The hidden healers in poisonous plants

Prelims : Current events of National and International Importance

Why in News?

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A Research Study by IASST, Guwahati revelaed that there are hidden healers in poisonous plants.

- Scientists have unravelled some of nature's most poisonous plants are also among its most powerful healers.
- Plants have been used for their medicinal value since ancient times.
- While some plants are known for their toxicity, they also contain beneficial phytochemicals important for both plants and humans, indicating their dual nature.
- Despite being notorious for toxicity, they possess extraordinary compounds that ***can be converted into powerful weapons for healing*** when meticulously isolated and altered.
- With the advancement of research and development in this domain, the therapeutic potential of phytochemicals derived from toxic plants has surfaced as a promising direction for contemporary medicine.
- Researchers tracing the secrets held in the leaves, roots, and sap of the natural world have comprehensively investigated various poisonous plant species and their phytochemical constituents.
- Research team has reviewed existing literature and identified 70 poisonous plant species that are used traditionally to treat a wide array of illnesses, from fevers and colds to skin diseases and oedema.
- These plants are *already utilized in homeopathy and traditional Indian medicine.*
- The researchers emphasized that plants produce phytochemicals, natural compounds used for their survival, which can also affect human biology.
- While some of these are toxic, others, when isolated and modified, hold immense medicinal promise.

- Modern pharmacology is beginning to recognize the potential of these phytochemicals.
- These toxic compounds can be transformed into potent therapeutic agents with careful scientific processing.
- The study explores how these natural toxins can be studied, validated, and potentially turned into life-saving drugs.
- The findings draw upon ethnopharmacology, how indigenous cultures use plants for healing.
- From treating snakebites to managing jaundice, these traditional remedies are now being re-evaluated through the lens of modern science. The implications are vast.
- With rigorous testing, these plants could help discover novel drugs for diseases still lacking effective treatment.
- The researchers have stressed the importance of rigorous scientific validation before clinical use.
- Toxicity must be carefully studied to ensure safety.

Reference

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