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LATE TERTIARY LEAF FLORA OF MAHUADANR VALLEY, JHARKHAND

SANJAI KUMAR SINGH and **MAHESH PRASAD**

BIRBAL SAHNI INSTITUTE OF PALAEOBOTANY, 53 UNIVERSITY ROAD, LUCKNOW-226007, INDIA
E-mail: sanjai_sk2002@yahoo.co.in
mahesh_bsip.@ yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Leaf impressions from the Late Tertiary sediments of the Mahuadanr valley, Jharkhand have been studied morphotaxonomically. The qualitative and quantitative methods of comparison of morphological features between the fossil and extant taxa revealed the occurrence of some more taxa representing 12 species of 10 dicotyledonous families. On the basis of present assemblage as well as previously published data, the palaeoclimate and phytogeography of the Mahuadanr area during the late Tertiary have been deduced.The analysis of present distribution of all the modern comparable species of the fossils indicates that most of the taxa presently grow in the mixed deciduous forests of the Himalayan foothills, central India, south India and adjoining area of the Mahuadanr valley, which suggests that mixed deciduous type of forest flourished in and around the fossil locality during sedimentation. The presence of a good amount of recovered taxa growing today in the vicinity of the Mahuadanr fossil locality indicates that same flora is persisting, suggesting that there was not much climatic change in the area since the late Tertiary time.

Keywords: Plant megafossils, Leaf impressions, Angiosperms, Palaeoclimate, Phytogeography, late Tertiary, Mahuadanr, Jharkhand (India)