The state-tree of Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh falls under one of the global megadiversity centres, i.e. Eastern Himalaya. It is a botanical paradise. However, the state is losing its glory rapidly due to biotic pressure. Several steps have been taken by the government to conserve the unparalleled biodiversity of the state by establishing Biodiversity Reserves, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, etc. The Supreme Court of India has completely banned the felling of trees in the state. However, there is practically no check on the destruction of the forest by the public themselves. Hence, there is an urgent need to create awareness among the public about the plant wealth of the state, leading to the conservation of biodiversity. Declaration of ‘state-flower’, ‘state-tree’, etc. by the government creates an emotional attachment between the people and the plants, due to which people start taking care of these plants.

During studies on the flora of the state, it was noticed that till date, the state tree of Arunachal Pradesh has not been officially declared. My observations indicate that ‘Tokol Palm’ is the most suitable tree species to be declared as the state-tree of Arunachal Pradesh, because almost all parts of this palm are used by the local people. Though it is included in the Red Data Book of Indian Plants, its leaves are preferred for thatching houses in the region. The tree is practically the ‘Kalpvriksha’ of Arunachal Pradesh. It is therefore proposed that ‘Tokol Palm’ (Livistona jerikinsiana) Arecaceae (Palmaceae) be declared the state-tree of Arunachal Pradesh.


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