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Ethnopharmacological Note

## A novel use of *Cuscuta reflexa* Roxb. (Cuscutaceae) by a Tripura tribal healer of Khagrachari district, Bangladesh to treat bone fracture

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*Cuscuta reflexa* Roxb. (Cuscutaceae) is known as giant dodder in English and “swarna lota” in Bangladesh. It is a parasitic vinous plant, which can be easily observed entwining other plants in the wild areas or roadsides of the country. The plant does not have any leaves; a yellowish coloured stem essentially form the whole plant. The plant is considered ethnomedicinally important. The people of Malihabad, Lucknow district, Rajasthan, India, use the plant to treat leucoderma (Ali & Shankar, 2015). The Reang tribe of south district of Tripura, India, uses the plant to strengthen liver and kidneys as well as for treatment of uterine problems (Debnath et al., 2014). The Korku tribe at Satpuda Range, India, use whole plant for dermatitis, skin diseases, and itches (Iqbal, 2013). The whole plant is used as a purgative by the Apatani tribe in Arunachal Pradesh, India (Kala, 2005). The Pahan tribe of Bangladesh uses the whole plant to treat skin infections (Rahmatullah et al., 2012). Folk medicinal practitioners (FMPs) in Shitol Para village in Jhalokati district, Bangladesh use whole plant to treat jaundice, liver diseases, uterus and liver pain (Rahmatullah et al., 2010a). In an ethnomedicinal survey conducted among various tribal communities in Rangamati and Khagrachari districts, Bangladesh, we observed a rather unusual and novel use of the plant. The information was obtained from Suipruchai Dewan, a male tribal healer, age 50 years, and belonging to the Tripura tribal community residing in Nunchori konchaig karbari Para in Khagrachari district, Bangladesh. The healer used the plant to treat bone fracture in which paste of the whole plant was applied over the fractured area followed by bandaging the area with a piece of cloth. This is rather a new use of *C. reflexa*, for the plant most used by Bangladesh FMPs to treat bone fracture is *Cissus quadrangularis* (L.) (Vitaceae) (Rahmatullah et al., 2010b). A Santal tribal healer of Dinajpur district, Bangladesh, uses a combination of stems of *Stephania glabra* (Roxb.) Miers. (Menispermaceae) and whole plants of *C. quadrangularis* to treat bone fracture and sprains (Azad et al., 2014).

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Figure 1. *Cuscuta reflexa* Roxb.