

UK evinces interest

Kochi: Vinod Kumar, chairman of the Palakkad Coconut Producers Company, said his company has been exporting one tone of sugar a month to the United Kingdom and has an order for 100 tonnes now. "The price is very competitive, and we are waiting for more licenses to tap neera so that we can augment production."

The Palakkad CPC has last month laid the foundation stone for its neera processing plant which can process 60,000 litres of neera a day. Coconut Development Board chairman T K Jose said the combined export of the three major coconut sugar manufacturing nations -Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines - is estimated to be 1 million tonne a year. India can be a major player in the sector as the three south Indian states -Kerala Karnataka and Tamil Nadu—alone have the potential to manufacture around 2 million tonne sugar a year, he said. Mr Mohan said Indonesia and the Philippines are promoting coconut products in a big way and Sri Lanka is emerging as an important player now, exporting coconut sugar.