

# It is all about Coir Fibre Jewellery



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At a first look, no one would believe that these are made out of coir fibre. Yes, it is! These ornaments were made at the Coir Jewellery working under the Coir cluster unit of Androth Island of Lakshadweep. Lakshadweep islands are bestowed with coconuts. Coconut is in fact very closely associated with the socioeconomic and cultural life of the people of Lakshadweep. Coconut cultivation and production and marketing of copra constitute the major livelihood option in these islands. Coconut husk, one of the by-product of coconut is generally used as fuel in household once after drying besides transporting to coir fibre factories under the Department of Industries for converting it into coir fibre and further processing into value

added products such as coir fibre, coir yarn, curled fibre, coir mats etc. As of now, five coir fibre factories, five production demonstration centres and seven fibre curling units are functioning in different islands. The Coir production cum demonstration centre situated in Andrott Island engages around 12 workers; 11 women and one male working with six spinning machines. As an extension to the coir centre, a coir jewellery has been functioning since 2009 under the supervision of Mr. Sayyed Muhammed. Initially, five women workers were trained in coconut fibre based jewellery and handicrafts making at National Coir Training & Design Centre (NCT&DC) functioning under the Central Coir Research Institute of Coir Board, Kalavoor, Alappuzha

district of Kerala. Since then, making of coconut fibre based ornaments and jewellery items were successfully initiated in the island. By 2016, these master trainers started imparting training to selected women from the island. Presently the unit is having 40 trainees in two shifts. The trained women make very attractive ornaments using coir fibre. Earrings, hangings, necklace, finger rings, long chains and bangles are some of the items made by them. The initial step is making coir fibre duct. It will take around 10 min to make one duct. A long chain is made with 200 ducts. Minimum two days are required to finish one product. It needs immense patience and soft skill to make these kinds of products.



## Challenges

Lack of public awareness about coir based jewellery items, Non conducive location of the unit as it is located adjacent to the fish market, lack of proper market, improper unattractive packages, inadequacy of proper schemes by the concerned governmental agencies to support these trained women and Low price for the premium jewellery items.



## Strategies

Interventions are needed for facilitating the formation of women SHG on coconut fibre based jewellery making and handicrafts in the islands along with support for arranging exhibitions and sales of items, especially in islands which are visited by number of tourists. Coir jewellery should get a name and fame like any other traditional jewellery like terracotta or thread based jewellery. There is scope for starting a coir fibre jewellery unit –cum- incubation centre as part of the coir factory for which financial assistance can be made available from related department.

