

# Heibi Mana in Saroi Khangba Ritual (Manipur)

## Introduction

Heibi mana is the leaf of a wild plant that is locally known and widely used in Manipur. In Meitei tradition, it holds both cultural and spiritual importance. Apart from being eaten as a seasonal vegetable, Heibi mana is also closely associated with traditional rituals, especially Saroi Khangba, which is performed to protect people from illness and negative spiritual influence.

## Background of Saroi Khangba

- The leaves are included among the ritual offerings (lei-hao) placed at the ritual site.
- Wild and medicinal plants like Heibi mana are believed to purify the surroundings.
- The plant symbolizes protection and is used to ward off evil spirits and negative energy.
- The leaves are sometimes used to prepare or decorate the ritual space, making it spiritually clean and safe.

## Cultural Significance

For the Meitei community, Heibi mana represents a deep connection with nature. The use of naturally available plants in rituals shows respect for traditional knowledge passed down through generations. Heibi mana is not only seen as a ritual item but also as a symbol of harmony between humans, nature, and the spiritual world.

## Medicinal and Daily Use

- It is commonly eaten as a leafy vegetable, either in Singju or cooked dishes.
- In traditional medicine, the leaf paste is used for local treatment.
- It is believed to help in treating intestinal worms and voice-related problems.

This dual use, both sacred and practical, makes Heibi mana a special plant in Manipuri culture.

## Conclusion

Heibi mana holds a meaningful place in Saroi Khangba rituals as well as in everyday life. Its use reflects the Meitei community's belief in natural healing, spiritual balance, and respect for indigenous practices. Through rituals like Saroi Khangba, Heibi mana continues to remain an important cultural symbol connecting tradition, health, and spirituality in Manipur.