

Molshree

Molshree, also known as Bakul or Spanish Cherry, is a flowering tree native to India, Southeast Asia, and the Philippines. Its scientific name is *Mimusops elengi*, and it belongs to the Sapotaceae family. The tree has a significant cultural and religious significance in India, where it is considered sacred and often planted near temples and in gardens.

Tree Characteristics	Description
Common Name	Molshree / Bakul / Spanish Cherry
Scientific Name	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>
Maximum height	Up to 25 meters
Diameter of crown	5-10 meters
Diameter of trunk	1-1.5 meters
Years to grow	10-15 years
Economic benefit	Timber, medicinal uses, fragrance, agroforestry

Physical Characteristics

The Molshree tree is evergreen and can grow up to a maximum height of 25-30 meters. It has a dense, pyramidal-shaped crown with a diameter of about 12-15 meters when mature. The bark is grayish-brown and rough, with vertical fissures. The leaves are glossy and oval-shaped, measuring about 10-12 cm in length. The tree produces small, white, and fragrant flowers, which bloom in clusters.



Uses of the tree

The various parts of the *Mimosa elengi* tree have a range of uses in different fields. Some of the uses are:

Medicinal uses: The bark, leaves, and flowers of the tree have been used in traditional medicine for various ailments. The bark has been used for treating diarrhea, dysentery, and fever. The leaves are believed to have antihypertensive, anti-inflammatory, and analgesic properties. The flowers have been used as a remedy for sore throat, cough, and asthma.

Perfumery: The flowers of the *Mimosa elengi* tree have a sweet and pleasant fragrance and are widely used in the perfumery industry. The flowers are also used to make traditional attars or fragrant oils.

Cosmetics: The oil extracted from the seeds of the tree is used in cosmetics and skincare products due to its emollient and moisturizing properties.

Timber: The wood of the *Mimusops elengi* tree is hard and durable and is used for making furniture, flooring, and musical instruments.

Food: The fruit of the tree is edible and is consumed in some parts of India. It is also used to make pickles and jams.

Religious significance: In Hinduism, the *Mimusops elengi* tree is considered sacred and is believed to have spiritual significance. The flowers are offered to Lord Shiva and the tree is planted in temples and homes.

Ornamental purposes: The tree is commonly used as an ornamental plant due to its attractive flowers and shiny, dark green leaves. It is also grown as a street tree in some cities.



Ecological Role

The Molshree tree plays an essential ecological role in its native regions. It provides shelter and food to a variety of birds, animals, and insects, including bees, butterflies, and birds like sunbirds and parakeets. The tree's flowers are an important source of nectar for pollinators, and its leaves are

a food source for several species of caterpillars.

Importance to Birds, Animals, and Insects

The Molshree tree provides a habitat for a diverse range of bird species, including the white-bellied drongo, spotted dove, and the common myna. Many animals, such as squirrels and monkeys, also rely on the tree for food and shelter. Additionally, the tree is an essential resource for honeybees, which collect nectar from its flowers to produce honey.



Type of Soil Needed for Growing

The Molshree tree grows best in well-drained soils with a pH range of 6.5 to 7.5. It can tolerate a wide range of soils, including sandy and loamy soils, but it requires good soil drainage to avoid waterlogging.

Temperature Range and Climatic Conditions

The tree thrives in tropical and subtropical climates and prefers warm and humid conditions. It grows best in areas with a temperature range of 20-35°C and requires a minimum of 900 mm of rainfall annually.

States in India Where the Tree is Found Naturally

Molshree is found naturally in various regions of India, including the Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, and the Himalayan foothills. It is also commonly found in the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

Different Stages of Tree Growth in Detail

The Molshree tree goes through different stages of growth, starting with the germination of the seed. The tree can take up to 4-5 years to reach maturity and produce flowers. Once mature, the tree produces flowers annually, typically between February and June. The tree's fruit is a fleshy, berry-like drupe that takes about 5-6 months to ripen.

How Farmers are Benefited by Growing it Under Agroforestry

Farmers can benefit significantly from growing Molshree trees under agroforestry. The tree's flowers and leaves are in high demand in the fragrance and perfume industries, providing a significant source of income for farmers. Additionally, the

tree's fruit is edible and can be used to make jams, jellies, and syrups, providing another source of income for farmers. The tree's wood is also valuable and can be used for furniture, flooring, and construction.



Conclusion

The Molshree tree is an essential part of India's biodiversity, providing ecological and economic benefits to farmers and wildlife. Its fragrant flowers, dense foliage, and cultural significance make it a popular choice for