
 ***Mimusops elengi* L.** 
Family: Sapotaceae

This medium-sized fragrant evergreen tree is native to India and also found in the tropical forests of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and northern Australia. It belongs to the Sapotaceae family and is famously called ‘Bakul’ in the northern and ‘Elenji’ on the southern side of India. It has been planted throughout the country and is among the popular avenue trees found all over except the extreme ecosystems. The culinary use of the plant is less known in comparison to the medicinal use of its bark, flowers, fruits, and seeds. In northern states of Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh ripe fruits are consumed as raw, whereas in some other places, the fruit is a common ingredient for pickles. The fruit is rich with carbohydrates, protein, sugar, and minerals and is nutritionally comparable with any other widely-eaten cultivated fruits like mango, guava, pomegranate, sapota, etc.



Photo: Rajasri Ray

