

# CDB Celebrates World Coconut Day 2015 at Vijayawada with Pomp and Glory



addressed issues such as mechanization, value addition, organic farming, packing and labelling aspects, survey for coconut clones that are performing well in Uddanam area in Srikakulam district under rain fed conditions to develop the same as clones suitable for rain fed conditions. He further stated that Horticultural Research Station, Ambajipeta received ChaudaryDevilal Outstanding AICRP Award for the year 2014-15. He emphasized that Andhra Pradesh, with its 1000 Km coastal area, has larger scope for increasing area under coconut and there is an enormous scope to develop Neera production as viable industry in Andhra Pradesh.

September 2<sup>nd</sup> has been designated as Coconut Day by the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC) headquartered at Jakarta, Indonesia. APCC's foundation day also falls on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. APCC is an intergovernmental organisation of 18 member countries mandated to promote, coordinate and harmonize coconut developmental activities of the Asian Pacific region to achieve maximum economic development. All major coconut-growing countries including India are members of APCC. The celebration is aimed at creating awareness about the importance of coconut and its potential in alleviating poverty, encouraging investments and promoting the development of coconut industry in the member countries.

Around 500 farmers from all coconut growing states have attended the function and out of which 75 per cent farmers were from Andhra Pradesh. The event was a good platform for the farmers to get first-hand knowledge about the new initiatives of the Board. The Board has also arranged an exhibition at the venue showcasing latest technologies in coconut sector and various value added coconut products including Neera. Tender coconut ice creams and Neera and its value-added products manufactured by different coconut producer companies were distributed at the event. Four Coconut Producer's Companies from Kerala have showcased their products at the exhibition.

Shri.ThotaNarasimham released the Telugu version of Indian Coconut Journal on the occasion whereas Dr. B.M.C Reddy, Vice Chancellor, Dr. Y.S.R. Horticultural University, released the leaflet on Neera and Neera Technician Training brought out by CDB. The leaflet pertaining to "Scientific management of Coconut" by Horticultural Research Station, Ambajipeta was also released. Progressive farmers from AP such as Sri Johar Khan, Chairman, Coconut Producers Company, Ichapuram, Srikakulam district, D.R.Raju, Chairman, Coconut producers Company, East Godavari District, and Sri LakshmipathiRaju, Dhanunjaya Coconut Producers Company, East Godavari District spoke about various problems being faced by the farmers of Andhra Pradesh. Inaugural session was followed by two technical sessions, comprising topics pertaining to coconut scenario in Andhra Pradesh – potential & prospects, coconut for family nutrition, health and wellness, pests & diseases in coconut, major coconut value added products and assistance from TMOC, prospects and potential of FPOs in Andhra Pradesh. Sri B.PanduRanga, Deputy Director of Horticulture proposed vote of thanks at the end of the inaugural session.

Shri.ThotaNarasimham, Member of Parliament and Member, Coconut Development Board, has inaugurated World Coconut Day 2015 at SwarnaVedika in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 in a grand manner. Coconut Development Board, in association with the Department of Horticulture, Andhra Pradesh has organized the event, which was based on theme "Coconut for Family Nutrition, Health & Wellness". Shri.Thota Narasimham, in his inaugural address stated that coconut is oldest and devotional crop in India and said he would take the issues of coconut farmers like exemption of Neera from Abkari Act, coconut insurance, minimum support price, organic coconut cultivation etc., to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Shri.N.Chandrababu Naidu.

In his keynote address, Shri T. K. Jose IAS, Chairman, CDB, said that if Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh can implement Neera together, India can become the World leader in palm sugar export. Indonesia exports Rs. 12000 crore worth Neera. In the case of farmers in Andhra, more income can be generated especially from Neera and its value added products. State government need to take a policy decision in this regard. Compared to Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, India is lagging behind as far as value addition in coconut is concerned. Thailand is bringing out more than 50 value-added products wherein they are having only 0.89 lakh hectare of coconut cultivation. Out of 21 lakh hectares of coconut cultivation in India, Andhra Pradesh possesses 1.22 lakh hectares. If coconut cultivation and value addition is in proper way, Andhra Pradesh alone can beat Thailand. We wanted to be the part and parcel of "Make in India" campaign as per the declaration of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri.NarendraModi. Unlike other horticultural crop, every part of coconut is useful. There are 65 varieties of coconut milk products available in USA which is being manufactured by "SO Delicious Dairy Free" company. Eventhough, Allopathy, Homeopathy and Ayurveda have no medicines for Alzheimer's, Virgin coconut oil is the only medicine for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. If anybody takes 2 teaspoons of virgin coconut oil he or she will be cured from Alzheimer's. Coconut milk is the major source of many of the developed counties. Coconut oil is used as major cooking medium in Kerala and few districts of Tamilnadu and Karnataka. Coconut milk is used in 630 districts in India. Hence all Coconut Producers Companies and Federations should concentrate in making coconut milk. An Ayurvedic Medical College in Kerala has brought out one scientific study that Dhahi prepared from coconut milk can prevent the diabetes. We have never thought of Dhahi from coconut milk. A similar delicious product ice cream was manufactured by National Institute for Food Technology and Entrepreneurship Management (NIFTEM) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare.

Availability of good quality planting materials is the major constraints faced by coconut growers. Though the requirement of coconut seedlings is 1 crore per annum, we are able to produce only 35 lakhs seedlings from all sources, which clearly points that there is greater necessity in taking up of Tissue culture multiplication in coconut.

Dr.B.M.C.Reddy, in his special address, explained the nutrition value of coconut milk, coconut water, coconut oil etc., He stated that, 50 percent of coconut oil contains saturated fatty acid – lauric acid that is present in breast milk. Further, he



MP and CDB member Thota Narasimham (2nd right) speaks with CDB chairman TK Jose while releasing the CDB magazine on the occasion of World Coconut Day in Vijayawada on Wednesday as CDB member Johar Khan (left) and YSR Horticultural University V-C BMC Reddy look on | Express Photo