.[9]

As it is shown in table.1 they are the medicinal plants that are found in the scared groves of East Khasi hills in which the traditional healers used them in curing different types of disesees.

### Medicinal plants and its utility

Biological Name	Regional Name	Family	Uses of the medicinal plants
<i>Acorus calamus</i> (L.)	U-bet	Araceae	The leaves are boiled in water for two to three hours and then it is used as steam to cure from flu and headache.
<i>Adiantum phillipense</i> (Linn.)	Tyrkhang khyllai	Adiantaceae	Bone fragments are treated with a paste made from the leaves.
<i>Antidesma bunius</i> (L.) Soh-syllai Euphorbiaceae	Soh-syllai	Euphorbiaceae	After boiling the leaves in water,the solution that come out from it is used as bathing water by the people with joints pains.
<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> (L.)	Dieng tharlong	Caesalpiniaceae	The blooms are boiled and eaten as a remedy for diarrhoea and piles.
<i>Betula alnoides</i> (Buch Ham)	Dienglieng	Betulaceae	For the treatment of gas and indigestion the roots extracts are given as medicine.
<i>Buddleja macrostachya</i> (Benth)	Jalong krem	Buddlejaceae	Venereal diseases are treated using the leaves.
<i>Curcuma angustifolia</i> (Roxb)	niang-soh pet	Zingiberaceae	Children are given a boiling rhizome and leaf paste to ease their upset stomach
<i>Curcuma domestica</i> (Velaton)	Shynrai stem	Zingiberaceae	To cure various diseases - Paste made with the rhizome of <i>Lindera latifolia</i> leaves and <i>Piper longum</i> fruits is applied to the affected area.

			To set bone fractures - rhizome paste of this plant, ginger is mixed with mustard oil which is applied then tied around bone fractures.
<i>Drymaria cordata</i> (L.) Willd.ex Roem & Schult)	Bat-nongrim	Caryophyllaceae	The juice extract from the crushed plants is applied on burns, snake bites and skin problems.
<i>Eupatorium adenophorum</i> (L.) Ba	Bat iong	Asteraceae	The paste that is extracted from the leaves is being administered on the wounds.
<i>Gaultheria fragrantissima</i> (Wall)	'La thynrait	Ericaceae	The paste formed from the leaves is administered to the sprained and broken bones.
<i>Hodgsonia heteroclite</i> (Roxb.)	Soh risa	Curcubitaceae	Fever is being treated using the paste made from the roots, ginger, and lime.
<i>Houtynia cordata</i> (Thunb)	Jamyrdoh	Saururaceae	The stem of the leaves is being eaten freshly for blood purification and it is also used to cure the wounds and blisters.
<i>Hypocharis radicata</i> (L.)	bat jhur kthang	Asteraceae	To alleviate tummy distress, the leaves are consumed either fresh or boiled.
<i>Osbeckia stellata</i> (Buch.Ham ex D. Don)	Soh-lyngkthut	Melastomaceae	The paste made from leaves serves as a remedy for several types of injuries and is used to control the bleeding from nose and cure snake bites.
<i>Piper griffithii</i> (DC)	Mrit khlaw	Piperaceae	The dried pepper is grind into powder form where it is mixed with honey and then it is eaten by the patient to cure their cough.
<i>Psidium guajava</i> (L.)	Soh priam	Myrtaceae	The extracts from the crushed leaves is being taken by the patient to cure their chronic diarrhoea

**Table1.** Showing the therapeutics plants used by the people for medicinal purpose

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SCARED GROVES

Since the dawn of time, indigenous tribes have set aside small or large areas of forest as sacred groves because of their religious convictions, seasonal water supplies, resource hubs, or burial places, among other reasons. Small groups of trees to vast areas may make up the sacred groves. They have survived for ages and are often regarded to be in better form than other adjacent forests since they have survived for so long. (Tiwari et al., 1998; Negi, 2012) They include more medicinal plants that are specific to them than state-owned reserve woods [20,26]. (Boraiah et al., 2003) These forests contain a wealth of species [4]. (Khan et al., 2008)sacred groves might serve as a potent instrument for assuring the preservation of biological diversity[15].In Meghalaya, scared groves typically have clearly

defined boundary stones known as 'Mawpud', which are used for marking territory.

Tradition teaches us that preserving and sanctifying a sacred grove aims to restore a strong relationship of tranquil cooperation between people and nature. Indigenous cultural and religious beliefs have been included in the innovative technique of protecting the Sacred Groves. The Khasi people were (and still are) renowned for their appreciation of the natural world, as seen by this belief and practice. It's a common proverb in the area that "There can be no Sacred Grove without Hima or Raid"and "There can be no authenticity/sovereignty of any Raid or Hima without a Sacred Grove." Therefore, Mawphlang Sacred Grove is among the most well-known Sacred Groves because the purity is

still very much intact because of the local community's active preservation. The forest is still unspoiled in nature.

The people of Meghalaya consider the sacred groves (forests) to be the homes of the gods. It ensures the well-being of humans, their cattle, and their property and wards off evil spirits. Those who disobey the customs of these forests may have to endure the fury of the god. One of the key elements in the preservation of the plant life in such groves is religious conviction. Locals hold that cutting down trees and taking twigs, fruits, flowers, etc. will offend the Sylvan deities. These groves are regarded as one of the regions with the greatest diversity of plants, birds, and mammals. The legendary tales and traditions connected to the groves have been the primary factor in maintaining the sacred groves in perfect condition.

The sacred groves are regarded as the homes of the gods and the ancestors in the culture. The Khasi people think that the ghosts of their ancestors live in these trees and guard their villages against natural disasters and malevolent spirits. Since the local communities have strictly forbidden any kind of exploitation or destruction, these forests have been safeguarded and preserved by them for centuries.

The sacred groves retain a unique place in the Khasi people's hearts. People because they embody a long history of environmental preservation and are inextricably linked to their social, religious, and cultural existence. It goes without saying that these forests are haven to the vulnerable variety of flora and wildlife that are in risk of extinction and as a result are abundant in biodiversity.

Given that they are host to a range of unique and threatened plant and animal species, these sacred forests play a significant role in ecology. The genetic diversity of the area's flora and wildlife is preserved by these groves, which serve as a natural genetic diversity repository. Additionally, they assist in protecting the area's soil and water resources and serve as significant carbon sinks, reducing the effects of climate change.

Therefore for the area to remain ecologically and culturally viable, it is crucial to preserve these sacred forests. The sacred groves are in jeopardy of a number of things, including environmental loss, deforestation, moreover intrusion by exotic

species, as a result of the pressures of population increase and development. It is essential to assist regional conservation efforts and raise public awareness of the importance of these locations if we are to ensure the sustainable existence of these groves.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF SPREADING AWARENESS IN PRESERVING THE SACRED GROVES**

It is critical to raise awareness about the necessity of protecting sacred groves in order to secure their survival for future generations because many cultures have strong spiritual and cultural ties to sacred trees. As locations for rituals, ceremonies, and cultural practices, they are treasured as sanctified places. These groves serve as a link between communities and their ancestors, establishing a sense of self, belonging, and cultural continuity. Their importance can help foster a sense of pride and motivate communities to take an active role in their preservation. Sacred woods are frequently distinguished by their exceptional biodiversity. Numerous plant and animal species, including rare and unique ones, can be found in these forested areas. Sacred groves can safeguard delicate ecosystems and stop the extinction of species. By spreading the word about these groves' ecological significance, we may encourage conservation initiatives and build a sense of obligation to preserve our natural heritage.

The Sacred groves contribute much to the ecosystem. By absorbing greenhouse gases, they serve as carbon sinks, preventing climate change. These woods also sustain water cycles, control soil erosion, and improve the quality of the local water supply. We may emphasize the importance of holy groves in preserving ecological balance and advance sustainable practices by raising knowledge of their positive environmental effects. Within these groves, indigenous tribes and local populations have learned important lessons about ecological inter dependencies, medicinal plants, and sustainable resource management. Increasing knowledge of this ancient knowledge can encourage respect for indigenous cultures and the fusion of old conservation methods with contemporary ones. Sacred groves are seriously threatened by urbanization, deforestation, agricultural expansion, and land encroachment. These priceless ecosystems are degraded and destroyed as a result of unrestrained development and unsustainable practices. Creating a sense of urgency about the threats can encourage

communities, decision-makers, and environmental organizations to take the required steps to preserve and safeguard these sacred forest.

Increasing community involvement in the protection of sacred groves can be accomplished through raising awareness about them. It is possible to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility by including community members in educational campaigns, workshops, and capacity-building projects. We can encourage sustainable management strategies and guarantee the ongoing existence of sacred groves by incorporating local populations in decision-making procedures.

Therefore protecting sacred groves is important for both environmental reasons and their cultural and spiritual value. By bringing attention to the significance of these sacred locations, we can motivate people, groups, and decision-makers to take effective action to save and preserve them. It is crucial to acknowledge the intrinsic worth of sacred groves, their role in preserving traditional knowledge systems, and their contribution to biodiversity protection. We can make sure that these sacred groves survive and provide ecological, cultural, and spiritual benefits for future generations by making concentrated efforts and working together.

### **TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICES**

Traditional healing practices have a huge amount of cultural and historical relevance and are still quite important in many different communities all over the world. These procedures include a variety of age-old, frequently based on indigenous knowledge systems, traditional medical and therapeutic methods that have been handed down through the years. The foundation of traditional healing is the knowledge that social dynamics, the natural environment, and spiritual well-being are all intertwined with human health. It adopts a comprehensive strategy, considering a person's health in terms of their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual states. Traditional healers have specialized knowledge and skills in identifying, treating, and avoiding ailments. They are frequently well-respected members of their communities. Particularly among marginalized populations with little or no access to contemporary medical services, the affordability and accessibility of traditional healing is one of its advantages. In order to treat health problems, traditional healers frequently use locally accessible medicinal herbs, minerals, and other

natural treatments. This method not only alleviates bodily problems but also contributes to people's and communities' cultural identity and sense of belonging. Traditional healing methods also frequently stress the value of social support, community involvement, and the interdependence of people and their environment. A sense of community, social integration, and emotional well-being are all facilitated by the rituals, ceremonies, and get-together connected to traditional healing. However, it is crucial to approach conventional therapeutic methods from a perspective that is balanced. It is important to recognize that not all traditional practices have been scientifically validated or are appropriate for all health issues, even if many traditional healing treatments have shown efficacy and success in specific circumstances. A thorough and well-rounded approach to healthcare can be ensured by combining conventional healing with evidence-based contemporary healthcare systems.

The cultural practices and beliefs of the Khasi people are strongly ingrained in traditional healing in the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya, India. Traditional medicine has been practised by the Khasi people for a very long time. It has been passed down through the centuries and is still an important part of their healthcare system. In the Khasi Hills, knowledgeable individual healers predominantly perform traditional healing. These traditional healers are experts in the use of spiritual practices, rituals, and medicinal plants that are thought to promote health and well-being. They have a great deal of respect in the neighborhood and are in high demand due to their healing powers. Traditional healing in the Khasi Hills incorporates herbal medicine on a fundamental level. The healer have extensive knowledge of regional medicinal plants, their characteristics, and the best ways to prepare them for various diseases. They gather, prepare, and give herbal treatments for a variety of illnesses, including decoctions, infusions, poultices, and pastes. Traditional healing in the Khasi Hills includes both rituals and spiritual practices. To invoke spiritual powers and create a link between the physical, mental, and spiritual facets of a person's well-being, the healer frequently mixes the use of medicinal herbs with prayers, chants, and ceremonies. It is said that by performing these rituals, an individual and the community can regain their equilibrium and harmony. The value of social support and communal cooperation is emphasized by traditional healing practices in the Khasi Hills. The traditional healer frequently



offers their healing skills in the context of community events and ceremonies, where people assemble to seek healing, exchange stories, and offer and receive support from one another. The resiliency and general well-being of the community are benefited by this communal component of traditional healing. Traditional medicine in the Khasi Hills is therefore closely tied to the cultural practices and beliefs of the Khasi tribe. The main components of traditional healing emphasizes a holistic approach to health and well-being, including rituals, herbal medicine, and spiritual practices. The Khasi Hills could benefit from improved healthcare outcomes, cultural preservation, and the development of a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to health if traditional healing and contemporary healthcare systems are combined.

### **ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ORAL COMMENTARIES IN PRESERVING THE HEALING PRACTICES**

For millennia, many illnesses, diseases, and mental health problems have been treated using conventional therapeutic techniques. They frequently involve reestablishing harmony and balance in the body and mind using herbal remedies, natural cures, meditative practices and religious healing techniques. Traditional healing is important because of its capacity to deliver various and supplementary medical treatments to people, particularly those who do not have access to or cannot afford contemporary medication. Traditional healing practices are frequently strongly entrenched in traditional and religious values, which can bring solace and a sense of connection to one's culture and heritage. The traditional healing method have helped in the preserving of the cultural heritage where they are frequently an intrinsic part of a culture's history, rituals, and beliefs. By maintaining and supporting these practices, we may assist ensure that cultural legacy gets passed onto future generations. They also provided a sustainable and environmentally friendly therapeutic methods for those who live in remote or economically disadvantaged regions, this healthcare option may be more accessible and economical. Filling in the gaps in contemporary healthcare the contemporary medicine can occasionally fall short or fail to adequately address specific health conditions, such as chronic discomfort or mental illnesses. By offering supplementary or alternative treatments, which may be more beneficial for some people, traditional healing techniques can help close these gaps. Promoting holistic health approaches:

traditional healing methods frequently emphasize an integrated approach to health, highlighting the interdependence of the physical being, mind, and spirit. In general, traditional healing methods provide a number of advantages that can support the promotion of physical, mental, and spiritual health, as well as the preservation of cultural heritage and filling in the gaps in contemporary healthcare.

Across many cultures and societies, oral tradition has played a significant part in traditional healing methods. Knowledge of traditional healing practices and treatments was handed down from one generation to another in many traditional civilizations through oral tradition, which included narrative storytelling, dance, music, and other forms of verbal communication. To diagnose and treat diseases, traditional healers frequently depended on a combination of hereditary wisdom, personal experience, and intuition. Traditional healing knowledge and procedures were frequently highly guarded secrets that had to be handed down to a selected few within a community or family. In summary, oral history was a vital tool for conserving and passing on the knowledge and techniques of conventional medical practices, and it was crucial to the survival of many traditional civilizations' well-being and health.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion we can say that the ethnic group of East Khasi hills are very much adhered to the conventional medicine knowledge, which is their heritage. The Khasi people's use of medicinal herbs is closely linked to their cultural identity and spiritual practices in addition to serving as a source of healing. The loss of biodiversity and conventional medical procedures is a result of the world's fast modernization and the disappearance of traditional knowledge. The indigenous Khasi knowledge is being preserved, and sustainable medical plant use is being encouraged. Therefore, the Khasi people's traditional use of medicinal herbs is an essential component of their cultural history and offers enormous potential for modern medicine. A novel drug's development and the advancement of environmentally friendly medical procedures can both benefit from the scientific validation of conventional wisdom. In light of this, the Khasi people, who have resided in the area for millennia, regard the sacred groves as holy and hold them in the highest regard. The grounds of these groves are used for a variety of rites and ceremonies since they are thought to be

the homes of deities and spirits. The groves are a site of cultural value that represents a representation of the intimate connections between indigenous cultures and the environment in which they reside. In summary, the sacred groves of the East Khasi Hills are priceless natural and cultural resources. They support the preservation of biodiversity, offer a window into the region's rich cultural legacy, and present chances for study and instruction. We can guarantee that these sacred groves survive for future generations by acknowledging their significance and making serious efforts to preserve them. As a whole, traditional healing methods contribute significantly to cultural heritage and offer invaluable insights into a comprehensive understanding of health and well-being. The development of a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to health can be aided by respecting, maintaining, and incorporating indigenous healing practices alongside contemporary healthcare systems. To fully realize the promise of traditional healing while safeguarding the security and well-being of individuals and communities, traditional healers, healthcare professionals, and researchers must cooperate, communicate, and respect one another. As a result, the Khasi tribe's cultural practices and beliefs are closely entwined with traditional healing in the Khasi Hills. The main components of traditional healing emphasize a holistic approach to health and well-being, including rituals, herbal medicine, and spiritual practices. The Khasi Hills could benefit from improved healthcare outcomes, cultural preservation, and the development of a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to health if traditional healing and contemporary healthcare systems are combined.

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