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Terminalia chebula

[Synonyms : *Myrobalanus chebula*]

MYROBALANS is a deciduous or evergreen tree. Native to India and Malaysia it has tiny unpleasant-smelling, cream flowers.

It is also known as *Aralu* (Singhalese), Belliric myrobalan, Black chebolic, Black myrobalans, Chebolic-myrobalans, Gall-nuts, *Harad* (Hindi), *Harde* (Gujarati), *Haritaki* (Bengali, Sanskrit), *Harra* (Hindi), Harro, *Hilikha* (Assamese), Ink-nuts, *Kadukai* (Tamil), *Karitaki* (Telugu), *Katukka* (Malayalam), *Myrobalanenbaum* (German), and Myrobolans tree; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of privation.

Bark and dried fruit (the latter containing 32% tannin) are used for tanning – and produce a soft, mellow leather. They are also the source of a black or a yellow dye.

The hard purplish-brown wood (which is also heavy and fairly durable) has been used in India for making furniture and for general construction.

For Hindus myrobalans is sacred to Shiva, the destroyer and producer.

Medicinally, it has long been a source of medicine for the Hindus. The bark and fruit have been used for centuries to treat diarrhoea, fever, asthma, wind, loss of appetite, and as a laxative and tonic.