

## Pharmacognostic Studies in the Members of Phansomba, a Folk Medicine Belonging to the Genus *Phellinus* Quél.

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A general pharmacognostic study of 35 specimens of *Phellinus* Quél., collected as market samples of phansomba and wild heart-rot-causing diseases in plantations and in live standing trees in Pune, has been carried out. Present biochemical analysis suggests that the total polysaccharide range is between 6% and 14%, total protein is between 4% and 9%, the total amino acid range is between 0.4% and 6%, and the crude ash between 3% and 8%. These ranges are in agreement with those of "sanghawang" belonging to *Phellinus linteus* (Berk. et M.A. Curt.) Teng, a Korean medicinal polypore. Studies also suggest that from a

general pharmacological point of view, the medicinal mushroom sanghawang, sold and patented for large-scale cultivation for various medicinal purposes, especially for its antitumor activity, is one that is comparable with "phansomba" sold in the western region of India.

We also propose that the species of *Phellinus* sold as phansomba in the western part of India has many characteristics in common with the species of fungus that causes heart rot in live standing pine sold as sanghawang in Korea, with respect to their medicinal properties.