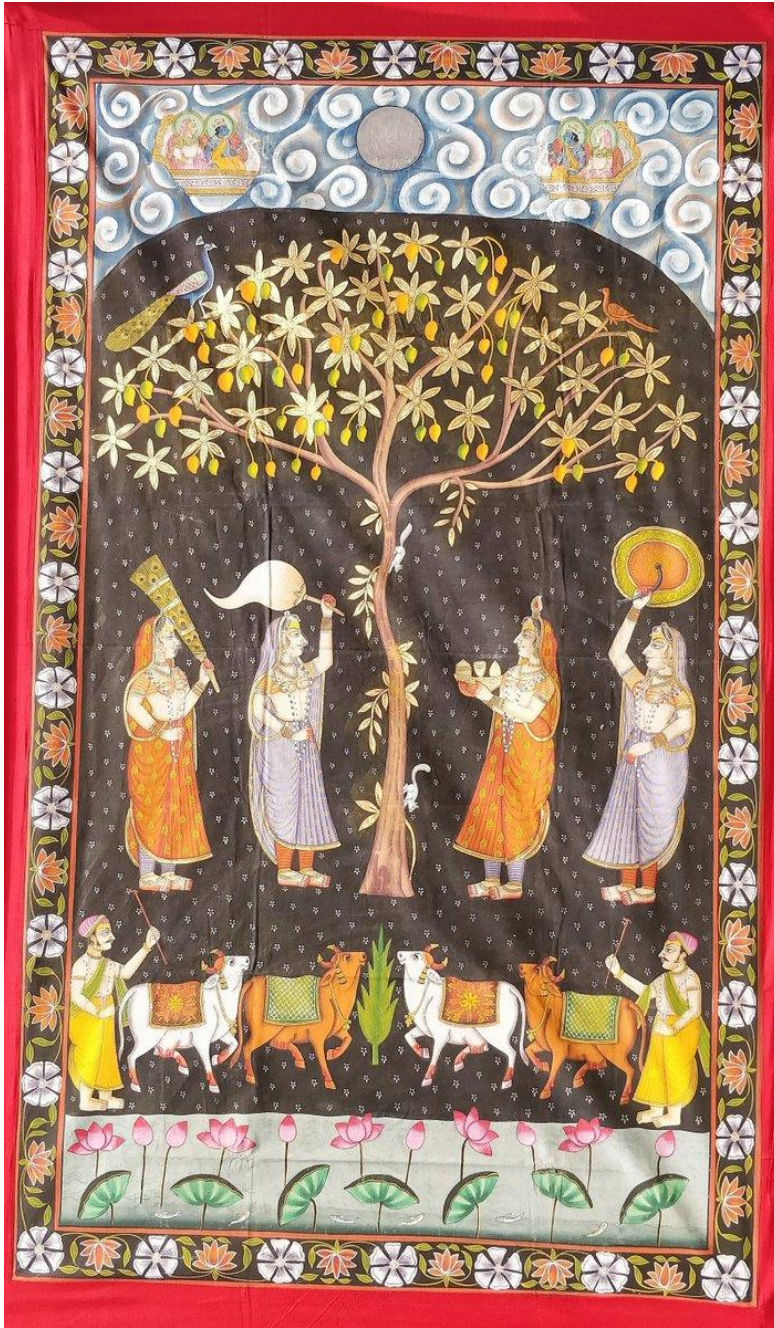


Aapno Sanskriti (Khejri)

Khejri : State Tree of Rajasthan





Khejri is the most dominant tree of the western Rajasthan; and for this exact reason, Khejri is called the state tree of Rajasthan. It was declared state tree in the year 1982-83. Khejri (*Prosopis cineraria*) covers about two-thirds of the total geographical area of the State and is of immense significance culturally and economically. The tree supports rural economy like no other wild vegetation does. The unripe pods are green, and locally known as 'sangria' or 'sangar'. The dried green beans of the khejri are stored and used for cooking round the year. It is one of the ingredients of the famous *panchkuta*, a local dish cooked with five vegetables. The dried mature pods, locally called 'kho-kha', have a sweetish pulp and are also edible and much liked by local children. They are used as fodder for livestock.



Indian Postal Department issued a Postal Stamp on Khejri in 1988.

Some documents suggest that the bark of Khejri was used as a flour during the [Famine of Rajputana in 1869](#). Khejri is a nitrogen-fixing tree which enhances the fertility of the soil. It supports agricultural crops when sown under and around it. Culturally the tree has a reputed status in the society. Green twigs of khejri are worshipped in homes on *Janmashtami* (the birth day of Lord Krishna as per Hindu traditions). It is a symbol of Krishna in some districts of Rajasthan. The tree is honoured and worshipped by the Bishnoi community.



Khejri Tree inspired the Chipko Movement. In 1730 AD, a small village located 26 km south-east of Jodhpur in Rajasthan witnessed probably the first and most fierce environment protection movement in the history of the country. Amrita Devi of Khejarli village and her three young daughters laid down their lives to protect the sacred trees which the king had ordered to be cut down for building his new palace. The 'martyrs' belonged to Bishnoi community and the trees which they were protecting were 'Kheji. In 1970s, this sacrifice became the inspiration behind the Chipko Movement.