

# *Melia azedarach* Linn.

**Synonyms** : *Melia indica* Brand , *M. Azadirachata* Linn.

**Family** : Meliaceae

**Parts Used** : Leaf, Bark, oil from flowers

## **Vernacular Names**

English : Pride of India

Malayalam : Malaveppu

Hindi : Mahanimb

Sanskrit : Mahanimbah

Bengali : Ghoranim

Kannada : Turakabevu

Tamil : Malaivempu

Telugu : Kondavepa



**Distribution and Habitat:** Throughout India, Sub Himalaya

**Botany:** A medium sized deciduous tree, 9-12 m height. Bark grey or greyish-brown with long, shallow, vertical fissures; wood soft; sap wood yellowish white; heart wood light-red.

• **Leaves:** Alternate, 2-3 pinnate, pinnae opposite or alternate, ovate or lanceolate, serrate, acuminate, glabrous on both surfaces, slightly oblique at the base.

• **Flowers:** Fragrant, smallish, lilac at the top, scented, in axillary panicles. Petals 5, nearly glabrous. Calyx small, 5-cleft, pubescent outside, divided nearly to the base; lobes ovate-oblong acute, ciliolate. Petals 1.5 cm long, oblong-lanceolate.

• **Fruit:** Ellipsoid globose 4-seeded drupes, yellow when ripe.

**Properties:** Antidiarrhoeal, deobstruent, diuretic

**Chemical constituent:** Fruit-Azaridine, bakayanin, bakalactone, margosine, azadirone, sendanin, sendanal, vanillin, catechin,  $\beta$  sitosterol, triterpene B, 1- cinnamoylmelianolone and cinnamic acids; Seeds- A fatty acid derivative, nimbinene, salannin and meldenin; Leaves- Kaempferol-3-O-  $\beta$ - rutinoid, rutin, nimbinene; Root- a limonoid, salannin.

**Uses:** Lumbago, headache, leprosy, leucoderma, ulcer, piles, asthma, and abnormal urethral discharge, post labour pain in uterus, burning sensation, dysmenorrhoea, sciatica, and amenorrhoea. Hysteria, leprosy, scrofula, splenic disorders, cardiac diseases, scabies and urinary calculi

## **Agrotechnology:**

**Propagation:** It can be propagated by seeds and vegetatively root shoot cuttings. Direct sowing can be successfully done by dibbing, broadcast, sowing, in lines or in trenches, depending on the site conditions. The seeds are collected from June- August, which coincides with the rainy season. The seeds remain viable for a short period of 3 to 5 weeks only. For planting the nursery raised seedlings, the seedling may be planted inside thorny bushes to provide initial protection from cattle damage.

**Manures and Fertilizers:** In neem, for a 2-3 year old crop, the recommended fertilizers are 30-40 Kg nitrogen, 65-70 Kg potash in split doses at an interval of 2-3 month from the time of planting in the first year and the same quantity in the second year. In the third year, only nitrogen at 30kg/ ha has to be applied in two split doses.

**Irrigation:** The crop needs irrigation frequently in the initial years during summer months. The competition of grasses should be avoided by proper and timely weeding because woody weeds compete with neem for moisture and nutrition.