CHAPTER II

APPROACH OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY
APPRAOCH OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

The study of ethnobotany is mainly field oriented work. The field study of relationship of aboriginals with surrounding vegetation gives first hand information. There are various methods to collect data and investigate traditional prescription for ethnobotanical studies. Apart from methodology discussed in this chapter, it is important to stress here that for more faithful data, persons who undertake such studies should be familiar or well verse with the local dialect.

During present study it has been experienced that for collecting faithful data it becomes very easy if person (inv.) is from same tribe. This can avoid repeated cross checkings and untrue stories by informer consulted for. If the enquirer is completely ignorant, he would be told lies by informants. Added to this villagers or informants suspect enquirer who is stranger to them as police informer etc. This is very much applicable for interior places of North-east region where underground problems are faced. The investigator being a Naga from Ao tribe well versed with Ao dialect as well as Nagamese- the common dialect of almost all the tribes of Nagaland, had the privilege in conducting this study.

During the field studies besides collecting information and plants used as herbal medicine, wild leafy or other vegetables, fruits, folklores and so on, ethnobotanical study is incomplete without gathering information on Historical and Anthropological background and close acquaintance with vegetation, flora and Fauna of the area. Therefore, keeping in mind all these above
discussed aspects, the present study was approached following proper methods. Methodology followed in the present study is described below in a precise form.

1. **Planning:** After considering various factors like richness of an area having such practices (herbal medicine, folklores-practices etc.), feasibility and scope of ethnobotanical studies it was decided to undertake present study in Mokokchung and Tuensang district of Nagaland.

2. **Survey:** The survey was made on following aspects/points:
   (a) Literature
   (b) Anthropological studies
   (c) Social Structure
   (d) Historical background
   (e) Geomorphology and
   (f) Flora and fauna

3. **Field Study:** After preliminary survey of above mentioned aspects, field studies were undertaken to collect detailed information and data on the spot. Beside collecting informations on herbal medicines, wild vegetables-fruits, folklore, folk practices and beliefs, field data on vegetation types of the area were collected. Regular field studies extending over a period of five years were conducted in different parts of these two districts of Nagaland. Some of the places visited for present field study are shown in the map of study area (Fig.1) and informations were collected as follows:
Table 1

Field Data

1. Collection No. Date
2. Locality
   (a) Detail description of immediate locality
   (b) District
   (c) Altitude
   (d) Habit and habitat
3. Local name of the plant
4. Family name
5. Species
6. Description
   (a) Plant
   (b) Leaves
   (c) Bark
   (d) Latex present
   (e) Association or attack of insect etc.
   (f) Flower description
   (g) Fruit description
   (h) Kind of predator
7. Uses
   (a) Plant part used for
   (b) Method of uses
   (c) Other uses if any
   (d) Mode of administration/dosage
   (e) Any incantation
8. Any other plants used with
   (a) Family
   (b) Genus
   (c) Species
   (d) Part used
9. Any other remarks
10. Name of the informer and address
11. Photographic data

These informations were collected from following sources:
   (a) Consulting herbalist, local medicineman
   (b) Information from important sources like: Administrative Officers, Village Headman, eldest and most experienced person of village, foresters and farmers.
   (c) Visiting forest and sacred grooves and cultivated field-farms with local informer and translater.
   (d) Consulting folkmagician and folkloriest
   (e) Visiting local vegetable markets
   (f) Enquiry from the relations
   (g) Photography and audio recording

Wherever necessary and possible photographs of plants, items and vegetation were taken and informations were recorded;

4. Preparation of Herbariums:
   Following routine herbarium methods (Jain and Rao, 1976) herbarium specimens were prepared. These herbarium specimens have been deposited in the University herbarium (NEHU), with the voucher number as "Ethnobotanical study of Mokokchung and Tuensang District", S.Ch. No.1 to 368.
5. **Identification:** Specimens collectd were identified with the help of floras, local (NEHU) herbarium, Regional herbarium (Assam), National herbarium (CAL) and Kew herbarium(K). For bamboo identification Dr. Naithani FRI Dehradon, was consulted.

6. **Compilation and presentation:** The present study deals mainly with the Ethnobotany of Mokokchung and Tuensang districts of Nagaland based on extensive field work. Keeping in view the detailed accounts of district floras undertaken by other workers' emphasis has been given in the present study only to forests and vegetation types, and plant uses for herbal medicines, folklores, folk practices, wild edible vegetables and fruits etc. However, brief enumerations of most of the plants dealt in the present study/work have been provided at one place (Chapter IV). Therefore, separate lists for herbal (medicinal) plants, wild edible vegetable, fruits, indigenous and other domestic uses of plants are provided in Chapter V. The folk practices including beliefs and folklores are given in separate chapter (Chapter VI).

Basing on present investigation a brief discussion and prognosis have been given in the last chapter (Chapter VII). The discussion and prognosis are followed by bibliography and appendices.
Above: The author (sitting at the centre) with administrative officers, securities and guards during field study near Burma Border.

Below: Field study Team crossing a hanging Bamboo Bridge.
Above: Author obtaining Ethnobotanical information from a informer (Mr. Imlongchang).

Below: Field study - Field assistant with the plant specimens.