

Orobanche aegyptica Pers. Parasitizing Knol - khol (*Brassica oleracea* var. *gongylodes* L.)

Orobanche spp. are total root parasites affecting various crops like tobacco, brinjal and tomato. Among



Plate 1. Roots of *Orobanche aegyptica* intertwined with root system of knol - khol.

cruciferous plants, mustard is severely affected by this parasite. During routine field visit knol - khol (*Brassica oleracea* var. *gongylodes* L. crop growing near Jaipur (Rajasthan) was found infested with *Orobanche* spp. The parasitized plant of knol - khol showed stunted growth and reduced vigour. The edible part (swollen stem) did not show normal development. Two to many parasitic plants were found growing around a single plant of knol - khol. Examination of carefully uprooted infested plant along with parasite revealed that roots of the parasite are closely intertwined with the host root system. (Plate-1).

Stem of the parasite was 10-15 cm high, branched at the base, scales few lanceolate, 5-15 mm long, flowers sessile, calyx pubescent and U-toothed, corolla 2-3.5 cm long with upper part blue - lilac and lower part white. Capsules oblong and 1.3 cm long. The parasitic plant was identified as *Orobanche aegyptica* Pers. and knol - khol appears to be a new host record for the root parasite. □

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