TOBACCO INDUSTRY THROUGH THEIR CONTRACTED FARMERS IN KENYA ARE POSSING A GRAVE THREAT TO THE EXISTENCE OF INDIGENOUS MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY 80% OF THE POOR COMMUNITY.

The above issue has hit hard the indigenous knowledge holders and as a result it needs an urgent attention. This was revealed by an extensive research carried out by Sungu African Herbal Research Center at Rangwe area Komolo Sub-location of HomaBay District.

It is unfortunate that due to the ignorance of B.A.T contracted farmers, they have cleared indiscriminately the commonly used medicinal plants for the purpose of curing tobacco.

Despite pleas by the custodians of indigenous knowledge, researchers and the community, the industry has turned deaf ears and are unco-operative.

The company hides behind a limited agroforestry programme which caters for exotic trees that takes not less than 10 years to mature for farmers use. Even at the maturity stage, farmers prefers to use the trees as timber or sale them out to dealers.

This also happens as a result of unsupervised or an unmonitored project by the B.A.T. personnels. In their agroforestry programme, not at any stage do they mention care and protection of the useful shrubs and the indigenous medicinal plants.

We urge the international community to address this issue urgently for its our belief that as a research body, all human race use plants source as of medicine. I would like to request for an opportunity to attend any of the current forums to further explain our true position VIZ A VIZ the above at your convenience.

Thanks in advance,

Yours faithfully,

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