A REVIEW ON PHYTOCHEMICAL, MEDICINAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL PROFILE OF FICUS BENGALENSIS

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Abstract - *Ficus bengalensis* is a large evergreen tree distributed all over India from sub Himalayan region and in the deciduous forest of Deccan and South India. *Ficus bengalensis* (*FB*) (Moraceae) commonly known as Banyan tree or Vata or Vada tree in Ayurveda. There are more than 800 species and 2000 varieties of *Ficus* species, most of which are native to the old world tropics. According to Ayurveda, it is astringent to bowels; useful in treatment of biliousness, ulcers, erysipelas, vomiting, vaginal complains, fever, inflammations, leprosy. Accroding to Unani system of medicine, its latex is aphrodisiac, tonic, vulnerary, maturant, lessens inflammations; useful in piles, nose-diseases, gonorrhea, etc. Some important Ayurvedic marketed formulations are Nyagrodhaadi churnam (Bhaishajya Ratnavali), Saarivaadya Chandanaasava, Dineshavalyaadi Taila (Sahasrayoga).

Keywords: Hypoglycemic activity, Hypolipidemic activity, Anti-inflammatory activity, Antibacterial activity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ficus bengalensis is a large evergreen tree distributed all over India from sub Himalayan region and in the deciduous forest of Deccan and South India. The tree is commonly found all over India from sea level to an elevation of about 3,000 ft. It is grown in gardens and road sides for shade (Wealth of India, 1999 and Parrotta John A. 2001). It is a member of four sacred trees *Nalpamara* (*Ksirivrksas*) meant to be planted around the homeand temples. It is found throughout the year, grows inevergreen except in dry localities where it is a leafless for a short time. It is hardy and drought-resistant, it withstands mild frost. It is epiphytic when young. It develops from seeds dropped by birds on old walls or on other trees and is therefore, considered destructive to forest trees, walls and buildings (Warrier P.K et al. 1996, Chopra R.N et al. 1958 and Medicinal plants of India, 1956).

Ficus bengalensis (*FB*) (Moraceae) commonly known as Banyan tree or Vata or Vada tree in Ayurveda. There are more than 800 species and 2000 varieties of *Ficus* species, most of which are native to the old world tropics (Manoj et al., 2008). It is endemic to Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. It is also known as Bengal fig, Indian fig and East Indian fig, Indian Banyan or simply Banyan (English), also both, nyagrodha (Sanskrat), Bat, Bargad and Bar (Hindi). The English name Banyan is given by the Britishers to this tree because under the tree Banias that is, the Hindu merchants used to assemble for business. The triad Ganges, the Himalayas and the Banyan tree symbolize the images of India, for this reason it is considered as National Tree. Ficus means fig and bengalensis means belonging to or is of Bengal (Patil et al., 2009).

Taxonomical classification

The plant is classified as shown in the Table 1

Table 1. Taxonomical classification of *F. Bengalensis* (Edwin and Sheeja, 2006).

Kingdom	Plantae
Subkingdom	Tracheobionta
Super division	Spermatophyta
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Subclass	Hamamelidae
Order	Urticales
Family	Moraceae
Genus	Ficus
Species	*F. Bengalensis*

Synonyms: (Riffle R.L., 1998 and Nadkarni K. M, 2006)
Sanskrit: Vata
English:: Banyan tree
Hindi:Vada
Bengali: Bot

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