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श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

वृक्षारोपणमहिमा

Vriksharopanamahima

GREATNESS OF TREE PLANTING

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वृक्षारोपणमहिमा

GREATNESS OF TREE PLANTING

Trees are indeed Sons

यः सप्ततितमं पीठमध्यास्ते पूज्यदेशिकः
शङ्करो विजयो नाम मस्करीन्द्रसरस्वती
आदिशत्सुन्दरं रामं वृक्षारोपविधिं प्रति ।
श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणेभ्यः सुसङ्गृह्य समर्पये ॥
जगद्गुरोः कृपाभिलाषिसुन्दरेण यज्वना
सुमङ्गलाम्ब रामनाथपुत्रकेण धीमता
सुकल्पवेदधर्मवेदिरामवाजपेयिना
प्रसूनमालिका तरोर्यतेः पदोःकृताऽर्पिता ॥

Brahma, who created humans and other living beings, provided for their sustenance by creating foods like rice, wheat etc., and also trees, plants, creepers etc. to act as medicines to rid them of diseases; he bade the humans to adore trees etc. as Devatas. Other living beings, plantations etc. have been created only by way of helping humans. Humans have been created on earth with the purpose of giving them an opportunity of getting rid of their sins and seeking merit, and averting rebirth. Our Bharatadesa is ideal for this purpose. Gods have created sacred Tirthas, rivers, kshetras etc. here so that humans can travel on foot, take holy bath, have darshan of deities and get rid of sins; similarly Gods have laid a path for attaining Swarga and averting Naraka by planting trees and protecting them.

It is indeed wonderful to find that Bhishma has dwelt at length in Mahabharata on the noteworthy fruits of planting trees, digging tanks etc. in his discourse from his bed of arrows to the Pandavas on Dharmas in response to Yudhishtira's queries. Further Vriddha Parasara Smriti and Sukraniti have also covered this aspect in detail. Let us now look at them.

Mahabharata, Anusanika Parva, chapter 93:

श्रीमन्महाभारते आनुशासनिकपर्वणि ९३ अध्याये

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

आरामाणां तटाकानां यत्फलं कुरुपुङ्गव ।

तदहं श्रोतुमिच्छामि त्वत्तोद्य भरतर्षभ ॥

Yudhishtira asked: O Bhishma, the greatest among Kurus and Bharatas, I now wish to hear from you the fruit of developing gardens by planting trees, and of digging reservoirs like tanks, lakes etc.

अत ऊर्ध्वं प्रवक्ष्यामि वृक्षाणामवरोपणम् ।

Bhishma starts to talk of planting of trees.

स्थावराणां भूतानां जातयः षट् प्रकीर्तिताः ॥

वृक्षगुल्मलतावलयस्त्वक्सारास्तृणजातयः ।

Trees (non-moving living organisms) are categorized into six groups: tree, bush, creeper, large creeper (like grape), bamboo (with thick skin), grass.

एता जात्यस्तु वृक्षाणां तेषां रोपे गुणास्त्वमे ॥

कीर्तिश्च मानुषे लोके प्रेत्य चैव शुभं फलम् ।

By planting trees of these categories, one reaps fame on earth and auspicious fruit in the next world.

लभते नाम लोके च पितृभिश्च महीयते ॥

देवलोके गतस्यापि नाम तस्य न नश्यति ॥

He is celebrated in Pitru-loka; even after reaching Devaloka, his name and fame are not sullied.

अतीतानागते चोभे पितृवंशं च भारत ।

तारयेद्वृक्षरोपी च तस्माद्वृक्षांश्च रोपयेत् ॥

One who plants trees liberates his ancestors in his lineage as well as descendants; hence do plant trees.

तस्य पुत्रा भवन्त्येते पादपा नात्र संशयः ।

परलोकगतः स्वर्गं लोकांश्चाप्नोति चाव्यायान् ।

Trees, which are planted by one, become indeed his sons; there is no doubt. One, who plants trees, goes to Swarga and other realms which do not experience decay, on his demise.

पुष्पैः सुरगणान् वृक्षाः फलैश्चापि तथा पितृन् ॥

छायया चातिथिं तात पूजयन्ति महीरुहः ।

Trees worship Devas with flowers, Pitrus with fruits, and Atithis with shade. (Atithi is guest who arrives unannounced).

किन्नरोरगरक्षांसि देवगन्धर्वमानवाः ।

तथा ऋषिगणाश्चैव संश्रयन्ति महीरुहान् ॥

Devas, Gandharvas, humans, Rishis, Kinnaras, snakes, Rakshasas and others take shelter in trees.

वृक्षदं पुत्रवद्वृक्षास्तारयन्तिपरत्रतु।

Just as a son liberates his parents by performing Aparā Kriyas, trees liberate the one who plants them.

तस्मात्तटाके सद्वृक्षा रोप्याः श्रेयोर्थिना सदा।

पुत्रवत्परिपाल्याश्च पुत्रास्ते धर्मतः स्मृताः॥

Hence those desirous of bliss should always plant good trees on all sides of reservoirs like tanks, lakes etc., and protect them well like their own sons; trees are indeed sons as per dharma.

तटाककृद्वृक्षरोपी इष्टयज्ञश्च यो द्विजाः ।

एते स्वर्गे महीयन्ते ये चान्ये सत्यवादिनः ॥

One who digs tank, one who plants trees, one who performs Yaga, and one who speaks truth always are honoured in Swarga.

तस्मात् तटाकं कुर्वीत आरामांश्चैव रोपयेत् ।

यजेच्च विविधैर्यज्ञैः सत्यं च सततं वदेत् ॥

Hence prepare tanks, plant trees, perform Yagas, and speak truth always.

Thus Bhishma concluded his discourse on the greatness of planting trees.

Vruddha Parasara Smriti, chapter 10, verse 374 onwards:

Here it is said that trees should be planted, and those who plant trees do not even see Narakas with their eyes.

Smritis are compiled from 1300 branches of Veda by Rishis. This achievement is impossible for ordinary humans. For a man to learn one branch of Veda, it takes twelve years; human lifespan is hence inadequate to learn 1300 branches of Veda. But Rishis grasp all Vedic branches through the power of their austerities and give out their essence in the form of Smriti. Smriti sets out dos and donts. If the dos are carried out properly, merit will accrue; if the donts are committed, sins accrue. Here tree plantation is taken up.

आरामाश्चापि कर्तव्याः शुभवृक्षैः सुशोभिताः ।

अश्वत्थो-दुम्बर-प्लक्ष-चूत-राजाद-नीवरैः ।

जम्बु-निम्ब-कदम्बैश्च खजूरैर्नारिकेलकैः ॥

वकुळैश्चम्पकैर्हृद्यैः पाटलाशोककिंशुकैः ।

Gardens should be put up; auspicious and pleasing trees should be planted – trees like Peepul (Fig) (Aswatha), Cluster Fig (Udumbara), Wavy leaf Fig (Plaksha), Mango, Rajada, Wild Rice (Nivara), Rose Apple (Jambu), Neem (Nimba), Kadamba, Date, Coconut, Bakula, Champaka, Patala (red coloured), Asoka, Kimsuka (Forest tree).

द्रुमैर्नानाविधैरन्यैः फलपुष्पोपयोगिभिः ॥

जातीजपादिपुष्पैश्च शोभिताश्च समन्ततः ।

Similarly trees giving other flowers and fruits, and flower creepers of Jati (Nutmeg), China Rose (Japa) etc. should be planted all round.

मूलोपयोगिनः सर्वे तता पुष्पोपयोगिनः ॥

आरामेषु च कर्तव्याः पितृदेवोपयोगदाः ।

Trees, useful for Pitrus and Devas, and conducive to roots and flowers should be planted.

गाथामुदाहरन्त्यत्र तद्विदः कवयोपरे ॥

वृक्षरोपकलोकानां उक्ता याः पुष्पवाटिकाः ।

Some wise men have sung the merits of those who plant trees and put up flower gardens.

अश्वत्थमेकं पिचुमन्दमेकं न्यग्रोधमेकं दश चिञ्चिणीश्च ।

षट् चम्पकं तालशतत्रयञ्च पञ्चाम्रवृक्षैर्नरकं न पश्येत् ॥

One, who plants one Peepul (Aswatha) tree, one Neem tree, one Banyan tree, six Tamarind trees, six Champaka trees, three hundred Palmyra trees and five Mango trees does not even look at Naraka.

कपित्थबिल्वामलकीत्रयञ्च पञ्चाम्रवापी नरकं न याति ।

One, who plants three Wood Apple (Kapitha) trees, three Bilva trees, three Indian Gooseberry (Amalaki) trees, and five Mango trees does not reach Naraka.

यावन्ति स्वादन्ति फलानि वृक्षात् क्षुद्धिनिदग्धास्तनुभृद्गणाद्याः॥

वर्षाणि तावन्ति वसन्ति लोके वृक्षैकवापास्त्रिदशौघसेव्याः।

For the number of years living beings taste the fruits of trees and satisfy their fiery hunger, those who planted those trees reside for those many years in Swarga, served by hordes of Devas.

यावन्ति पुष्पाणि महीरुहाणां दिवौकसां मूर्ध्नि धरातले वा ।

पतन्ति तावन्ति च वत्सराणां कल्पानि वृक्षैर्दिवमारुहन्ति...

As long as the flowers of trees adorn the heads of Devas or decorate the earth, those who planted those trees reside in Swarga for those many KALPAS of years.

A Kalpa is a day of Brahma, consisting of 1000 Chaturyugas, i.e. combination of Satya yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. Kali Yuga lasts for 4,32,000 human years, out of which only 5120 years have elapsed so far in the present Kali Yuga. In comparison with Kali Yuga, Dvapara Yuga is twice as long, Treta Yuga is thrice as long and Krita Yuga is four times as long. Thus one Chaturyuga period is ten times one Kali Yuga, i.e. 43.2 lakhs of human years. One Kalpa thus comes to 1000* 43.2 lakhs of human years, i.e. 432 crores of human years. This gives an idea of the unimaginably long periods of time that this man with the merit of planting of trees spends in Swarga.

यत्कालपक्वैर्मधुरैरजस्रं शाखाच्युतैः स्वादुफलैर्नगाद्याः।

सर्वाणि सत्वानि च तर्पयेयुस्तं श्राद्धदानेन च वृक्षनाथान् ॥

Trees, while always satisfying all living beings with sweet, ripe and tasty fruits, fallen from their branches, also satisfy those who planted the trees by performing Sraaddha. This is the declaration of Smriti.

स्कान्दे माहेश्वरखण्डे अरुणाचलमाहात्म्ये १४ अध्याये १४ श्लोके

Skanda Puranam, Maheswara Khandam, Arunachala Mahatmyam, chapter 14, verse 14:

Here it says that Devi Parvati planted trees in order to please Siva while performing austerities at the foot of the mango tree on the banks of Kampa river in Kanchipuram.

वृक्षप्ररोपणैर्दानैरशेषातिथिपूजनैः ।

श्रान्तिं हरन्ती जीवानां देवी धर्ममपालयत् ॥

Devi Kamakshi, while performing austerities, protected Dharma by planting trees, giving Danam (charity), entertaining Atithis (guests coming unannounced) with food etc. and removing the misery of living beings.

The special merit of planting Peepul (Fig) (Asvatha) tree is elucidated in Puranas.

स्कान्दे नागरखण्डे २४८ अध्याये ३८-३९ श्लोकौ

Skanda Puranam, Nagara Khandam, chapter 248, verses 38-39:

अश्वत्थं रोपयेद्यस्तु पृथिव्यां प्रयतो नरः ।

तस्य पापसहस्राणि विलयं यान्ति तत्क्षणात् ॥

In the case of one who plants Peepul (Asvatha) tree on earth with faith, thousands of his sins get destroyed at the very instant of his planting the tree.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां पवित्रो मङ्गलान्वितः ।

मुक्तिदो रोपितो ध्यातः चातुर्मास्येघनाशनः ॥

Peepul (Asvatha) tree is the most sacred of trees and is full of auspiciousness. If Peepul (Asvatha) tree is planted during Chaturmasya period (the four months of Ashadha, Sravana, Proshtapada and Asvina), it removes sins and confers Moksha. Moksha is the state of supreme and constant bliss with no rebirth.

ब्रह्मवैवर्ते प्रकृतिखण्डे २६ अध्याये ५९ श्लोके

Brahmavaivarta Puranam, Prakriti Khandam, chapter 26, verse 59:

अश्वत्थवृक्षमारोप्य प्रतिष्ठां च करोति यः ।

स याति तपसो लोकं वर्षाणामयुतं परम् ॥

One, who plants Peepul (Asvatha) tree and performs 'Pratishtha', attains to Tapoloka and resides there for 10000 years. Tapoloka is the sixth realm in the upper reaches above earth. The realms are: Earth, Bhuvanloka, Suvarloka, Maharloka, Janoloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka. 'Pratishtha' here refers to Japa (chanting of mantras) and Homa prescribed by Rishi Bodhayana to be performed at the time of planting the Asvatha tree. The Rishi has also prescribed Pratishtha for developing forest, and Oshadhisanthi to be performed at the time when the tree blossoms and gives fruit.

The relation between one's birth star and the type of tree is brought out in Narada Purana, chapter 56, from verse 204 onwards.

नारदपुराणे ५६ अध्याये २०४ श्लोकप्रभृति

वृषो वृक्षोश्चभा याम्यधिष्ण्ये यमकरस्तरुः ।
उदुम्बरश्चाग्निधिष्ण्ये रोहिण्यां जुम्बकस्तरुः ॥
इन्दुभात्खदिरो जातः कृष्णप्लक्षश्च रौद्रभात् ।
संभूतोदितिभाद्वंशः पिप्पलः पुष्यसंभवः ।
सर्पधिष्ण्या नागवृक्षो वटःपितृभसंभवः ।
पालाशो भाग्यभाज्जातः अक्षश्चार्यमसंभवः ।
अरिष्टवृक्षो रविभात् श्रीवृक्षस्त्वाष्ट्रसंभवः ।
स्वात्यृक्षजोर्जुनो वृक्षः द्विदैवत्याद्विकङ्कतः ।
मित्रभाद्वगलो जातो विष्टिः पौरन्दरर्क्षजः ।
सर्जवृक्षो मूलभाच्च वज्जुलो वारिधिष्ण्यजः ॥
पनसो वैश्वभाज्जातश्चार्कवृक्षश्च विष्णुभात् ।
वसुधिष्ण्याच्छमीवृक्षः कदम्बो वारुणर्क्षजः ॥
अजाहेश्रूतवृक्षोभूद्बुध्यजः पिचुमन्दकः ।
मधुवृक्षः पौष्ण्यधिष्ण्यात् धिष्ण्यवृक्षाः प्रकीर्तिताः ॥
यस्मिन् शनैश्चरो धिष्ण्ये तद्वृक्षोऽर्च्यः प्रयत्नतः ।

It says that if one worships the specified tree, he would be rid of the misery caused by Shani (Saturn).

Star	Tree
Asvini	Amalaka (Indian Gooseberry)
Apabharani	Kanjiram (Etti in Tamil)
Krittika	Udumbara (Cluster Fig) (Athi in Tamil)
Rohini	Jamun (Jambu)
Mrigashirsha	Ebony (Khadira)
Ardra	Agaru (Long pepper) (Karu Ithi in Tamil)
Punarvasu	Bamboo
Pushya	Peepul
Aslesha	Nagalingam (or Punnai in Tamil)
Magha	Banyan
Purvaphalguni	Parrot tree (Palasa) (Tanri in Tamil)
Uthiraphalguni	Rose Laurel (Purasu in Tamil) (Aksha)
Hastam	Neem
Chitra	Bilva
Svati	Arjuna (Marudu in Tamil)
Visakha	Vayamkatha (Wood Apple)
Anuradha	Bullet Wood (Magizham in Tamil)
Jyeshtha	Bodh (Parai)
Moolam	Ashvakarna (Mara in Tamil)
Purvashadha	Vanchikodi in Tamil
Uttarashadha	Jack Fruit
Sravanam	Vellerukku in Tamil
Sravishta	Indian Gum (Vanni in Tamil)
Satabhishak	Kadambu
Purvaproshtapada	Mango
Uthiraproshtapada	Neem
Revati	Butter tree (Iluppai in Tamil)

So far we have noted that planting and worship of trees must be done as it bestows merit.

Sukraniti:

Sukraniti covers rules of governance. It is written by Bhagavan Sukra, the Graha of Friday. He covers guidelines on the number of hours government servants should work, the number of days of their leave entitlement, medical assistance, employment of wife and children in case of emergency etc.

शुक्रनीतौ चतुर्थेऽध्याये लोकधर्मनिरूपणप्रकरणे ४६-६२ श्लोकाः

Sukra refers to the need for planting of trees. He mentions details of planting of trees including rules of which trees should be planted where, the procedure of tending them, the interdistance among trees to be maintained etc.

ग्रामे ग्राम्यान् वने वन्यान् वृक्षान् संरोपयन्नृपः ।

The king should plant village trees in villages and wild trees in forests.

उत्तमान् विंशतिकरैः मध्यमान् तिथिहस्ततः ॥

सामान्यान् दशहस्तैश्च कनिष्ठान् पञ्चभिः करैः ।

There are four categories of trees: superior, medium, ordinary and small. The interdistance between trees of the superior type should be 20 armlengths (one armlength is considered as 24 inches); the same for the medium category of trees is 15 armlengths; for ordinary trees, it is 10 armlengths; and, for small trees, it is 5 armlengths. One inch or Angulam is the space between the top two lines of the middle finger, or space occupied by 8 Yava grains placed together and measured across.

अजाविगोशकृद्धिर्वा जलैः ---- पोषयेत् ॥

The trees should be reared by providing the dung of goats and sheep, and cowdung and water.

Now Sukra takes up the trees to be cultivated in rural areas.

उदुम्बरा-श्वत्थ-वट-चिञ्चा-चन्दन्-जम्भलाः ।

कदम्बा-शोक-बकुल-बिल्वा-म्रात-कपित्थकाः ॥

राजादना-म्र- पुन्नाग-तूदकाष्ठा-म्ल-चम्पकाः ।

नीपःकोक-म्र-सरल-दाडिमा-क्षोट-भिस्सटाः ॥

They are: Cluster Fig (Udumbara), Peepul (Fig) (Aswatha), Banyan, Tamarind, Sandalwood, Jambhala (Crew pine), Kadamba, Asoka, Bakula, Bilva, Amratha (hog plum), Kapitha (wood apple).

Rajadana (Ceylon Iron Wood), Mango, Punnaga (nutmeg), Tudakashtha, Champaka, Nipa (Kadamba type), Koka (wild date), Sarala (pine), pomegranate, Kshota from hill.

शिंशुपा-शिग्रु-बदर-निम्ब-जम्बीर-क्षीरिका ।

खर्जूर-देवकरज-फन्गु-तापिच्छ- सिम्भलाः॥

कुद्दालो-लवली-धात्री-क्रमुको-मातुलुङ्गकः ॥

लकुचो-नारिकेलश्च-रम्भभा-न्ये सत्फला द्रुमाः ।

Simsupa (this is the tree on which Bhagavan Anjaneya sat in Asokavana while spotting Sita. This tree can be found on the road from Sengalipuram to Vadaver (on the left) in Tamil Nadu.), drumstick, Jujube (Badara), Neem, Lemon, Kshrika (type of Date), Date, Devakaraja (Pungai in Tamil, pea family), Phalgu (hairy fig), Tamala (Tapicha, tobacco), Simbhala (cotton tree, Kongam in Tamil).

Kuddala (orchid), Lavali (star gooseberry), Dhatri (Indian gooseberry), Arecanut, Matulunga (citron type), Lakucha (bread fruit type), coconut, plantain, and other good fruitbearing trees.

सुपुष्पाश्चैव ये वृक्षाः ग्रामाभ्यर्णे नियोजयेत् ॥

वामभागेथवोद्यानं कुर्यात् वासगृहे शुभम् ॥

Good flowery trees should be planted inside the village; or flower garden should be put up on the left side of residence.

सायं प्रातस्तु घर्मान्ते शीतकाले दिनान्तरे ।

वसन्ते पञ्चमेहनस्तु सेव्या वर्षासु न क्वचित् ॥

Watering of trees: to be done in both morning and evening in summer; on alternate days in winter; in evenings in spring. No watering in rainy season.

फलनाशे कुलुत्थैश्च माषैर्मुद्गैर्यवैस्तिलैः ।

शृतशीतपयःसेकः फलपुष्पाय सर्वदा ॥

मत्स्याम्भसा तु सेकेन वृद्धिर्भवति शाखिनाम् ।

If fruits become rotten, manure of Kulatha (horse-gram), Masha (black gram), Mudga (Green gram), Yava (barley) and Til (sesame) should be applied.

Boiled and cooled milk should be used for irrigating fruit and flower trees.

आविकाजशकृच्चूर्णं यवचूर्णं तिलानि च ॥

-----मुदकञ्चेति सप्तरात्रं निधापयेत् ॥

उत्सेकः सर्वपुष्पाणां फलपुष्पादिवृद्धिदः ॥

By irrigating flower and fruit trees with powdered dung of sheep and goat, Yava (barley) flour, til (sesame) and water for seven days, the trees will grow well.

ये के च कण्टकिनो वृक्षाः खदिराद्यास्तथापरे ।

आरण्यकास्ते विज्ञेयास्तेषां तत्र नियोजनम् ॥

Trees which are thorny, like ebony (khadira) etc. are wild trees and should be planted in forests.

खदिरा-श्मन्त-शाका-ग्निमन्थ-स्योन-नाक-बब्बुलाः ।

तमाल-शाल-कुटज- धवा- र्जुन-पलाशकाः ॥

सप्तपर्ण- शमी-तुन्न-देवदारु-विकङ्कताः ।

करमर्दे-ङ्गुदी-भूर्ज-विषमुष्टि-करीरकाः ॥

Ebony (khadira), Smanta, Teak (saka), Agnimantha, Syonaka (broken bones tree), Babbula (Acacia Nilotica), Tobacco (Tamala), Sal (Sala), Kutaja (coral swirl), Dhava (axlewood), Arjuna (Marudu in Tamil), Palasa (Purasa in Tamil, forest flame).

Saptaparna (seven leaved Indian devil tree), Sami (Vanni in Tamil, White thorn), Tunna (red cedar), Deodar, Vikankata (Indian Plum), Karamard (Bengal Currant), Ingudi (Desert date), Birch (Bhurja), Vishamushti (Chinaberry), Kariraka.

शल्लकी-काश्मरी-पाठा- तिन्दुको- बीजसारकः ।

हरीतकी च भल्लातः शम्पाको-र्कश्च-पुष्करः ॥

अरिमेदश्च-पीतद्रुः-शाल्मलिश्च-विभीतकः ।

नरवेलो –महावृक्षोपरे ये मधुकादयः ॥

Sallaki (Olibanum), Kashmari (Malay Beachwood), Patha (Velvetleaf), Tinduka (Black and white ebony), Bijasaraka, Haritaki (Yellow Myrobalan), Bhallata (Semecarpus), Sampaka (Golden shower), Arka (Crown Flower), Pushkara (type of Banyan).

Arimeda (Needle Bush), Pitadru (Longleaf pine), Salmali (Silk cotton), Vibhitaka, Naravela, Madhuka (Honey tree, Iluppai in Tamil) and such large trees.

प्रतानवत्यः स्तम्बिन्यो गुल्मिन्यश्च तथैव च ।

ग्राम्या ग्रामे वने वन्या नियोज्यास्ते प्रयत्नतः ॥

Plants having shoots, bushes and creepers should also be planted. Care should be taken to plant domestic trees in villages and wild trees in forests.

Vedas:

Vedas are at the root of all dharmas. Let us look at what Vedas say about trees. Trees and plants fall into two categories: Oshadhis and Vanaspatis. Those which flower and give out vegetables and fruits are Oshadhis. Those which give out raw vegetables without flowering are Vanaspatis. In Yajurveda, Ashtaka 3, Prasna 3, Anuvaka 9 it says:

औषध्यः फलपाकान्ताः तैरपुष्पाद्वनस्पतिः । चतुरङ्गले ह्योषध्यः प्रतितिष्ठन्ति । आप्रतिष्ठायै खनति । यजमानमेव प्रतिष्ठां गमयति ।

Earth should be dug to a depth of four Angulams (inches) and the sapling should be planted. One who does so attains to a stable good state.

Further trees are considered as Devatas and Homas are performed. Yagas like Asvamedha yaga refer to this. Yajurveda, Ashtaka 3, Prasna 8, Anuvaka 20 says that worship of Cordia tree (Naruvili in Tamil) removes the sin of killing brahmana (Brahmahatya); Deodar tree bestows merit; Bilva fosters Vedas; Ebony fosters radiance; Palasa (Rose Laurel, Purasu in Tamil) fosters Yagas.

वृक्षायुर्वेदाध्यायः

Vriksha Ayurveda: Brihat Samhita

Varahamihira, the great savant, wrote a text on Jyotisha (astronomy) called Brihat Jatakam by churning the ocean of Jyotisha. All astrologers make use of that book now. The same author wrote a larger text earlier called Brihat Samhita consisting of 108 chapters. There he covered a vast range of subjects including digging hills, depth of availability of ground water in relation to the type of trees, characteristics of men and women, means of getting rain naturally etc. There he has written about methods of growing trees under the title of Vriksha Ayurveda. This is also covered in the Ayurveda Sastra, where medicinal cures are mentioned in three sections – men, animals like horse, elephant, cow etc., and trees. The last section on trees is called Vriksha Ayurveda.

Let us now look at the sayings of Varahamihira and Kasyapa.

Brihat Samhita, chapter 55 says:

प्रान्तच्छायाविनिर्मुक्ता न मनोज्ञाजलाशयाः ।

यस्मादतो जलप्रान्तेष्वारामान् विनिवेशयेत् ॥ १ ॥

Prior to this, Varahamihira guided on finding the presence of ground water and building wells, ponds, lakes etc. Here he says that if the reservoirs have no shade on the sides, they will lack beauty; hence trees should be planted and gardens developed on sides.

मृद्धी भूः सर्ववृक्षाणां हिता तस्यां तिलान् वपेत् ।

पुष्पितास्तांश्च मृद्धीयात् कर्मैतत् प्रथमं बुधः ॥ २ ॥

Soil, the base of all trees, should be soft. Hence til (sesame) seeds should be sprinkled; after they flower, those plants should be trampled upon and crushed. This is the first activity.

काश्यपः :- दूर्वावीरणसंयुक्ताः सानुपा मृदुमृत्तिकाः ।

तत्र वाप्याः शुभा वृक्षाः सुगन्धिफलशाखिनः ॥

Kasyapa says: In places where Durva grass and Vettiver (fragrant) grass are there, and soil is soft and marshy, auspicious fragrant trees, flowering trees and fruit trees should be planted.

अरिष्टा-शोक-पुन्नाग-शिरीषाः सप्रियङ्गवः ।

मङ्गल्याः पूर्वमारामे रोपणीया गृहेषु वा ॥ ३ ॥

Planting of Neem (soapberry), Asoka, Punnaga (Nutmeg) and Sirisha (flea) trees with Priyangu creepers at first in gardens and houses bestows auspiciousness.

काश्यपः :- अशोक-चम्पका-रिष्ट-पुन्नागाश्च प्रियङ्गवः ।

शिरीषोदुम्बराः श्रेष्ठाः पारिजातकमेव च ॥

एते वृक्षाः शुभा ज्ञेयाः प्रथमं तांश्च रोपयेत् ।

देवालये तथोद्याने गृहेषूपवनेषु च ॥ इति-

Kasyapa also says: Asoka, Champaka, Neem, Punnaga (Nutmeg), Priyangu, Sirisha, Udumbara and Parijata are known as auspicious trees; hence they should be planted first in temples, public gardens - large and small and houses.

पनसा-शोक-कदली-जम्बू-लकुच-दाडिमाः ।

द्राक्षा-पालीवताश्चैव बीजपुर-तिमुक्तकाः ॥४॥

एते द्रुमाः काण्डरोप्याः गोमयेन प्रलेपिताः ।

मूलोच्छेदेऽथवा स्कन्धे रोपणीयाः परं ततः ॥५॥

Trees are called 'Kandaropya' when planted by cutting a branch, applying cowdung at the end and planting in ground. Such trees are: Jack, Asoka, Plantain, Jambu, Lakucha (Bread fruit), Pomegranate, Grape, Palivata, Gauva (Bijapura) and Atimuktaka (Mountain Ebony).

काश्यपः :- द्राक्षा-तिमुक्तको-जम्बू-बीजपूरक-दाडिमाः ।

कदली-बकुळा-शोकाः काण्डरोप्यांश्च वापयेत् ॥

अन्येपि शाखिनो ये च पुष्पिताः फलितास्तथा ।

गोमयेन प्रलिप्ताश्च रोपणीया विवृद्धये ॥

Kasyapa also lists the same trees as above; he has included Bakula in addition.

अजातशाखान् शिशिरे जातशाखान् हिमागमे ।

वर्षागमे च सुस्कन्धान् यथादिक्स्थान् प्ररोपयेत् ॥६॥

The planting of plants where no branches have grown should be done in late winter (Magha and Phalguni); where branches have sprouted, in winter; where well developed branches have grown, in rainy season. Planting should be done at the same quarters from where they were cut.

काश्यपः :- अजातशाखा ये वृक्षा शिशिरे तांश्च रोपयेत् ।

जातशाखाश्च हेमन्ते रोपणीया विधानतः ।

सुस्कन्धाः शाखिनो ये तान् प्रावृट्काले तु रोपयेत् ॥ इति ॥
Kasyapa also confirms the same.

घृतो-शीर-तिल-क्षौद्र-विडङ्ग-क्षीर-गोमयैः ।

आमूलस्कन्धलिप्तानां सङ्क्रामणविरोपणम् ॥७॥

While planting trees which are transplanted from one place to another, they should be smeared with ghee, Vettiver (fragrant creeper), til, honey, vidanga (false black pepper), cow's milk and cowdung from the roots right upto the branches.

काश्यपः :- घृतं क्षीरं तथा क्षौद्रमुशीरतिलगोमयैः ।

विडङ्गलेपनं मूलात् सङ्क्रामणविरोपणम् ॥

Kasyapa also confirms the same.

शुचिर्भूत्वा तरोः पूजां कृत्वा स्नानानुलेपनैः ।

रोपयेद्रोपितश्चैव पत्रैस्तैरेव जायते ॥८॥

One, who plants trees, should take bath and be clean and perform Puja to the tree. The tree will then grow well without shedding the leaves.

सायंप्रातश्च घर्मर्तौ शीतकाले दिनान्तरे ।

वर्षासु च भुवःशोषे सेक्तव्या रोपिता द्रुमाः ॥९॥

Watering of trees: to be done in both morning and evening in summer; on alternate days in winter; in evenings in spring; if earth becomes dried up, in rainy season.

जम्बू-वेतस-वानीर-कदम्बो-दुम्बरा-र्जुनाः ।

बीजपूरक-मृद्वीका-लकुचाश्च सदाडिमाः ॥१०॥

वञ्जुळो-नक्तमालश्च-तिलकः-पनसस्तथा।

तिमिरोऽम्रातकश्चेति षोडशानूपजाः स्मृताः ॥११॥

Sixteen trees known as Anupaja, i.e. grown in Anupa- marshy areas:

Jambu, Vetasa (reed, cane), Vaneera (reed), Kadamba, Udumbara, Arjuna, Gauva, Grape, Lakucha, Pomegranatae, Asoka, Naktamala (Punga), Tilaka, Jack, Timira and Amrataka (Hog Plum).

उत्तमं विंशतिर्हस्ताः मध्यमम् षोडशान्तरम् ।

स्थानात् स्थानान्तरं कार्यं वृक्षाणां द्वादशावरम् ॥१२॥

As seen earlier in Sukraniti, the interdistance to be maintained while planting of trees: 20 armlengths for superior type; 16 armlengths for medium type; 12 armlengths for ordinary type.

काश्यपः :- अन्तरं विंशतिर्हस्ता वृक्षाणामुत्तमं स्मृतम् ।

मध्यमं षोडश ज्ञेयमधमं द्वादश स्मृतम् ॥ इति॥

Kasyapa also confirms the same.

अभ्याशजातास्तरवः संस्पृशन्तः परस्परम् ।

मिश्रैर्मूलैश्च न फलं सम्यग्यच्छन्ति पीडिताः ॥ १३ ॥

If trees are planted closely, their branches may touch each other, and their roots also might interfere with each other; they will then not yield the desired fruits.

शीतवातातपै रोगो जायते पाण्डुपत्रता ।

अवृद्धिश्च प्रवालानां शाखाशोषो रसस्रुतिः ॥ १४ ॥

Owing to cold, wind and Sun, trees might undergo paleness of leaves, stunted growth of shoots, weakening of branches and lack of sap; then it means that the tree is sick.

चिकित्सितमथैतेषां शस्त्रेणादौ विशोधनम् ।

विडङ्गघृतपङ्काक्तान् सेचयेत् क्षीरवारिणा ॥ १५ ॥

To cure the trees of the disease, first cut the afflicted part with sickle and clean. Then apply well a mix of Vayu Vidanka, ghee and mud on the diseased part. Pour diluted milk. The tree will be cured of disease.

तथा च काश्यपः :- शाखाविटपपत्रैश्च छायाया विहिताश्च ये ।

येऽपि पर्णफलैर्हीना रूक्षाः पत्रैश्च पाण्डुरैः॥

शीतोष्णवर्षवाताद्यैर्मूलैर्व्यामिश्रितैरपि ।

शाखिनां भवेद्रोगो द्विपानां लेखनेन च ॥

चिकित्सितेषु कर्तव्याः ये च भूयः पुनर्नवाः ।

शोधयेत् प्रथमं शस्त्रैः प्रलेपं दापयेत्ततः ॥

कर्दमेन विडङ्गैश्च घृतमिश्रैश्च लेपयेत् ।

क्षीरतोयेन सेकः स्यात् रोहणं सर्वशाखिनाम् ॥ इति ॥

Kasyapa also says: Trees contract diseases through cold, heat, rains, wind etc., interference of roots of other trees, scratching of elephants etc. The cure is to apply mix of Vayuvidanga, ghee and mud on the diseased parts; then dilute milk should be poured. This will cure the trees.

फलनाशे कुलुत्थैश्च माषैर्मुद्गैस्तिलैर्यवैः ।

शृतशीतपयःसेको फलपुष्पसमृद्धये ॥ १६ ॥

As seen in Sukraniti earlier, if fruits become rotten, then manure of Kulatha (horse-gram), Masha (black gram), Mudga (Green gram), Yava (barley) and Til (sesame) should be applied. Boiled and cooled milk should be poured. Fruit and flower trees should be protected in this manner.

अविकाजशकृच्चूर्णस्याढके द्वे तिलाढकम् ।

सक्तुप्रस्थो जलद्रोणेतुलया सह ॥ १७ ॥

सप्तरात्रोषितैरेतैः सेकः कार्यो वनस्पतेः ।

वल्मीगुल्मलतानां च फलपुष्पाय सर्वदा ॥ १८ ॥

For trees and creepers to grow well, the mix of the following ingredients should be soaked for seven days and poured.

Powdered dung of goats and sheep: 2 Aadhakam (1 Aadhakam is 3 kg and 72 gms; 2 Aadhakams = 6 kg, 144 gms.)

Til: 1 Aadhakam (3 kg, 72 gms.)

Saktu (Barley Flour): 1 Prastham (768 gms)

Water: 1 Drona (12 kg, 288gms)

..... (4 kg, 800 gms)

त्रियवं कृष्णलं विद्यात् माषलः पञ्चकृष्णलः ।

ते स्युर्द्वादश लक्षाख्यं सुवर्णमथ षोडश ॥

पञ्चलक्षैश्चतुर्भिस्तु सुवर्णेर्निष्क उच्यते ।

चतुष्पलोऽथ कुडवः प्रस्थः स्यात् तच्चतुष्टयम् ॥

आढकस्तु चतुष्प्रस्थो द्रोणस्तु चतुराढकः ।

मानिका तु चतुर्द्रोणा खारी स्यात्तच्चतुष्टयम् ॥

तुलापलशतं ज्ञेयं भारः स्यात् विंशतिस्तुलाः ।

शुष्कद्रव्येषु सङ्ख्येयं चार्द्रेषु द्विगुणा भवेत् ॥

Here measures are cited from another book.

3 Yava = 1 Krishnalam; 5 Krishnalam = 1 Mashala; 12 lakh Mashala = 16 Suvarna;

20 lakh Mashalam = 1 Nishkam;

4 Palam = 1 Kudavam; (1 Palam = 48 gms); 4 Kudavam = 1 Prastham;

4 Prastham = 1 Aadhakam; 4 Aadhakams = 1 Drona; 4 Dronas = 1 Manika;

4 Manikas = 1 Khari.

1 Tula = 100 Palams; 1 Bhara = 20 Tulas;

These measures are for dry materials; for wet materials, take twice.

तथा च काश्यपः :- अजाविकानां द्वौ प्रस्थौ शकृच्चूर्णं च कारयेत् ।

तिलानामाढकं दद्यात् सक्तूनां प्रस्थमेव च ॥

-----मेकं स्यात् द्वे सार्धे सलिलस्य च ।

सप्ताहमुषितैरैतैः सेकं दद्याद्वनस्पतेः ॥

स भवेत् फलपुष्पैश्च पत्रैश्चाङ्कुरितैर्वृतः ॥ इति ॥

Kasyapa also confirms the same treatment for the good growth of trees and creepers.

Procedure for sowing seeds:

वासराणि दशदुग्धभावितं बीजमाज्ययुतहस्तयोजितम् ।

गोमयेन बहुशो विरूक्षितं क्रोडमार्गपिशितैश्च धूपितम् ॥ १९ ॥

मांससूकरवसासमन्वितं रोपितं च परिकर्मितावनौ ।

क्षीरसंयुतजलावसेचितं जायते कुसुमयुक्तमेव तत् ॥ २० ॥

Keeping ghee in hand, roll seeds in the ghee in the hand; put the seeds in milk; take them out; as before roll them in ghee in the hand. Do this for ten days. Take the seeds out, mix well with cowdung several times; put them in another vessel; expose them to incense from specified materials; mix with appropriate materials. Clean the soil with til, and then sow the prepared seeds. Then they will grow well with flowers.

Procedure for planting Tamarind tree:

तिन्तिडीत्यपि करोति वल्लरीं ब्रीहिमाषतिलचूर्णसक्तुभिः ।

पूतिमांससहितैश्च सेचिता धूपिताच सततं हरिद्रया ॥ २१ ॥

Mix tamarind seeds with flours of rice, black gram, til and barley (Yava), soak, and expose to incense from turmeric; then good shoots will emerge. When the hard tamarind grows well this way, what to speak of other ordinary trees?

Procedure for planting Kapitha tree:

कपित्थवल्लीकरणाय मूलान्यास्फोटधात्रीधववासिकानाम् ।

पलाशिनी वेतससूर्यवल्ली श्यामातिमुक्तैः सहिताष्टमूली ॥ २२ ॥

Collect Ashtamuli – 8 roots: Arka, Amalaka, Dhava, Vasika, Palasa with leaves, Suryavalli, Syama, Atimukta.

क्षीरे शृते चाप्यनया सुशीते तालाशतं स्थाप्य कपित्थबीजम् ।

दिने दिने शोषितमर्कपादैः मासं विधिस्त्वेष ततोऽधिरोप्यम् ॥ २३ ॥

Boil the above 8 roots in milk, cool well, put the seed of Kapitha tree in it for some time and dry in the Sun. Do this for thirty days and then plant the seed.

Preparation of Pit for planting tree:

हस्तायतं तद्विगुणं गभीरं खात्वा ऽ वटं प्रोक्तजलावपूर्णम् ।

शुष्कं प्रदग्धं मधुसर्पिषा तत् प्रलेपयेत् भस्मसमन्वितेन ॥ २४ ॥

Pit should be made circular, with one armlength (18 inches) diameter and two armlengths (36 inches) deep. Fill the pit with dilute milk. Allow the pit to dry well and burn it with fire. Then apply mix of ghee, honey and ash in the pit surface.

चूर्णीकृतैर्माषतिलैर्यवैश्च प्रपूरयेत् मृत्तिकयाऽन्तरस्थैः ।

मत्स्यामिषाम्भःसहितञ्च हन्याद्यावद्धनत्वं समुपागतं तत् ॥ २५ ॥

उप्तं च बीजं चतुरङ्गुलाधो मत्स्याम्भसा मांसजलैश्च सिक्तम् ।

वल्ली भवत्याशु शुभप्रवाला विस्मापनी मण्टपमावृणोति ॥ २६ ॥

In the pit thus prepared, fill with soil for about 4 inches depth, followed by mix of flours of black gram, til and barley to a depth of 4 inches, laid over by 4 inches of soil again. Pour specified water. Do this till the soil hardens.

When the seed is sown at a depth of 4 inches and specified water poured, the tree will grow well with nice shoots and branches to good height.

Means of making the tree grow amply:

शतशोऽङ्कोलसंभूतफलकल्केन भावितम् ।

एतत्तैलेन वा बीजं श्लेस्मातकफलेन वा ॥२७॥

वापितं करकोन्मिश्रमृदि तत्क्षणजन्मकम् ।

फलभारान्विता शाखा भवतीति किमद्भुतम् ॥२८॥

Crush Ankola fruits and make paste; dip the seed of the tree to be planted a hundred times in that paste; or, pour the oil of Ankola a hundred times on the seed; or, treat a hundred times with the paste of fruit of Sleshmataka (Lasora or Assyrian Plum) or oil of that seed. If the seed treated thus is sown in soil brought from place exposed to hailfall, the tree will grow amply with good shoots and branches and yield good flowers and fruits; no doubt about this.

Procedure for planting Sleshmataka (Lasora) tree:

श्लेष्मातकस्य बीजानि निष्कुलीकृत्य वापयेत् प्राज्ञः ।

अङ्कोलविज्जलाद्भिश्छायायां सप्तकृत्वैवम् ॥ २९॥

महिषगोमयधृष्टान्यस्य करीषे च तानि निक्षिप्य ।

करकाञ्जलमृद्योगे न्युप्ताऽह्ना फलकराणि ॥ ३०॥

Peel off the skin of the fruit of Sleshmataka; pour the diluted paste of Ankola fruit on it and allow it to dry in shade. Do this seven times. Then treat the seed with dung of cow, buffalo etc. and sow in soil and water from place exposed to hailfall; the seed will grow well in a day.

Stars of days most suitable for tree planting:

ध्रुवमूलविशाखा गुरुभं श्रवणस्ताश्विनी हस्तः ।

उक्तानि दिव्यद्ग्भिः पादसंरोपणे भानि ॥

Sages like Garga have recommended the stars of Uthiraphalguni, Uthirashadha, Uthiraproshtapada, Rohini, Anuradha, Chitra, Mrigasirsha, Revati, Moola, Visakha, Pushya, Sravana, Asvini and Hasta.

इति श्रीवराहमिहिरकृतौ बृहत्संहितायां

वृक्षायुर्वेदो नाम पञ्चपञ्चाशत्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus ends Vriksha Ayurveda section (55) of Brihat Samhita by Varahamihira.

विष्णुधर्मोत्तरे पुराणे द्वितीयखण्डे त्रिंशत्तमेऽध्याये वृक्षायुर्वेदवर्णनम्

उत्तरेण शुभः प्लक्षः वटः प्राक् भार्गवोत्तम ।

उदुम्बरश्च याम्येन सौम्येनाश्वत्थ एव च ॥१॥

Four different types of trees are to be planted in the four sides of a village or town: Plaksha (Wavy leaf Fig) on the north, banyan on the east, Udumbara on the south, and Asvatha (Peepul) on the west.

एते क्रमेण नेष्यन्ति दक्षिणादिसमुद्भवाः ।

समीपजाताश्च तथा वज्र्याः कण्टकिनो द्रुमाः ॥२॥

Trees should be planted in a line in rows. Thorny trees are not to be planted in rural areas; trees are also not to be planted closely.

वामभागे तथोद्यानं कुर्याद्वासगृहाच्छुभम् ।

वापयेत् प्राक् तिलांस्तत्र मृद्रीयात् तांश्च पुष्पितान् ॥३॥

Garden should be cultivated on the left of residences. Before planting trees, til should be planted there first; when it flowers, it should be crushed and ground leveled.

ततस्तु रोपयेद्वृक्षान् प्रयतः सुसमाहितः ।

स्नातो द्रुममथाभ्यर्च्य ब्राह्मणांश्च शिवं तथा ॥४॥

On the day of planting tree, the person who does the planting should take bath, be pure and keen, and worship the tree to be planted, brahmanas and Siva, and then proceed with planting.

ध्रुवाणि पञ्च वायव्यं हस्तः पुष्यः सवैष्णवः ।

नक्षत्राणि तथा मूलं शस्यते द्रुमरोपणे ॥५॥

Stars most suitable for planting trees: the five Dhruva stars- Uthiraphalguni, Uthirashadha, Uthiraproshtapada, Rohini and Anuradha; Svati, Hasta, Pushya, Sravana and Moola.

उद्यानं सजलं राम राम नाभिरामं यदा तदा ।

प्रवेशयेन्न विटपान् पुष्करिण्यश्च कारयेत् ॥६॥

संस्कार्यमुद्भिदं तोयं कूपाः कार्याः प्रयत्नतः ।

हस्तं मघा तथा मैत्रं सौम्यं पुष्यञ्च वासवम् ॥७॥

उत्तरात्रितयं राम तथा पूर्वा च फल्गुनी ।

जलाशयसमारंभे प्रशस्ते वारुणं तथा ॥८॥

संपूज्य वरुणं देवं विष्णुं पर्जन्यमेव च ।

तर्पयित्वा द्विजान् कामैस्तदारंभकरो भवेत् ॥९॥

Here the poet stresses the importance of building good water reservoirs before planting trees. Stars recommended for start of work on reservoirs: Hasta, Magha, Anuradha, Mrigasirsha, Pushya, Sravishta, Uthiraphalguni, Uthirashadha, Uthiraproshtapada, Purvaphalguni, Satabhishak. Varuna, Vishnu and Parjanya should be worshipped, and brahmanas honoured at the time of start of work on water reservoir.

अथोद्याने प्रवक्ष्यामि प्रशस्तान् पादपान् द्विज ।

अरिष्टाशोकपुन्नाग शिरिषामप्रियङ्गवः ॥१०॥

पनसाशोककदली जम्बूलकुचदाडिमाः ।

माङ्गल्याः पूर्वमारामे रोपणीया गृहेषु वा ॥११॥

Good trees to be planted in gardens: Neem, Asoka, Punnaga, Sirisha, Mango, Priyangu, Jack, Plantain, Jambula (Rose Apple), Pomegranate. Planting of these trees in gardens and houses first will bestow auspiciousness.

कृत्वा बहुत्वमेतेषां रोप्याः सर्वे ह्यनन्तरम् ।

शाल्मलिं कोविदारं च वर्जयित्वा विभीतकम् ॥१२॥

After planting the above trees in large numbers, other trees with the exception of Shalmali (Silk cotton), Kovidara (orchid) and Vibhitaka (Bahera) may be planted.

असनं देवदारुञ्च पलाशं पुष्करं तथा ।

न विवर्ज्यस्तथा कश्चित् देवोद्यानेषु जानता ॥१३॥

तत्रापि बहुता कार्या माङ्गल्यानां द्विजोत्तम ।

Asana (Indian Laurel), Deodar, Palasa and Pushkara (type of banyan) trees should not be allowed in gardens in temples. Auspicious activities should be undertaken in ample measure.

सायं प्रातस्तु घर्मान्ते शीतकाले दिनान्तरे ।

वर्षकाले भवेच्छोषे सेक्तव्या रोपिता द्रुमाः ॥१४॥

Watering of trees: Both morning and evening in summer, on alternate days in winter. No watering in rainy season.

उत्तमं विंशतिर्हस्ताः मध्यमम् षोडशान्तरम् ।

स्थानात् स्थानान्तरं कार्यं वृक्षाणां द्वादशावरम् ॥१५॥

Interdistance between trees: For superior trees, 20 armlengths; for medium trees, 16 armlengths; for ordinary trees, 12 armlengths. One armlength is 24 inches.

अभ्याशजातास्तरवः संस्पृशन्तः परस्परम् ।

अव्यक्तमिश्रमूलत्वात् भवन्ति विफला द्विज ॥ १६ ॥

If trees are planted closely, their branches may touch each other, and their roots also might interfere with each other; they will then not yield the desired fruits.

तेषां व्याधिसमुत्पत्तौ शृणु राम चिकित्सितम् ।

आदौ संशोधनं तेषां किञ्चिच्छस्त्रेण कारयेत् ।

विडङ्गघृतपङ्काक्तान् सेचयेत् शीतवारिणा ॥ १७ ॥

When tree is afflicted with disease, procedure to treat: Cut the affected part with sickle and clean. Then apply mix of Vayuvidanga, ghee and mud at the location. Pour diluted milk. Thus the tree will be cured of disease.

फलनाशे कुलुत्थैश्च माषैर्मुद्गैस्तिर्यैर्वैः ।

शृतशीतपयःसेको फलपुष्पाय सर्वदा ॥ १९ ॥

If fruits become rotten, manure of Kulatha (horse-gram), Masha (black gram), Mudga (Green gram), Yava (barley) and Til (sesame) should be applied. Boiled and cooled milk should then be poured for fruit and flower trees to grow well.

अविकाजशकृच्चूर्णं यवचूर्णं तिलानि च ।

----मुदकं चेति सप्तरात्रं निधापयेत् ॥ १८ ॥

उत्सेकं सर्ववृक्षाणां फलपुष्पाभिवृद्धिदम् ।

For trees and creepers to grow well and yield good flowers and fruits, the mix of the following ingredients should be soaked for seven days and poured: Powdered dung of goats and sheep, barley flower, til and water.

रङ्गतोषितं बीजं रङ्गतोयाभिषेचितम् ।

उदग्रपुष्पं भवति यौवने नात्र संशयः ॥

मत्स्याम्भसा तु सेकेन वृद्धिर्भवति शाखिनाम् ॥

Soaking of seeds in water in tin coated vessels, and watering from tin coated vessels lead to notable growth of flowers in trees; no doubt.

ततः प्रधानतो वक्ष्ये द्रुमाणां दोहदान्यहम् ।

Now let me tell you about desires of trees. The word ‘Dohada’ used here means desire; it also has a special meaning of desire during pregnancy; that meaning is also applicable here.

मत्स्योदकेन शीतेन चाम्राणां सेक इष्यते ॥
मृद्धीकानां तथा कार्यः तेनैवं रिपुषूदन।
पक्वासृगुधिरं चैव दाडिमानां प्रशस्यते ॥
तुषं देयं च भव्यानां मद्यं च वकुलद्रुमे ॥
विशेषात्कामिनीवक्त्रसंसर्गात् गुणं च यत्॥
प्रशस्तं चाप्यशोकानां कामिनीपादताडनम् ।

Asoka tree is greatly desirous of adult women kissing with lips and kicking with feet. This should be done for good growth of Asoka trees. This has been mentioned by many great poets like Kalidasa in their works.

शृगालमांसतोयं च नारङ्गाक्षोटयोर्हितम् ॥
मधुयष्ट्युदकं चैव बदराणां प्रशस्यते ।
गन्धोदकं च गोमांसं कतकानां प्रशस्यते।
क्षीरसेकेन भवति सप्तपर्णो मनोहरः ॥

For Saptaparna (seven leaved Indian devil tree), pouring of milk renders it attractive.

मांसपूतो वसामज्जा सेकः कुरबके स्थितः।
पृतिमत्स्यघृतं पूति कार्पासफलमेव च ॥
अरिमेदस्य सेकोऽयं पाटलेषु च शस्यते ।
कपित्थबिल्वयोः सेकं गुडतोयेन कारयेत्॥
जातीनां मल्लिकायाश्च गन्धतोयं परं हितम् ॥

For Kapitha and Bilva trees, pouring of jaggery water is recommended. For Mallika and Jati flower trees, sandal paste water is good.

तथा कुब्जकजातीनां कूर्ममांसं प्रशस्यते ।
खर्जूरनारिकेलानां वंशस्य कदलस्य च ।
लवणेन सतोयेन सेको वृद्धिकरः स्मृतः ॥

For date, coconut, bamboo and plantain trees, salt water is good.

विडङ्गं तण्डुलोपेतं मत्स्यमांसं भृगूत्तम॥
सर्वेषामविशेषेण दोहदं परिकल्पयेत्॥

For all trees, manure of mix of Vayuvidanga, rice and other specified items is good.

एवं कृते चारुपलाशपुष्पाः सुगन्धिनो व्याधिविवर्जिताश्च ।

भवन्ति नित्यं तरवः सरस्याः चिरायुषः साधुफलान्विताश्च ॥

Following the above guidelines leads to splendid growth of trees with healthy leaves and tasty fruits, with fragrance, free from disease, and having long life.

इतिश्री विष्णुधर्मोत्तरे पुराणे द्वितीयखण्डे वृक्षायुर्वेदवर्णनं नाम त्रिंशत्तमोऽध्यायः ।

Thus ends Vriksha Ayurveda section in Vishnu Dharmottara Puranam, Khanda 2, chapter 30.

Sthalavrikshas:

As Devatas reside in trees, Sthalavrikshas (Sacred trees for the place) are grown and worshipped. Let us now look at the Sthalavrikshas in various temples in Tamil Nadu.

S.No.	Sthalavriksha	Place
1	Agil in Tamil (Agaru)	Tirukkarayil
2	Athi in Tamil (Fig)	Tiruvotriyur Tirukkanattumullur Tiruaappadi
3.	Arasu in Tamil (Peepul, Aswatha)	Tiruvavaduturai Tirunallam Tirupparidiniyamam Aavur Pasupatiswaram Tiruarasili
4	Alari in Tamil (Karavira, Oleander)	Tirukkaraviram Tirukkallil
5	Aamanakku in Tamil (Castor bean)	Kottaiyur
6	Banyan (Vata, Aala in Tamil)	Tiruanbilalanturai Tiruppazhuvur TiruvalampoZHil Tirukkachur Tiruppundurutti Tiruvalankadu

		Tirunelvayil Aratturai Tiruppullamangai Tirukkonamalai Tirukkudalaiyatrur Tiruvenkadu
7	Badar (Ilandai in Tamil, Ber, Jujube)	Tirukkizhvelur Tirunana Tiruomambuliyur Tirukkuranganilmuttam
8	Madhuka (Iluppai in Tamil, Honey tree)	Tiruirumbaimahakalam Tiruppazhamannippadikkarai Tiruchengodu (Tirukkodimadachengundrur)
9	Oomathai in Tamil (Datura Metel, Thorn Apple)	Tirumanancheri
10	Arka (Erukkai in Tamil, Crown Flower)	Tiruerukkattampuliyur Tirukkanattumullur Tirumangalakkudi
11	Jambira (Lemon, Elumichai in Tamil)	Tirumakaral
12	Kadamba (Burflower)	Tirukkadambanturai (Kuzhittalai- Kadambarkoil) Tirukkadambur Tirualavai (Kadambavanam - Madurai)
13	Haritaki (Kadukkai in Tamil)	Tirukkurukkaivirattam
14	Ebony (Karungali in Tamil)	Tiruambar Mahakalam
15	Kallathi in Tamil	Tirupparankundram
16	Kaattathi in Tamil	Tiruaappadi Tiruchitremam Tiruchengattangudi
17	Karai in Tamil (Cutch)	Kachinerikkaraikkadu
18	Kiluvai in Tamil	Tirukkadaimudi
19	Kurundai in Tamil (Atavi Jambira)	Tirupperunturai (Aavudaiyarkoil) Tiruttandalainilneri Tiruppunavoyil
20	Kondrai in Tamil (Golden Rain Tree)	Tirutturaiyur Tirupputtur Tiruppandanainallur

		Tiru Achirupakkam Tiruchaathamangai Tiruanjaikkalam Tiruttinainagar Tiruchopuram Tiruadikai Tirumaanikuzhi
21	Kongu in Tamil (Hopea-Malabar Iron)	Tirunannilathu Perunkoil Tirumangalakkudi Tirukkodi Tirukkaichchinam
22	Korai (in Tamil) grass	Tiruchchaikkakdu
23	Champaka	Tiruttenkudittittai Tiruinnambar Tiruchchivapuram Tirunageswaram Tiruppennagadam (Tiruttunganaimadam) Vaigalmadakkoil Ramanadiswaram
24	Chadurakkalli in Tamil	Tiruppunavail
25	Sandalwood	Tiruvanchiyam Tiruvazhundur
26	Chirupulai Chiruchedi in Tamil	Tiruirumpulai (Alangudi)
27	Darbha grass	Tirunallar
28	Taazhai in Tamil (Ketaki, Screw pine)	Tiruchchaikkadu Pallavanam
29	Thillai (Back Mangrove)	Chidambaram (Tirutillai)
30	Tulasi	Tiruvirkudi Virattam
31	Coconut	Tiruttengur Vadakurangaduturai
32	Tetra in Tamil	Tirukkuvalai
33	Nandiyavattai in Tamil (Moon beam)	Tiruvennaiyur
34	Narattai in Tamil (Citron)	Tirupperaiyil (Ogaipperaiyur)
35	Naval in Tamil (Jambu)	Tiruvanaikka Tirunavalur
36	Nelli in Tamil (Amalaka)	Tirunellika

		Tirunelvoyil Tiruppazhaiyarai Vadatali
37	Parai in Tamil (Daruka)	Tirupparaitturai
38	Jack (Pala in Tamil)	Tirukkutralam Tiruvoimur Talaiyalankadu Kadikkulam Tirukkaroyil Tiruvalangadu
39	Parijata (Pavalamalli in Tamil)	Sirkazhi
40		Tirukkalar
41		Tirukkottaru
42		Tirunaraiyur Chittiswaram
43	Mallika	Ilambaiyasnkottur Tiruppallavaniswaram
44	Panneer in Tamil (Cork tree)	Tiruchchotrutturai Kizhaittirukkattuppalli
45	Palm	Tiruppanandal Tiruppuravar Panangattur Tiruppanaiyur Tirumazhapadi Tiruvottur Tiruvanparthan Panangattur Tiruvalampuram
46	Padiri in Tamil (Trumpet Flower, Kastapatala)	Tiruppadirippuliyur Tiruvalidayam Tiruvarur Tiruvarur- Arurpparavaiyunmandali Avinasi (Tiruppukkoliyur)
47	Palai in Tamil (Kshirini)	Tiruppalaitturai
48	Pirambu in Tamil	Tirukkodikka
49	Punga in Tamil (Indian Beach, Karanja)	Tiruppongur
50	Palasa (Palasa, Flame of the Forest)	Tiruttalaichchangadu Tirukkanjanur
51	Tamarind	Tiruingoimalai
52	Punnai in Tamil	Tiruppunavoyil

	(Tungakesara)	Tiruppugalur Mylapore, Chennai Tiruvonnainallur Tiruvettakkudi Tiruppurambayam Tiru Ambarpperumtirukkoil Tirunelvennai TiruIrumbai Mhakalam
53	Bakula (Magizham in Tamil)	Tiruvotriyur Tiruvannamalai Tirunidur Tiruppunavoyil
54	Mandara	Kalaiyarkoil (Tirukkanapper) Tiruttiladaippadi
55	Arjuna (Maruda in Tamil)	Tiruvidaimarudur Tiruidaiyaru Tiru Ambarpperumtirukkoil Tirupparuppadam
56	Madhavi	Tirumuruganpundi Tiruttelichcheri Vada Tirumullaivoyil
57	Mango	Tirumandurai Mayiladuturai Tirunagaikkaronam Ekamreswara, Kanchipuram Tiruusasthanam Tiruavinasi Tiruppariyalur Pataleswaram
58	Mavilangai in Tamil (Caper, Sacred Barna)	Tiruchcherai (Udaiyarkoil) Tirunattiyattangudi
59	Mullai in Tamil (variety of Jasmine)	Tirukkarugavur Tirukkaruppariyalur
60	Bamboo	Tiruppasur Tirunelveli Tiruvonnainallur Tiruvetkalam
61	Vanji in Tamil (Bullet Wood)	Tirukkaruvuranilai
62	Vanni in Tamil (Shami)	Vridhdhachalam (Tirumudukundram) Tiruvanmiyur

		<p>Melai Tirukkottur Tiruvadugur Tiru Aradaipperumpaazhi Kaduvaikkaraipputtur Peruvelur Penuperunturai Tiruvanniyur Tiruppamburam Pattiswaram (Mayiladuturai) Tirukkattuppalli Tiruppundurutti Tiruchchattiyakkudi Melai Tirukkattuppalli Tiruchchembonpalli Tirukkollikkadu Tirukkediswaram Tiruppandikkodumudi Tirumundiswaram Tiru Amattur</p>
63	Vaagai in Tamil (Sirish)	Tiruvaazhkolipputtur
64	Vaalmilagu in Tamil	Tiruooral (Takkolam)
65	Plantain	<p>Tiruppazhanam Tiruttevir Dharmapuram Kudavoyil Tiruppaigneeli Tirukkazhukkundram Tiruttenkurangaduturai</p>
66	Bilva	<p>Tiruvaiyaru Tiruverumbiyur Rameswaram Tiruvaigavur Tiruvanaikkaval Tiruvedikudi Tirukarkudi Tirunedunkalam Melai Tirukkattuppalli Tirukkandiyur Chakkarappalli Tirunallur</p>

		Tiruchchemponpolli Tiruppariyalur Tiruvalanchuzhi Tiruneelakkudi Tiruttelichcheri Tirumeeyachchur Tiruchchirukudi Tiruarisirkaraiputtur Tirukkondiswaram Idumbavanam Tiruvendurai Tirukkollampudur Tiruedagam Tiruadanai Tirumuruganpundi Virattam, Tirukkoilur Idaiyaru Tirumarperu Tiruidaichchuram Tiruvakkarai Tiruvenkadu
67	Vizhal (in Tamil) grass	Tiruvilanagar
68	Vizhudi (in Tamil) Plant	Tiruveezhimizhalai
69	Kapitha (Vila in Tamil)	Tirukaroyil
70	Velvel in Tamil	Tiruverkadu
71	Neem (Vembu in Tamil)	Kumbakonam-Karonam Vaidiswarankoil Tiruvatpokki (Aiyarmalai)

Special prayers and rituals for the trees in the above temples are in vogue even now.

Conclusion:

On the instructions of Parama Pujya Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamigal, the 70th Sankaracharya of the venerated Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, I compiled this book from several rare works and I am placing the same at his lotus feet.

In order that this book would be of use to all people, translation in Tamil has been provided.

Gist of the book:

Isvara, who created this world of humans and living beings, also created trees and creepers with medicinal value in order to protect the health of beings. Veda spelt out briefly the methods of planting trees and protecting them from disease. This was amplified by Rishis in Smritis and Puranas. The present day scholars opine that rains occur only if trees are planted. Let us accept that. But the ancient texts state that by planting trees, one gets rid of sins and attains to Swarga; childless people will beget children; if they die without progeny, the trees planted by them act like sons and perform Sraaddha and satisfy them. Hence this book is titled **“Trees are indeed Sons”**. Glories of tree planting are enumerated in detail. Those who plant 1 Peepul tree, 1 Neem tree, 1 Banyan tree, 10 Tamarind trees, 6 Champaka trees, 300 palm trees and 5 mango trees do not even look at Narakas. Those who plant 3 Kapitha trees, 3 Amalaka trees and 3 Bilva trees do not go to Narakas. For the number of years the trees live on earth, birds and living beings like squirrel sit on the trees, and wayfarers rest, those who plant the trees reside in Swarga for those many years. In order to realise the dream of our Acharya that all people enjoy all these happy fruits, I, Sundararama Vajapayee, the son of Smt.Mangalamba and Sri Ramanatha Vajapayee, have compiled this book from many works to the extent possible with the cooperation of my son Narayana Vajapayee. Credit for all merit in this book goes to my Gurus, who taught me. Faults belong to my ignorance. I conclude by saying that all should enjoy this book and attain to the bliss of Moksha too. I pray that Jagadguru may bless Auditor Sitarama Iyer and his family, who supported with financial assistance in publishing this book.

Translator's Note:

I am beholden to Parama Pujya Jagadguru Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswathi Swamigal of Kanchi Kamakti Peetham for instructing me to do this translation of the Tamil original into English. I place my humble effort at the lotus feet of the Jagadguru.

My thanks are due to Sri R.Ganapati Subramaniam of Navi Mumbai for help in typing out the Samskrit verses in record time. He has been helping me thus in many of my books in spite of his advanced age. May Jagadguru's blessings ever be with him.

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