

## Candy of *Cannabis sativa* L.- A traditional intoxicant in Udaipur, Rajasthan

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### Abstract

Plants and plant products are part of many socio-cultural events. An ethnobotanical survey to famous *Jawar Mata* fair at *Jawar* village, Udaipur, Rajasthan has revealed selling of candies made up from leaves of *Cannabis sativa* L. for recreational purpose. Although illegal, selling of *Cannabis* in this form, acts as a cheap traditional intoxicant as well as a source of income for rural and tribal population of the village.

**Keywords:** Hemp, Narcotics, Ethnobotany, Fair, Market

### Introduction

*Cannabis sativa* L. (Family: Cannabaceae) also called 'Hemp'; is a well known psychoactive plant of the World. Besides, its psychoactive uses, its fibers and seed oil are commercially very valuable. Use of leaves, flowers, stem and resin of Hemp as an intoxicant are prevalent in

many parts of the world (Morgenstern, 2005). Traditionally, it is used for recreational purpose in India during *Holi* festival when leaves of the plant are grinded, mixed with milk and some other ingredients to prepare the traditional drink '*Bhang*'. In this form, it is very much relished by both rural and urban masses (Sharma, 2007).



**Fig.1:** Fair premises at Jawar, Udaipur



**Fig.2:** 'Mafar' - traditional candies



**Fig.(3-4)** : Rural folk selling traditional Cannabis candy 'Mafar' at *Jawar Mata* Fair



It is also considered to be favorite drink of Lord Shiva and hence, it is an important part of *Mahashivratri* festival. Anyhow, these traditions make arrangements to keep place for this plant in gardens near Temples particularly Lord Shiva temples. So, in view of conservation of this plant species, role of these traditions becomes quite significant.

Festivals and fairs are integral part of socio-cultural life of India and important means to see folk rituals, traditions and culture. In *Jawar* village, situated 45 km far from Udaipur city (Rajasthan) in *Girwa tehsil*, a one day *Jawar Mata's* fair is organized every year on *Chaitra Krishna Navmi* (according to Hindu calendar) outside the premises of a 1500 years old temple of *Jawar Mata* (female goddess). The fair is full of fun and frolic. People of the village collect at the site to frisk on traditional dance 'Gair' while there are other events like *Neja* occupying competition on a huge tree of *Bombax ceiba* (Jain & Verma 2015). Ferris wheel is another major attraction of the fair (Fig. 1).

From ethnobotany's perspective, traditional markets during these fairs are very important. Rural folk sell various items e.g. utensils, toys,

carpets, clothes, paintings, threads, wooden articles etc. in temporarily built shops besides edibles while hawkers sell various locally made items mainly for children. An ethnobotanical survey regarding edibles being sold in the fair revealed some interesting observation.

### Observation

There were some people who were selling fried, spicy *Mung daal* and Onion *Pakor*s while eight stalls were exhibiting bright green colored candies in round/rectangular pieces (Fig.2-4). On investigation, sellers revealed that these candies were made up of leaves of plant *Cannabis sativa*. Leaves of *C. sativa* are finely grinded and then settled in sugar syrup to give shape of own choice. It was being sold under the name 'Mafar' at the rate of Rs. 20/ per piece. Interestingly, buyers of this Hemp product were from almost all the ages and both men and women were consuming and selling these candies. Population of this village is more than 3200 and out of that 88.48% belong to scheduled tribes predominantly *Bhil*, *Meena* and *Damor* as per Census 2011 (Jain & Verma, 2015). Selling of candies from the *Cannabis* plants growing as weed in their village became an alternative source of income for the rural population.

### **Conclusion**

Narcotic effect of *C. sativa* is well known and easy availability of the plant as being a weed; makes it very popular among rural folk as a recreational drug. Though, the cultivation of *Cannabis* is prohibited in India except for scientific or medical purpose and that only after getting license through appropriate authorities; yet illegal cultivation and use of the plant for psychotropic purpose are rampant. This short note documents the traditional use of *Cannabis* in candy form in a rural fair organized near Udaipur city.

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