Indian J. Trop. Biodiv. **20(1)** : 89 - 91 (2012)

NATURAL DYE YIELDING PLANTS OF MIZORAM, NORTHEAST INDIA

RAMACHANDRA LAHA
Department of Botany, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Aizawl – 796004, Mizoram
Corresponding author : rc_laha@yahoo.com

The close association of ethnic communities with the forest is an integral part of the ecosystem. Floristic inventories, ethnobotanical studies and various interdisciplinary aspects of folk utilization have been reported (Jain and Rao 1983; Cotton 1992). Dyes are one of the most important use of the plant (Dayal and Dobhal 2001) and it relates with cultural practice, ritual, craft, fabric (Nishida and Kabayash 1992; Ghosh 2003; Sampath and Rao 2003; Mahanta and Tiwari 2005; Rongmei and Yadav, 2005 and Singh, 2006) on different indigenous people.

The Mizoram state is part of Northeast India represent with wide biodiversity and it is a store house of economically important plants. However, much attention was not given on dye yielding plants of this region. There has been an increasing awareness to use ecofriendly dyes in the industries which has resulted into more reliance on the plant resources. Considering the importance and future prospects of dyes, the study was undertaken to document the dye yielding plants of the state.

The study area is confined to the state of Mizoram latitude 21º 58 'N and 28 º 35' N and longitude 92 º 16' E and 93 º 29' E. It occupies a total geographical area of 21,081 sq.km with altitude ranging from 20 m to 2157m MSL forest cover is both primary and secondary type comprising tropical and sub-tropical forest types. The region is characterized by hilly terrain having diverse ecosystem dominated by different ethnic groups.

Extensive field survey and plant collection was undertaken from various places of the state in 2000 and the information was recorded on the various aspects of dye yielding plants. The collection of plant samples was made following the procedure of Jain and Rao (1977). The specimen of different dye yielding plants was identified with the help of flora (Kanjilal *et al*., 1982; Hooker, 1989) and available references.

During the investigation 25 species of dye yielding plants were recorded belonging to various families (Table 1). The plant species include 17(68%) trees, 4(16%) herb, 2(8%) shrubs, 2(8%) climbers and the parts used for dye are fruits, flowers, barks and rhizomes, wood, and tubers (Table 1 and Fig. 1). The documented information may serve for future studies on the dye yielding plants however the knowledge on natural dye yielding plants is eroding due to changing social values, non participation of individual for learning and to tap the potential of the plants for socio economic development.