

Ramaji Bhemaji Parmar

Gujarat

(Community Representative)

Ramaji Bhemaji Parmar (49) is well renowned in his area for his expertise in many human and veterinary health related herbal practices. He represents local community which has knowledge about the use of the herb for the fever.



Herbal medication for skin diseases

National Third Award – Human, Scout: Narsinhbhai Parmar, SRISTI

His father late Bhemajibhai, who expired at the age of 110 years, was an admired herbal healer for animal and human ailments like cyst, kidney stones, bloat, fever, malaria etc. People from nearby villages used to visit him looking for cure and getting medicines. Being surrounded by different kinds of herbs and talks about diseases every day, Ramaji gradually developed interest in these activities and started assisting him. While on their trips to the forest to collect various herbs, his father taught him to identify and differentiate different medicinal plants. An avid learner, Ramaji visited nearby forest for collection of herbs, leaves, barks and plants and showed them to his father who explained him their uses. After the sad demise of his father, he took the responsibility to carrying the task forward in the service of the society. He also holds two acres of land in his village and has a wife and four children in his family.

Though illiterate, Ramaji's repertoire of herbal formulations, both for human and veterinary health, comprises over 500 traditional herbal practices for curing various ailments/diseases. He laments the fact that human activity is destroying the forests, which are necessary for sustenance. Also, many of the plants, which he uses in his formulations, are not available now because of the destruction of their habitats. This has posed difficulty for him to prepare his formulations as he has to look for an alternative for the plant(s) used in the formulation, which are not available now. But being a person with never-say-die attitude, Ramaji decided to do something about it rather than waiting for something to happen.

He thought about developing a garden with rare medical plants and went about making his dream a reality. In considerable time but with patience, he has been able to grow about 3,000 plants in an acre. He uses these plants from his botanical garden for treatment and aims to preserve bio-diversity of the surrounding area as well. This garden also boasts of a tube well for watering plants, the water of which is available to the village folk for consumption. Due to his pleasing personality, and herbal knowledge, he is visited by almost 40-50 people daily from his village and nearby areas. He freely shares his knowledge with people for their benefit and also sensitizes them about the need to conserve bio-diversity for human welfare. He also organizes periodic visits of school children to his garden to sensitise them about their environment and its diversity.

One of the herbal practices, Ramaji shared with SRISTI was related to a skin disease. He used a particular plant (name withheld for IPR reasons) which was found to be novel after doing prior art search. While pursuing research at Sadbhav SRISTI Sanshodhan Laboratory, it was found that adding certain other common ingredients increased the efficacy of the formulation. Suitable base was used for the formulation to prepare an ointment for topical use. The toxicological tests were conducted at Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (IITR), where it was found to be non-toxic. Limited user trials were initiated. The results of the trials were very encouraging and a product, 'Zematic' was commercially launched by SRISTI. The benefits so obtained are shared with Ramajibhai and his community.