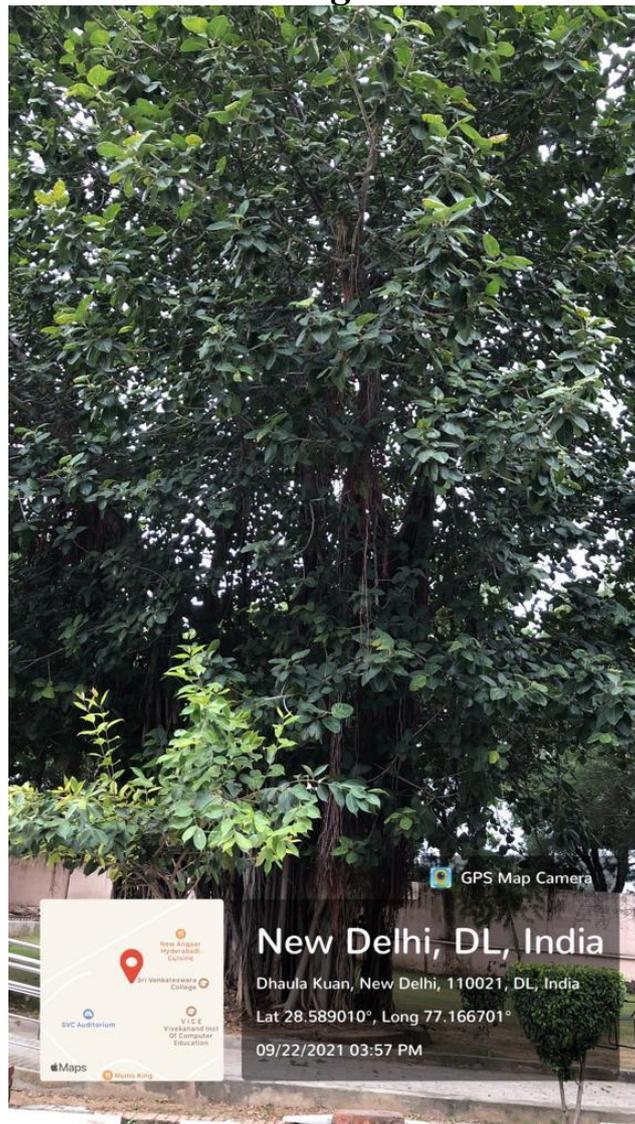


Ficus benghalensis



Common Name: Banyan Tree

Scientific Name: *Ficus benghalensis*

Family: Moraceae

It is the National Tree of India.

It is a large, fast growing evergreen tree native to the Indian subcontinent. It grows up to 20-25 meters tall and can spread up to 100 meters in width.

The leaves are stout, glabrous, ventrally compressed with hairy petiole, lamina coriaceous, and are obovate to ovate to elliptic. It has dioicous flowers, i.e. male and female flowers are different. They produce propagating roots which grow downwards as areal roots. Once they reach the ground, they become woody trunks.

Cultural significance: It is considered sacred in India and is often grown around temples.