



Review Article

STUDY OF MEDICINAL PLANTS DESCRIBED IN DURGA SAPTSATI (AN HOLISTIC ANCIENT TREATISE)- A CRITICAL STUDY**Acharya Balkrishna^{1,2}, Amit Kumar Chauhan^{3*}, Rajesh Kumar Mishra⁴, Anupam Srivastava³, Bhasker Joshi³**¹Patanjali Herbal Research Department, Patanjali Research Foundation Trust, Haridwar, Uttarakhand,²University of Patanjali, Haridwar, Uttarakhand.³Patanjali Herbal Research Department, Patanjali Research Foundation Trust, Haridwar, Uttarakhand,⁴Department of Dravyaguna Vigyan, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedic Evum Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar.**KEYWORDS:** *Durgā Śaptaśatī*, Āyurveda, Medicinal plants, *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Religious scripture.**ABSTRACT**

Durgā Śaptaśatī is an important, spiritual and renowned text of Hindu religious scripture describes the glory of Goddess *Durgā* with deep mysteries and learning's inside it. The beautiful description of this text reveals the trio combination of work-worship and knowledge like the three *Mandākinī* at one place. In this way, medicinal plants like *Padma* (Lotus), *Akṣa*, *Bandhūka* (Midday Flower), *Candana* (Sandalwood), *Pāṭala* (Rose), *Kalhāra* (Red water lily), *Mātulūṅga* (Citron) and *Pārijāta* (Night-flowering coral jasmine) are also described in "*Durgā Śaptaśatī*". This paper deals with the taxonomic description, medicinal properties and uses of medicinal plants described in *Durgā Śaptaśatī*.

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INTRODUCTION

Durgā Śaptaśatī has been one of the most widely read scriptures and a ceremonial store house of spiritual heritage. It has already attained the status of one of the most enduring religious classics globally. *Durgā Śaptaśatī* is a holy text of Hindu scriptures. In other words we can say that description of *Durgā Śaptaśatī* has been compared with the river *Mandākinī*, the habitat river of *Kedārnātha*. Moving towards flawless message of *Durgā Śaptaśatī*, it shows that the evil people and nation's opponent extremist's can be successfully beaten through unity of gentlemen's good deeds. *Durgā Śaptaśatī* is basically a part of great Indian religious text "*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*" from chapter 81-93 (pg.383-526)^[1]. Due to the perfect combination of Goddess *Durgā* majesty and 700 śloka for describing the Goddess as the supreme power, thus this text is known as '*Durgā Śaptaśatī*' and *Durgā mahātmya* (Glory of Goddess). Based on various contexts *Durgā Śaptaśatī* also reveals the description of various medicinal plants with their flower and fruits.

Description of Kamala (Lotus) in Durgā Śaptaśatī

Among various medicinal plants the most important flower is lotus as a salient flower in *Durgā Śaptaśatī*. *Asrāṇyanekarūpāṇi tathā megham ca daśanam.*

*Amlānapaṅkajām mālām śirasyrasi cāparām.**Adajjaladhityai paṅkajām cātisobhanam.**Himavān vāhanam śirha ratnāni vividhāni ca.* (*Durgā Śaptaśatī* 2:28-29, Pg. 80)^[2]

Brahmā and other Gods and Goddesses gave birth to beautiful creation of "Goddess *Durgā*" from their bright 'aura' and simultaneously hand over various weapons and ornaments to boost up her power and beauty based on their own majestic powers. The emperor of sea i.e., *Jaladhi* gave Lotus flower and Lord *Viśwakarmā* offers a beautiful garland of lotus flower with a unique quality that they will never go to withered in future^[2].

**Nidhiresa mahāpadmaḥ samānīto dhaneśvarāt.
Kiñjalkinī dardo pābdhirmālāmlānayaṅkajām.**
(Durgā Śaptaśatī 5:96, Pg. 117) [2]

In another place where all Gods and Goddess were praying from Goddess 'Viṣṇu Māyā' on 'Girirāja Himālaya', there Goddess Pārvatī or 'Bhagwatī Pārvatī' gave origin to another fascinating Goddess from her own body. After seeing her demons *Caṇḍa* and *Muṇḍa* informed their crowned head king 'Śumbha' about alluring beauty of Goddess. They also informed him in this worship about capturing of 'Mahāpadam' from Lord Kubera and also the capturing of 'Kinjalkinī' named garland of Lotus from Kubera [2].

In this way the key flower Lotus has been explained in various Śhloka of "Durgā Śaptaśatī".

**Yāmastautsvapitte harau kamalajo hantu
madhu kaiṭbham.** (Durgā Śaptaśatī 1:1, Pg. 59) [2]

When God Viṣṇu was sleeping in his deep sleep, then the demons 'Madhu & Kaitabha' tried to kill Lord Brahmā, at the same time the Lotus originator Brahmā worshipped Lord Viṣṇu to help him from those demons [2].

**Description of Akṣa (Belleric myrobalan) in
Durgā Śaptaśatī**

The beautiful smile Goddess was sitting on flower Lotus with her fascinating 'aura' was holding *Paraśu*, *Gadā*, *Vāṇa*, *Vajra*, *Padma* (lotus), *Dhanuṣa* (bow), *Kuṇḍikā*, *Daṇḍa*, *Śakti*, *Śaṅkha*, *Ghaṅṭā*, *Madhupātra*, etc. Present Śloka reveals the description of *Akṣa* plant i.e., Belleric myrobalan (*Vibhītaka*) [2].

**Akṣarakparaṅśu gadeṣukuliśam padmam
dhanuṣkuṇḍikām.**

**Daṇḍam śaktimasim ca carma jalajam ghaṅṭam
surābhājanam.** (Durgā Śaptaśatī 2:1, Pg.75) [2]

In another context in "Durgā Śaptaśatī", the description of *Vibhītakī* garland and *Bandhūka* are also available.

**Description of Bandhūka (Midday flower) in
Durgā Śaptaśatī**

**Bandhukākāñcananibham rudhirākṣamālām
pāśāṅkuśau ca varadām nijabāhudaṇḍaiḥ.**

**Binbhrāṅaminduśakalābharaṅam
trinetrāmardhāmbikeśamaniśam
vapurāśrayāmi.** (Durgā Śaptaśatī 9:1, Pg.145) [2]

Means, I continuously take shelter of the worshipping deity of Lord "Ardhanārīśwara". His complexion is similar to 'Bandhūka Puṣpa' (Gun flower) and akin gold colour i.e. Reddish-yellowish. He used to wear beautiful garland of *Vibhītakī*, Pāśa-a supernatural weapon, *Aṅkuśa* (curb) with *Varadamudrā* gesture bring addition in his beauty.

His ornament is 'Ardhacandra' with his three eyes. Given Śloka reveals the explanation of 'Bandhūka Puṣpa' (Gun flower) in "Durgā Śaptaśatī" [2].

**Description of Candana (Sandalwood) in Durgā
Śaptaśatī**

In 4th chapter of "Durgā Śaptaśatī" by the help of various flowers Gods & Goddesses worshiped 'Goddess Durgā'. But their names are not described there. However there is a description of Gandha Candana means Candan (Sandalwood) present in Durgā Śaptaśatī [2].

**Evam stutā surairdityaiḥ
kusumairnandanodbhavaiḥ.**

Arcitā jagatām dhātrī tathā gandhānulepaniḥ.
(Durgā Śaptaśatī 4:29, Pg.105) [2]

Description of Pāṭala (Rose) in Durgā Śaptaśatī

Gods and Goddesses worshiped Goddess *Durgā* in 'Nandana Vana' a holy forest of Gods & Goddesses where they used various divine flowers with 'Gandha Chandana' in order to praise her. In the same way a part of "Durgā Śaptaśatī" named "Durgāshottar Shatnamstotram" describes the beauty of 'Goddess Durgā' who used to have flowers of roses thus called as 'Pāṭalavati'. [2]

**Description of Kalhāra (Red water lily) in Durgā
Śaptaśatī**

In another chapter of "Durgā Śaptaśatī", the description of mediative shlokas describes the 'Kalhāra Puṣpa' (Kalhāra flower).

**Kalhārabaddhamālām niyamitavilasaccolikām
raktavastām**

**Mātaṅgī saṅkhaṭrām madhuramadhumadām
citrakodbhāsibhālam.** (Durgā Śaptaśatī 7:1, Pg.128) [2]

Means Garland of *Kalhāra* flowers with a fascinating brasserie were ambling beauty in her beautiful aura [2].

**Description of Mātaluṅga (Citron) in Durgā
Śaptaśatī**

In an important part of this mythological text there is a description of having *Mātaluṅga* (citrus fruit) by 'Goddess Durgā' [2].

**Mātaluṅga gadām kheṭam pānapātram ca
bibhrati.**

**Nāgam liṅgam ca yonim ca bibhrati nṛpa
mūrdhani.** (Durgā Śaptaśatī, Prādhānikam
Rahashyam: 5, Pg. 193) [2]

Means she is holding *Mātaluṅga* (Citrus fruit), *Gadā*, *Ḍhāla*, *Pānapātra* within her 4 arms with *Nāgalingam* and *Yoni* holding on her head [2].

Description of *Pārijāta* (Night flowering jasmine) in *Durgā Śaptaśatī*

In "*Durgā Śaptaśatī*" there is also the description of '*Pārijāta-Puṣpa*' by *Caṇḍa & Muṇḍa* while doing worship of demon's king '*Śumbha*'^[2].

Pārijāta taruścāyaṁ tathaivoccaiḥ śravāhayaḥ.
(*Durgā Śaptaśatī* 5:94, Pg.117)^[2]

In this way, in "*Durgā Śaptaśatī*" there is an illustrative narration of *Padma* (Lotus), *Akṣa*, *Bandhūka* (Midday Flower), *Candana* (Sandal wood), *Pāṭala* (Rose), *Kalhāra* (Red water lily), *Mātulūṅga* (Citron) and *Pārijāta* (Night-flowering coral jasmine).

Botanical description and medicinal properties of Plants described in *Durgā Śaptaśatī****Kamala (Nelumbo nucifera Gaertn.)***

Perennial aquatic herb, roots are adventitious. Leaves simple, solitary, suborbicular, 20-80cm across, dark green above, paler beneath, stipulate, glabrous and glaucous on both surface, coriaceous, shallowly notched and apiculate at one side, terminating in a simple vein, membranous when dry; petioles ca. 2m long, beset with scattered hard minute papillae. Flowers solitary on long, rose-pink or white, expanding and emerging above water; peduncles ca. 8-25cm across. Sepals linear-elliptic, concave, 1.5-2.5 x 0.5-0.6cm, obtuse, with midrib distinct near at apex and produced into a 3-5cm long tail, greenish purple outside, purplish inside; corolla shorter than sepals, green outside, purplish inside, lobes broadly or narrowly oblong; inner stamens ca. 2-2.5mm long, fertile, incurved. Berry ca. 1-1.5 cm across; seeds globose, ca. 1mm across, brown, spinulose; spines radiating, tufted at micropylar region. Fl. & Fr.: June-August (Plate:1).

Medicinal Properties

It is mentioned in ancient Ayurvedic text including *Caraka*^[3] *Suśruta*^[4] and various *Nighaṇṭu*. It is sweet in taste^[5]; cold in potency^[5]; alleviates *Kaphapitta*^[5]. It acts as Antidiarrheal^[6,4]; enhances complexion^[5]. Useful in treating *Raktapitta*^[6,4], dipsia^[5], burning sensation^[5], boils^[5], toxicity^[5], erysipelas^[5]. Its seeds are sweet, refrigerant, light, oily, constipating and conception promoter. Its stigma is astringent, refrigerant; alleviates *Kaphapitta*; It's tuber and peduncle is sweet, refrigerant, heavy, aphrodisiac, galactagogue, antidiarrhoeal; alleviates burning sensation and blood disorders.⁽⁷⁾ (Table:1)

Akṣa [Terminalia bellirica (Gaertn.) Roxb.]

Deciduous trees, upto 35m tall. Leaves simple, opposite or alternate, clustered at the tip of branchlets, estipulate, 9-35 x 5-16cm, obovate, elliptic or obovate-elliptic, base obliquely cuneate, attenuate or acute, apex obtusely acuminate,

margin entire, both surface pubescent when young, glabrous at maturity, coriaceous, eglandular; lateral nerves 7-10 pairs; petiole 15-80mm, stout, slightly grooved above, glabrous. Flowers bisexual, greenish-yellow, 5-6mm across, in axillary spikes; peduncle puberulous; bracteoles 0.5-2mm long, linear-lanceolate, caducous. Calyx tube 2-2.5 x 1.3-2mm, rusty pubescent, constricted above the ovary; lobes 5, cream coloured, triangular, tomentose; disc 5-lobed, villous. Petals absent. Ovary 1.5mm, inferior, tomentose, 1-celled; ovules 2 or 3, pendulous; style 4mm, subulate; stigma small. Drupe obovoid, obscurely 5-ridged, 2-2.5 x 1.8cm, yellowish-brown, honed, not winged, softly tomentose; seed single, ellipsoid. Fl. & Fr.: March-February (Plate:1).

Medicinal Properties

It is a constituent of *Triphalā* an important Ayurvedic formulation. In *Caraka Saṁhitā*^[3], it is described under *Jwarahara-gaṇa*, *Śirovirecana-Gaṇa* and in *Suśruta Saṁhitā*^[4], it is described under *Triphalā (Haritakī, Bhibītakī, Āmalakī)* and *Mustādi-gaṇa* (Group of specific medicinal plants). It alleviates *Triḍoṣa* but it is mainly used in the treatment of *Kapha* associated disorders. It is good for eyes; trichogenic, and treats premature greying of hair, hoarseness of voice, nasal diseases, blood disorders, throat diseases, ophthalmic diseases and cardiac diseases. Its fruit kernel is useful in treating cataract. Its bark treats anemia, jaundice and leucoderma. Its seeds are bitter; alleviates intoxication, hyperthirst, emesis, *Vāta* associated disorders and alleviates dyspnea. Its bark is diuretic; alleviates anemia and vitiligo. Its seed alleviates hyperthirst, vomiting and bronchitis. Its fruits are antiphlogistic, analgesic, styptic, intoxicating, digestive, anthelmintic, mild purgative, expectorant, ophthalmic, antipyretic, antiemetic and rejuvenating.^[7] (Table:1)

Candana (Santalum album L.)

Evergreen trees, upto 10m tall; bark surface dark grey to nearly black, rough with short vertical cracks. Leaves simple, opposite, estipulate, 3.7-12 x 2-4cm, elliptic, elliptic-ovate or ovate-lanceolate, base acute or round, apex acute, margin entire, glabrous, shiny above and glaucous beneath, coriaceous; lateral nerves 8-13 pairs; petiole 12-18mm long, slender, glabrous, grooved above. Flowers bisexual, 5-6mm across, reddish-purple, in axillary and terminal panicle cymes, much shorter than leaves. Tepals 5, basally connate into a 2mm long campanulate tube, shortly connate to the basal part of the ovary; lobes 2.5 x 1.5mm, ovate, thin, fleshy, glaucous without, minutely ciliate. Disc concave, adhering to the bottom of perianth, its

lobes alternates with tepals. Stamens 5, alternates with disc; filaments 1mm; anthers ovoid, 2-celled. Ovary superior later half inferior at the time of flowering, globose, unilocular, ovules 2-3, pendulous from below the long; style 1.5mm; stigma 3 lobed. Drupe, 8-12mm across, globose, blackish-purple, annulate above, beaked with the basal part of the style; seed solitary. Fl. & Fr.: November-December (Plate:1)

Medicinal Properties

Sandal wood is being used for medication since ancient time. Being fragrant and cool, it gives happiness to people, hence it is called *Candana*. Its essence has smell, so it is called *Gandhasāra* in *Sanskṛta*. It has a detailed description in ancient *Ayurvedic Saṃhitā* and *Nighaṇṭu*. The description of sandal wood is mentioned in *Dāhapaśamana*, *Aṅgamardapaśamana*, *Tr̥ṣṇā-nigrahaṇa*, *Varṇya*, *Kaṇḍūghna* and *Tiktaskandha* of *Caraka Saṃhitā*^[3] and *Priyaṅgavādi-gaṇa*, *Guḍūcyādi* and *Pittasaṃśamana-gaṇa* of *Suśruta Saṃhitā*^[4]. White sandal wood is bitter, pungent, astringent, sweet, refrigerant, light, dry, heavy; alleviates *Kaphapitta* and burning sensation; causes cheerfulness; hematinic, aphrodisiac, cardiac tonic, enhances complexion; antipruritus, alexipharmic, alleviates thirst; aromatic, enhances sexual vigor, glow and potency. It alleviates fever, emesis, unconsciousness, dipsia, leprosy, cataract, cough, *Raktapitta*, internal burning sensation, poisoning, worm infestation, fatigue and emaciation^[7]. (Table:1)

Mātulūṅga [*Citrus medica* L.]

Evergreen shrub or small trees up to 4m tall; branchlets angular and purplish when young, glabrous, stout; axillary spines ca. 4cm long, straight. Leaves simple, alternate, spiral, ca. 6-18 x 3-9cm, oblanceolate or obovate, obtuse or rounded at base, acute or rounded at apex, crenate-serrate at margin with white gland-dotted; secondary nerves 8-12 pairs; petioles ca. 0.5-1cm long, margined. Flowers ca. 1.5cm, white or pinkish, oblong in bud, bisexual and staminate in axillary racemes. Calyx urceolate, 4 or 5-lobed; lobes ca. 4mm long. Petals 5, ca. 2-4 x 1cm, pink or purplish abaxially, oblong or oblanceolate, glandular. Stamens 30-40 or more; filaments polyadelphous, white, shortly pubescent; anthers ca. 5mm long, yellowish, linear. Ovary 12-14-locular, ca. 8 x 4mm, cylindrical; style ca. 15 mm long, purplish, cylindrical; stigma pinkish, globose, sticky. Fruits ovoid-oblong, ellipsoid or obovoid, ca. 10-20 x 6-14cm, yellowish, surface smooth, rough or warty on outer, obtuse or depressed at base, obtuse or mamillate at apex; rind very thick, strongly adherent, glandular, foveolate, aromatic;

mesocarp whitish, hard; endocarp segments 10-12, with pale greenish acidic or sweetish pulp-vesicles; seeds numerous, ca. 10 x 5 mm, acute at base, smooth, white when cut. Fl. & Fr.: Throughout the year (Plate:2).

Medicinal Properties

In *Caraka Saṃhitā*⁽³⁾, it is described under *Hṛdya* and *Chardinigrahaṇa mahākaśāya* and its description is also given in *Suśruta Saṃhitā*^[4]. Its flowers are stomachic, constipating, light, cooling and alleviates *Raktapitta*. Flower stigma is stomachic, light, constipating, tastant; useful in treating gulma, abdominal disorders, dyspnea, cough, hiccough, emaciation, intoxication, constipation, hemorrhoids and emesis. It is stomachic, good for throat, depurates the tongue and heart; treats asthma, cough, anorexia, vitiated Pitta and hyperthirst. Its root is vermifugal and used in the treatment of constipation. The juice obtained from flower stigma is useful in treating costal pain, bladder pain, vitiated *Kapha*, anorexia, intoxication, constipation, hemorrhoids and emesis. Its root is stomachic, digestive, constipating, light, cooling, contractile, analgesic; aggravates *Vāta*; treats *Raktapitta*, hemorrhoids, worm infestation, cholera and constipation. Its fruit juice is useful in treating costal pain, bladder pain, cardiac pain and alleviates *Kaphavāta*. Its fruit pulp is sweet, mucilaginous, tonic, stomachic; alleviates *Vātapitta*; throat purifier, penetrating, light. Its fruit peel is pungent, bitter, hot, heavy, mucilaginous, heavy to digest, penetrating; alleviates *Kaphavāta*, emesis and anorexia^[7]. (Table: 1)

Pārijāta (*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis* L.)

Deciduous shrub or small tree. Branchlets pubescent, 4-angled. Leaves ovate, shortly acuminate, distantly toothed or entire, coriaceous, scabrid, base rounded, cuneate or acute. Flowers white, sweet scented, sessile, 3-7 together on hairy quadrangular peduncles arranged in cymose panicles. Calyx tube funnel shaped, 4-5 toothed. Corolla tube cylindrical, orange red; lobes white, 5-8, contorted in bud. Anthers subsessile near the mouth of the corolla tube. Ovary two celled; style cylindrical, bifid. Capsule compressed orbicular. Fl. & Fr.: September – March. (Plate:1)

Medicinal Properties

Its flowers are very aromatic. It is mentioned in many ancient treatises (JBR). It is antipyretic, hepatic stimulant, mild purgative and demulcent. It is tonic, analgesic, antiphlogistic, sudorific, depurative, anthelmintic; provokes Pitta; digestive, expectorant, diuretic and purgative.

Extract of its leaf shows hypnotic, antiallergic and purgative effect^[7]. (Table:1)

Kalhāra [*Nymphaea rubra* Roxb. ex Salisb.]

Aquatic perennial herbs, maroon coloured, laticiferous, rooted. Rhizomes short, ovoid, stoloniferous. Leaves suborbicular, peltate to broadly ovate, ca. 12-30 x 9-26cm across, base deeply hastate, apex obtuse to retuse, margin shortly sinuate dentate and wavy, usually floating or submerged, membranous when young than coriaceous, dark red when young, reddish maroon, later olive green glabrous when mature on both sides, densely pubescent, prominently veined; submerged leaves smaller, cordate or sagittate, long petiolate. Flowers bisexual, usually solitary and floating, crimson red or dark red, ca. 8-16 cm across; peduncles long; receptacle cylindrical. Sepals 4, free, oblong-lanceolate, apex subacute or blunt, brownish green outside, ca. 2.5-8 x 1.5 x 1-3.5 cm across. Petals ca. 10-25, oblong-lanceolate, base attenuate, apex subacute, white, outer ones ca. 2-7 x 1-2.8cm across. Stamens numerous; filaments of the inner stamens with purplish band outside, lanceolate, longer than anthers; anthers partially sunken. Ovary superior, multilocular; stigma flat with a hemispheric central projection, red. Berry globose, ca. 2.5-4 cm across; seeds many, ellipsoid or globular, smooth, spongy aril make the seeds float, about 1.5 x 1mm. Fl. & Fr.: August-January; almost throughout the year. (Plate:2)

Medicinal Properties

Flower is astringent and cardiac tonic, used to treat cholera, diarrhea, hepatopathy, fever and hyperdipsia. Rhizomes are used as a cure for dyspepsia and dysentery. Root decoction is used for kidney pain, bronchial catarrh or as a gargle for sore throats^{(3),(7)}. (Table:1)

Bandhujīva (*Pentapetes phoenicea* L.)

Annual herbs, up to 3m tall, stem glabrous, with a few scattered stellate hairs. Leaves simple, alternate, elongated, spiral, 5-10 x 1-2 cm, deltoid or hastate to linear, base deltoid, apex acute, margin crenate-serrate, glabrous above, stellate-hairy on the veins beneath; stipules linear-subulate, equalling petioles; petioles ca. 1-5cm long. Flowers 1-3 in axillary fascicles. Sepals ca. 1cm long, connate at base; lobes lanceolate, acuminate, stellate-hairy mixed with simple bristles outside. Petals ca. 1 cm long, red, broadly obovate, truncate. Staminal cup bearing 5 groups of 3 stamens alternating with 5 staminodes; staminodes as long as petals, linear-spathulate, glandular on inner surface. Ovary 5-locular, hairy, ovules many in each locule; styles ca. 1-1.5cm long, often twisted. Capsules subglobose to

oblong, ca. 1-1.5 x 6-1cm, 5-valved, stellate-tomentose with scattered bristles equalling or shorter than the persistent calyx. Seeds 8-12, brown in two rows, ca. 2 mm long, obovate, dotted. Fl. & Fr.: June-January (Plate:2)

Medicinal Properties

It is light in attribute^[5,6,8]; hot in potency^[9]; alleviates *Vātapitta*^[5,6,8]; provosts *Kapha*^[6,8]; alleviates *Tridoṣa*^[10]. Anti-diarrheal^[5,6,8,12], *Prasadaka*^[11]; It is useful in treating fever^[9,11], demonological^[9,11] diseases, cardiac^[9,10] diseases. Styptic and demulcent. Mucilaginous, emollient, unctuous; alleviates *Pitta*; anti-phlegm; light in attribute. (Table:1)

Pāṭala (*Rosa × centifolia* L.)

Erect shrub up to 1m tall. Branches closely covered with nearly straight prickles, scarcely dilated at base and glandular bristles of various forms and sizes. Leaves pinnately compound; leaflets 5 to 7, oblong or ovate, glandular-ciliate on the margin, and subpilose beneath. Flowers large, pink coloured. Sepal leafy, compound, viscid, and spreading in flower. Petal 5, and usually pale-red. Fruit ovoid. Fl. & Fr.: Throughout the year. (Plate:2)

Medicinal Properties

It is sweet, bitter, pungent, astringent, refrigerant, light, unctuous; alleviates *Vātapitta*; aphrodisiac, cardiac tonic, constipating, tastant, stomachic, purgative, digestive, ophthalmic, spermatic; enhances complexion and is rejuvenative. It alleviates stomatitis, *Raktapitta*, burning sensation, dipsia, poisoning, emesis and bloody diarrhoea. Its flowers are refrigerant, enhances complexion; alleviates *Vātapitta*, burning sensation, cough, bronchitis, ulcer, halitosis, indigestion, flatulence, abdominal pain, dermatological diseases, cardiac diseases, fever, erysipelas, hemorrhoids and general debility. Its tincture is purgative, refrigerant, anti-suppurative, aromatic. It alleviates fatigue, burning sensation, dipsia, *Pittaja* and oral diseases^[7]. (Table:1)

CONCLUSION

The word *Durgā* literally means “*Dukhena gantum shakya*.” It means “difficult to access.” It also means “*Durita Nivāriṇī*”, i.e. one who wards off difficulties from the path of her votaries. It is also the name of a Sacrificial Fire according to Vedic tradition. It also symbolizes the creative and evolutionary energy associated with ‘fire’ in many Vedic *Suktas* pertaining to *Agni*. In *Durgā Sūkta* both ‘fire’ and ‘*Durgā*’ are considered as universal energies. *Durga* is considered as the brilliant, lustrous power of the supreme being who manifests himself in the hearts of all. Thus it is the inner

divine potency. *Durgā Śaptaśatī*, was compiled thousands of years ago on Indian soil, with a view to establish the importance of medicinal plants. Medicinal plants described in *Durgā Śaptaśatī* used for worship and treatment of different diseases.

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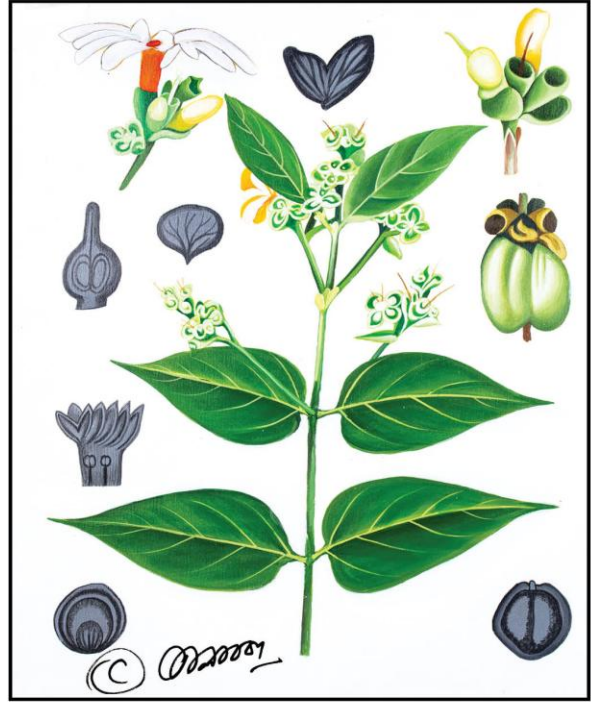
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Table: 1 Rasapañcaka

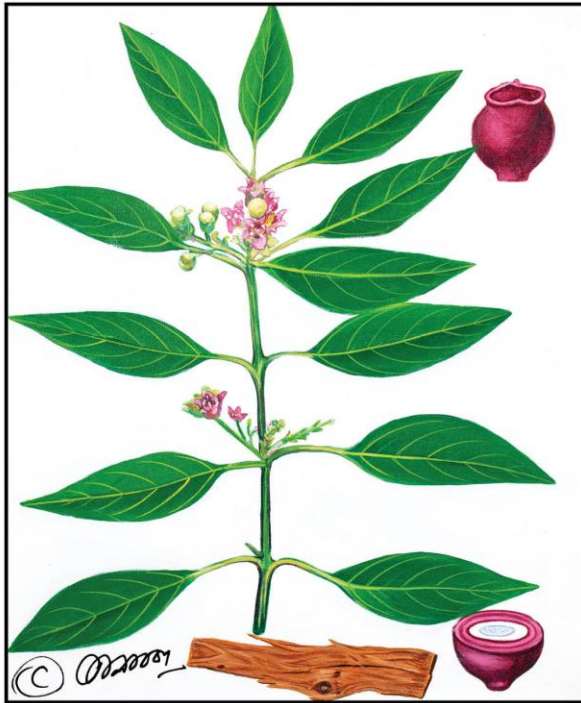
Sr.	Botanical name	Sanskrit name	Rasapañcaka					Doṣakarma
			Rasa	Guṇa	Vīrya	Vipāka	Prabhāva	
1.	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i> Gaertn.	<i>Kamala</i> ^[8] , <i>Nalina</i> ^[8] , <i>Manorama</i> ^[8] , <i>Śaśipuṣpa</i> ^[8]	<i>Kaṣāya</i> ^[13] , <i>Madhura</i> ^[6]		<i>Śīta</i> ^[13]		<i>Balya</i> ^[13] <i>Varṇya</i> ^[8]	<i>Pittakaphaśāmaka</i> ^[6]
2.	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Gaertn.) Roxb.	<i>Bibhītaka</i> ^[6] , <i>Karṣaphala</i> ^[6] , <i>Kalidruma</i> ^[6]	<i>Madhura</i> ^[6] , <i>Kaṣāya</i> ^[6]	<i>Rukṣa</i> ^[6]	<i>Ūṣṇa</i> ^[6]	<i>Madhura</i> ^[6]		<i>Kaphapittaśāmaka</i> ^[15]
3.	<i>Santalum album</i> L.	<i>Śīta</i> ^[5] , <i>Malayaja</i> ^[5] , <i>Candana</i> ^[5] , <i>Hima</i> ^[5]	<i>Kaṭu</i> ^[11] , <i>Tikta</i> ^[11] , <i>Swādu</i> ^[11] , <i>Kaṣāya</i> ^[11]	<i>Rukṣa</i> ^[5] , <i>Laghu</i> ^[5]	<i>Śīta</i> ^[5]		<i>Hṛdya</i> ^[5] , <i>Varṇya</i> ^[5]	<i>Pittaśāmaka</i> ^[5]
4.	<i>Citrus medica</i> L.	<i>Bijapūra</i> ^[6] , <i>Maatuluṅga</i> ^[6] , <i>Rucaka</i> ^[6] , <i>Phalapūraka</i> ^[6]	<i>Madhura</i> ^[6] , <i>Amla</i> ^[6]	<i>Dīpana</i> ^[6] , <i>Laghu</i> ^[6]			<i>Kaṅṭha</i> and <i>Hṛdaya</i> <i>Śodhaka</i> ^[6]	
5.	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i> L.	<i>Pārijāta</i> ^[9] , <i>Kharapatraka</i> ^[9]	<i>Tikta</i> ^[9]	<i>Balya</i> ^[9]	<i>Ūṣṇa</i> ^[9]			<i>Vātanāśaka</i> ^[14]
6.	<i>Nymphaea rubra</i> Roxb. ex Salisb.	<i>Raktakamala</i>	<i>Kaṣāya</i> ^[13] , <i>Madhura</i> ^[6]		<i>Śīta</i> ^[13]		<i>Balya</i> ^[13] <i>Varṇya</i> ^[8]	
7.	<i>Pentapetes phoenicea</i> L.	<i>Bādhujīva</i> ^[9] , <i>Bādhūka</i> ^[9]			<i>Grāhī</i> ^[9]			<i>Kaphakāraka</i> ^[9] , <i>Vātapittahara</i> ^[9]
8.	<i>Rosa × centifolia</i> L.	<i>Taruṇī</i> ^[9]	<i>Kaṣāya</i> ^[15] , <i>Swādu</i> ^[15] , <i>Tikta</i> ^[15]	<i>Laghu</i> ^[15]	<i>Śīta</i> ^[5]		<i>Varṇya</i> ^[15] , <i>Hṛdya</i> ^[15] , <i>Śukrala</i> ^[15]	<i>Vātapitajit</i> ^[15]



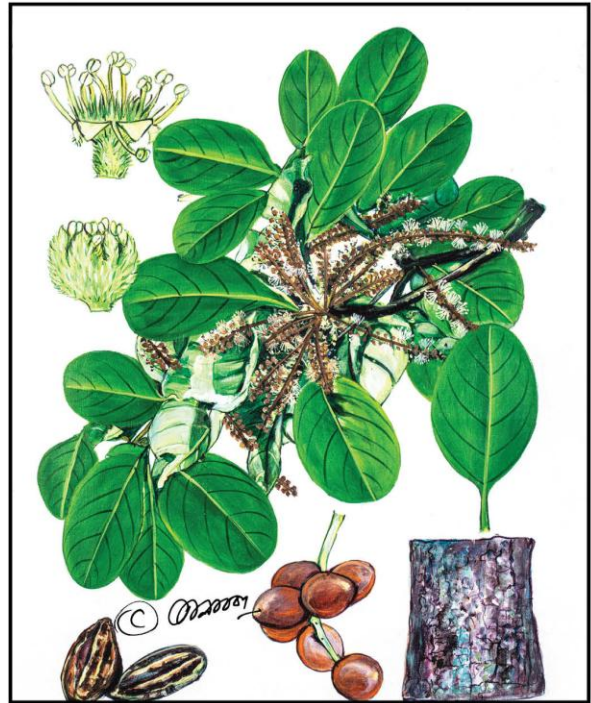
Nelumbo nucifera Gaertn. [Kamala]



Nyctanthes arbor-tristis L. [Parijata]



Santalum album L. [Candana]



Terminalia bellirica (Gaertn.) Roxb. [Bibhitaki]

Plate: 1



Citrus medica L. [Mātuluṅga]



Nymphaea rubra Roxb. ex Andrews [Kalhāra]



Pentapetes phoenicea L. [Bandhujīva]



Rosa centifolia L. [Pāṭala]

Plate: 2