

(185)

Therapeutic Uses of Mee Tree (*Madhuca longifolia*)

Risla M.H.F.*, Muthalib A.M.

*Department of Study in Unani, Institute of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo,
Colombo 03, Sri Lanka
rizla.zaki@gmail.com

Abstract

In the past, our ancestors maintained a close relationship with the environment. They knew the value of many plants. One tree that our ancestors preserved is the Mee tree. *Madhuca longifolia* belonging to the family Sapotaceae, is one of those multipurpose forest tree species that provide an answer for the food, fodder and fuel. It is widely distributed in the South Asian countries, Especially in Sri Lanka. Mee tree is a large deciduous tree growing widely under dry tropical and sub-tropical climatic conditions. The tree has religious and aesthetic value in the tribal culture. The trees with best girth in forest are often Mee trees as it is protected and cared by forest dwellers. Aim of the study is to identify the therapeutic uses of this plant in Sri Lanka. Ancient classical texts were used to collect data on Mee tree especially, Medicinal plants (Indigenous and Exotic) used in Ceylon. Articles were filtered through journals, magazines and newspapers. Databases such as Google scholar, Springer and Agroforestry were used to search journal articles. The journal articles from 2010-2022 were considered as eligible for this review. Search terms such as *Madhuca longifolia*, Mee tree, Medicinal uses were used to search journal articles. The final summary was formulated after a thorough reading of all above materials. As the results, the plant contains Vitamins, Ethylcinnamate, Amyrin acetates, Hexacosanol, Linoleic acid, Palmitic acid and many more chemical constituents. The Mee tree has analgesic, diuretic, tonic, aphrodisiac, astringent and demulcent properties with various parts of the plant. The parts are used in certain treatments in Ayurvedic medicine. The flowers, leaves, bark, roots, and seeds of the Mee tree are used to prepare medicines for rheumatism, bronchitis, headache, skin diseases, and worm infestations. The study was concluded as, this tree was so close and familiar to the lives of the people. This tree has many benefits for mankind, and many people have been interested in preserving it. However, due to the deforestation that has taken place in the country in the last few decades, the existence of Mee trees has been severely threatened. Today, Mee tree is a scarce resource in Sri Lanka. People should aware about protecting the plant for future generation.

Keywords: *Madhuca longifolia*, Mee tree, Medicinal uses, Deforestation