

Traditional artifacts from dried leaves of cymbidium species (orchidaceae) in ind...

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In Sikkim, people are fascinated about flowers and growing them in and around their houses. Floriculture has been able to change the entire concept of horticulture, helping it to transform from hobby gardening to economic venture. The tangible impacts of Orchids, especially Cymbidium cultivation is sentimental and economic value to farmers in transforming hobby floriculture into commercial venture are manifested in increased usage of flowers for different local functions, development of floriculture clusters in many corners of the State, increased and sustained supply of flowers to various domestic markets and greater degree of floriculture entrepreneurship amongst educated youths. Sikkim is one of the favorite tourist destinations in India. The traditional artifacts are very popular among the tourist. But, despite improvement in technology elsewhere, no noticeable change has been recorded in Sikkim. Research and design development unit need to establish in each district of state for generating sustainable livelihood both in urban and rural areas. The relevance of orchid's cultivation in the rural economy has multiplied over the years.

It is noteworthy that the traditional use of Cymbidium dried leaves is an integral part of the Lepcha tribe and hence it cannot be studied or judged in isolation. Even horticulturists/handicraft men working in the field need to take note of this and to a very large extent rely on traditional knowledge to reach a scientific conclusion. Further detailed explorations, survey and collection of artifacts information, making process and documentation etc. will provide reliable source of this Cymbidium leaves waste management to the Lepcha people making the socio-cultural artifact and handicrafts for fetching high income. Such comprehensive and exclusive study on traditional

handcrafts has been reported by several workers from different parts of India.

The significance of these traditional handcraft technologies and commercial growing of orchids in improving/wide spread to the young generations, promoting, generating employment and providing financial security to people has increased many fold and the realization of the same by cross section of the people has further increased its importance in this hilly region. The influence of the tourist attraction, curiosity and demand about these artifacts reflects on income earning on rural craftsmen. The awareness on trade related aspects on intellectual property rights (IPR) is an important role for this traditional knowledge, skill and practice of creating such attractive craft items with intricate design and novelty is now vulnerable to international piracy, illicit exploitation and monopolistic ownership and control by provision of granting its patents to some influential businessmen or corporate bodies. Because of they are not aware of the laws concerning modern trade and commerce to protect their design and technology. These Lepcha artisans must be protected from innocent infringement of particular design or technology of Cymbidium craft by patenting to prevent their possible forfeiture in imminent.

All such adverse factors are forcing the artisans to look for some alternate sources of income leaving this age old practice permanently. So, protection of some advance training with technology to the artisans, financial assistance to develop their infrastructure as well as proper marketing of their products can save this unique plant based craft from oblivion. Considering

the adverse environmental impacts of polythene bags, it is desirable to continue and promote use of Cymbidium leaf baskets for keeping the vegetables and fruits for freshness and the basket pots for cultivation of ornamental plants. These eco-friendly basket pots are absorbing the water and keeping the moisture levels for a longer period.