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**KOTHALA HIMBUTU ; *Salacia reticulata***  
**A review of Botanical and Ayurvedic perspective**

Kothala himbutu is an indigenous Sri Lankan medicinal plant, but also grown in some parts of Southern India. There are two species of Kothala Himbutu and said to have the same properties in Sri Lanka. Both species are at risk, if cut from their natural environment. The *Salacia reticulata* is endangered while the *Salacia diandra* is endemic and endangered. Both Kothala Himbutu species grow well in the wet zone in Sri Lanka.

Indian Kothala Himbutu plant does not have the same properties as the Sri Lankan one and that is why the Sri Lankan plant is in high demand in the export market. *Salacia reticulata* is the variety that contains this specific medicinal value and is found only in Sri Lanka.

The compounds contained in the parts of the kothala himbutu tree can control the process of the enzyme which helps to produce food into sugar and added that Kothala himbutu can be used as a tea to control sugar levels in the body with virtually no side effects.

According to ayurvedic system of medicine, mostly the roots of the Kothala himbutu tree are used in preparation of medicines. The plant is also used to heal digestion, hepatitis, skin ailments and diabetes. Kothala Himbutu is also known to reduce sugar in the gut and is ideal for those who want to get slimmer, want to reduce weight.

Sri Lanka is known to produce some of the best Kothala Himbutu plants in the world. The plant takes around 40 to 50 years to grow into mature creepers, before it can be used for medicinal purposes. Kothala Himbutu is used by traditional physicians or Ayurvedic doctors to treat diabetes. Currently, Japan has many patents and pending applications for export of the Kothala Himbutu plants from Sri Lanka.

## **Qualifications**

**BAMS** (Honours) – University of Colombo

Registered Ayur. Physician

**D.Pharm** (Honours) - **Faculty of Medicine, Colombo**

Registered Pharma. Diplomate

**PGDHD** (Health Development & Research) Scholar

Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

**MD(Ay)** Scholar, University of Colombo

Life Member-Pharmaceutical Society of Sri Lanka

Life Member – Alumni Association, IIM, University of Colombo

Life Member – Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science

Former Vice President – SLVS

Former Consultant - IUCN

