

## ***Ficus benghalensis* L.**

### **Systematic Position**

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Tracheophyta

Class : Magnoliopsida

Order: Rosales

Family: Moraceae

Genus: *Ficus*

Species: *Ficus benghalensis* L.



**Popular names:** Banyan tree, East Indian fig tree, Bargad, Bargat, Badh, Bar, Bor.

**Nature:** Tree

**Flowering time:** March to June

**Fruiting time:** April to July

**Plant distribution:** It is native of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In India, it is common in Sub-Himalayan tract and some peninsular forests.

### **Gardening notes:**

1. It requires full sun; can also grow in partial shade
2. It grows well in warm temperature, easily damaged by frost.
3. It prefers well-drained and moderately moist soil.
4. Propagation: By softwood cuttings and seeds.

### **Economic importance:**

1. Leaves are used as fodder for camels and elephants.
2. Figs provide food to local people, bats, birds and monkeys.
3. The banyan is sacred to Hindu religion; it is worshipped as the male consort of Peepal tree.
4. Latex is applied to bruises, cracked soles and rheumatic pain.
5. Red tips of young aerial root is eaten for vomiting.
6. Aerial roots are used for making tent-poles.
7. Wood is suitable for paper pulp.

**Plant description:** It is a very large spreading evergreen tree, branches spreading with numerous aerial roots.

**Root-** Tap root and branched, numerous aerial pillar-like prop roots also present.

**Stem-** Aerial, erect, cylindrical, and woody, bark greyish not rough, when cut exudes milky sap, numerous branches.

**Leaf-** Simple, alternate, elliptic or ovate, apex apiculate, base obtuse rounded, hairy at first, smooth when mature, and entire margin, petiolate, flat.

**Inflorescence-** Hypanthodium.

**Flower-** Three types of flowers-male, female and neutral, inconspicuous and not showy; **Fruit-** Figs, green when immature, turn reddish brown at maturity.

Some close up pictures of plant parts

