

RP-274

Reprinted from *Journal of Plantation Crops* 5(1): 39-46. June 1977.

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF COCONUT RESEARCH IN INDIA: A REPORT

(December 27, 1976 to January 8, 1977)

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The coconut research workers in India who had assembled at Trivandrum for the first National Symposium on Plantation Crops in December 1972 expressed the desirability of celebrating the diamond Jubilee year of coconut research in India in an appropriate manner during 1976. They felt that these could be organized under the joint auspices of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) and the Indian Society for Plantation Crops. They also proposed that an international symposium on coconuts could also be held as part of the celebrations. The coconut research workers later formed an *ad hoc* committee to suggest broad outlines of action for celebrating the jubilee year and organizing a symposium. This Committee recommended the formation of the following eight committees and enumerated the role and duties of each of them.

Advisory Committee:

Patron: C. Achutha Menon, Chief
Minister, Kerala
Chairman: Vakkom Purushothaman,
Minister for Agriculture, Kerala
Convenor: K. V. Ahamed Bavappa,
Director, CPCRI, Kasaragod

Organizing Committee:

Chairman: K. V. Ahamed Bavappa
Convenor: K. Satyabalan

Programme Committee:

Chairman: N. M. Nayar
Convenor: M. K. Nair

Publications & Publicity Committee:

Chairman: M. K. Muliyaar
Convenor: K. Kunhikrishnan

Exhibition & Entertainment Committee:

Chairman: N. P. Jayashankar
Convenor: C. P. Ramachandran

Reception & Registration Committee:

Chairman: M. C. Nambiar
Convenor: James Abraham

Refreshment Committee:

Chairman: K. Shama Bhat
Convenor: P. K. Koshy

Finance Committee:

Chairman: A. Ramachandran Potti
Convenor: Jacob Mathew

The various committees went into action by early 1975 and decided to organize the jubilee celebrations towards the end of 1976. The Programme Committee took early action to inform the coconut research workers throughout the world about the holding of the International Symposium on

Coconut Research and Development (ISO-CRAD) by announcing it in a number of scientific periodicals and also mailing out copies of Circular-I to all workers who had published at least one paper on coconut in a scientific periodical in the last 10 years. The Exhibition & Entertainment Committee also initiated early work on preparing charts, plans, and models.

In order to coordinate the work of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations and the International Symposium, a Diamond Jubilee Celebrations Committee (DIJUCORE) was felt necessary, and accordingly, this was constituted in early 1976 with M. C. Nambiar as Chairman and E. V. Nelliatt as Convenor. It decided to organize the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations for a fortnight from 27 December 1976 to 8 January 1977.

The various State Governments and the Government of India approved the idea of the Celebrations and came out with liberal grants. The Posts & Telegraphs Department agreed to commemorate the event by issuing a postage stamp on 27 December. The Films Division of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry also agreed to bring out a documentary on the occasion. Many government and nongovernment agencies also cooperated with the organizers by participating in the exhibition, taking advertisement in the Souvenir and hosting lunch/tea to the delegates. Several dailies and literary and popular science magazines also decided to bring out special issues on the occasion.

The following agencies aided the celebrations with active financial assistance and agreeing to act as collaborators: Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, University Grants Commission, Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, Administrations of Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Kerala Agricultural University, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Andhra Pra-

desh Agricultural University, and University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore.

The Celebrations began on December 27, 1976 with a function held in the morning. Mr. N. Chikke Gowda, Minister for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Government of Karnataka presided. Mr. N. Subramanian, Director of Postal Services (North), Kerala Circle, released the postage stamp and presented a stamp album to Mr. N. Chikke Gowda. He also declared open a philatelic exhibition on two themes, viz., 'Coconut on Stamps' and 'Plants on Stamps'. Also in this function, Mr. Hammed Ali Schemnad MP, released the publication, 'Six decades of coconut research in India' and Mr. B. Abdul Rahiman, MLA, released the Diamond Jubilee Souvenir. Mr. Chikke Gowda in his presidential address stressed the need for rigorous efforts on the part of research and extension workers to fight pests and diseases and increase the production of coconut. He also suggested that investigations should be initiated to develop new uses for coir and other coconut products.

In the afternoon, scientists working in the All India Coordinated Coconut & Arecanut Improvement Project met to discuss the technical programme for 1977 and approve it.

The third General Body meeting of the Indian Society for Plantation Crops was held in the evening. The names of office bearers elected for the years 1977-78 were announced. The outgoing President Dr. K. V. A. Bavappa then read his presidential address (the text appears elsewhere).

The philatelic exhibition attracted 33 entries from all over the country from philatelists, college students, and high school children besides a number of guest entries. This was the first instance in which a philatelic exhibition and commemorative stamp on a theme were conceived and organized around a scientific meeting. It is also not common in this country to issue commemorative stamps from a specified post office

and that too from a temporary post office as was the case in the present instance—the DIJUCOREPEX Post Office (Fig. 1 and 2). The Indian Society for Plantation Crops had also brought out a special cover depicting a scene on retting of coconut husk. The P & T Department had also arranged special slogan cancellations on each of the four dates following the stamp release, 28, 29, 30, and 31 December (Fig. 3). Normally, only slogans of philatelic interest are allowed for such cancellations and the present case of allowing slogans of agricultural interest was a rare gesture by the P & T Department.

December 28, 1976

Early in the morning a conducted field trip was organized to show the delegates around the experimental fields and laboratories of the Institute.

At 8.30 A.M. Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, Director General, ICAR, declared open the Diamond Jubilee building of the CPCRI. He also opened the agricultural exhibition organized in connexion with the Celebrations. It consisted of four pavilions and 75 stalls. A number of departments of the State and Central governments, government agencies, and business houses dealing in agricultural equipments and chemicals relating to coconut participated in the Exhibition. The entries of the competition on mechanical devices in coconut culture were also exhibited. The Exhibition attracted a large number of visitors including students from schools and colleges during its entire duration.

The inaugural function of the four day Symposium was held at 9.30 A.M. Dr. K. V. Ahamed Bavappa, President of the ISPC, and Director, CPCRI, welcomed the guests and the 302 delegates. They represented all the coconut growing states of India and most of the important coconut growing countries of the world. Dr. M. S. Swaminathan inaugurated the Symposium with a key note

address 'Coconut research—the next phase'. He emphasised the need and possibility of achieving higher production levels in coconut. He projected the gap between production levels obtained in research centres, plantations of enlightened farmers, and by ordinary farmers. He also stressed the need to evolve suitable remedial measures to combat the root (wilt) disease.

The first session on Genetics and Breeding was chaired by B. R. Murthy and the rapporteur was K. Satyabalan. Nine papers were presented in this Session.

In the afternoon, the session on Agronomy and Soil Sciences was chaired by H. R. Arakeri and M. Velayutham was the rapporteur. In this Session, ten papers were presented and discussed.

In the evening, the delegates were entertained to a variety entertainment programme covering some folk dance and music forms of Kerala State.

December 29, 1976

The premiere of the 15 minute documentary film produced by the Films Division entitled 'The Golden Palm' (Producer: Mushir Ahamed; Director: Yash Pal Chaudhuri) was held in the morning at the local theatre 'Milan' in the presence of the visiting scientists and other dignitaries.

The third Session, on Physiology and Biochemistry, was held in the forenoon under the chairmanship of R. D. Asana. N. P. Jayashankar helped as the rapporteur. Nine papers were presented and discussed. The fourth session on Technology was also held in the forenoon. V. Subramaniam chaired and M. P. Sankaranarayanan assisted as rapporteur in this session in which eight papers were read.

In the afternoon, the session on Basic Studies was held under the chairmanship of H. Y. Mohan Ram. R. D. Iyer was the rapporteur. Seven papers were presented.

In the evening, R. D. Asana gave a popu-

the occasion of the sixtieth year of coconut research in India, the Indian Society for Plantation Crops is pleased to confer the Diamond Jubilee award to (name) in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Coconut Research & Development and the same is presented to him by Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahamed, President of India on this day, the 6th of January 1977". The recipients were Dr. J. S. Patel (Geneticist), Mr. C. M. John (Biology), Dr. K.P.V. Menon (Mycology), Dr. K. M. Pandalai (Soil Chemistry), Mr. A. P. Anandan (Biology), and Mr. E. J. Varghese (Soil Science).

The institution of two research fellowships, by the Indian Potash Company Limited and the Indian Society for Plantation Crops, for undertaking postgraduate studies was also announced at this function.

January 7, 1977

The competition on new mechanical devices and appliances useful in coconut culture and research organized as part of the Celebrations attracted 16 entries. Seven were palm climbing devices, three were sprayers, and the rest were an electronic insect detector, a buckling preventing device, a plant protection chemicals applicator, a red palm weevil detector, a hardness tester, a leaf sampling knife, and a field inoculation chamber. The prize winners were: First Prize: A. N. Balan (Trichur): sprayer; Second prize: T. A. Davis (Barrackpore): Electronic insect detector; Third prize: Bangali Babu (Kasaragod): buckling preventing device; and Consolation prize: M.T. Joseph (Chemperi): palm climber.

January 8, 1977

The valedictory function of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations was held under the chairmanship of Mr. C.M. John, the first Director, Central Coconut Research Station, Kasaragod. Dr. K. V. A. Bavappa, Director,

CPCRI, welcomed the guests and invitees. Mr. A. C. George, Union Minister of State for Civil Supplies and Co-operation, gave away the Diamond Jubilee Medals to those who had completed 25 years of service to coconut research in India. The citation read "On the occasion of the sixtieth year of coconut research in India, the Indian Society for Plantation Crops is pleased to present the Diamond Jubilee Medal to (name) for his/her successful completion of 25 years of dedicated service to the cause of coconut research and development. The medal is presented to him by Mr. A.C. George, Union Minister of State for Civil Supplies and Cooperation, Government of India, on this day, the 8th of January, 1977". The following were the recipients.

K. Ambunhi	J. Antony
M. T. Ayyappan	C. Baby
N. D. Chakiar	K. M. George
T. P. Gopalakrishnan	N. Gopalakrishna Pillai
K. R. Gopalan Nair	P. Govinda Pillai
T. G. Jayarajan	C. A. Kunhiraman
K. Kunhiraman	V. G. Lily
K. Mahalinga Naik	K. V. Madhavan Nair
A. Muhamad Kunhi	M. C. Nambiar
C. C. Narayanan	E. V. Nelliatt
P. K. Pavithran	P. L. Ramanandan
Rama Varma	Sabas Crasta
T. A. Thankappan	V. Velayudhan

In his speech, Mr. George stressed the need to replicate the achievements obtained on the experimental fields in farmers' fields also. Dr. V. A. Sayed Mohamad, Minister of State for Law, Justice, and Company affairs, Government of India, delivered the valedictory address. Mr. C. M. John presented prizes and certificates to the winners of the philatelic competition and mechanical devices. The function came to a close with the singing of the National Anthem.



Fig. 1. Fascimile of the commemorative stamp brought out by the Indian Posts & Telegraphs Department on 27 December 1976.

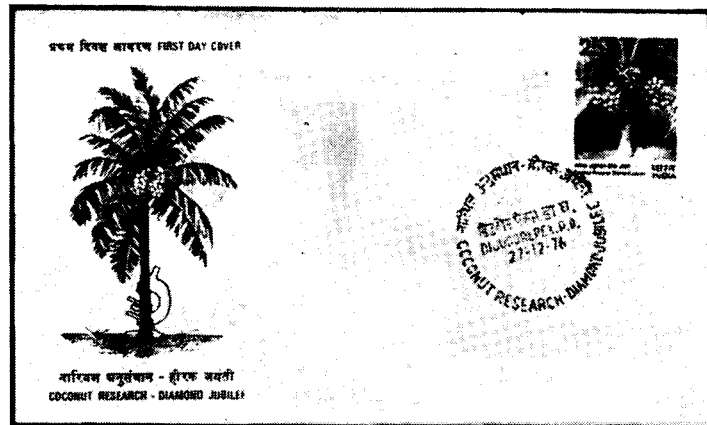


Fig. 2. Photograph of the First Day Cover brought out by the Indian Posts & Telegraphs Department with the First Day Cancellation from the DIJUCOREPEX Post Office.



Fig. 3. Photograph of the Special Cover brought out by the Indian Society for Plantation Crops showing the slogan cancellations for the four days 28, 29, 30, and 31 December 1976.

APPENDIX I

(Compiled by E. V. Nelliath and R. D. Iyer)

1. Plantation crops

A group of commercial crops of perennial nature, cultivated extensively in tropics/sub-tropics, which demand employment of labour throughout the year.

2. Multiple cropping

Multiple cropping as applied to plantation crops refers to growing more than one annual and/or perennial crops in the interspaces of the main crop.

3. Intercropping

Intercropping as applied to plantation crops refers to growing annuals or biennials in the interspaces of the main crop.

4. Mixed cropping

Mixed cropping as applied to plantation crops refers to growing perennials along with the main crop.

5. Multistoreyed cropping

This refers to a compatible combination of crops having varying morphological frame and rooting habits, grown together in such a manner that their canopies intercept solar energy at varying heights and their roots forage the soil mass at different zones.

6. Nurse crops

These are annuals or perennials grown during the early years of plantation crops with a view to protecting them against scorching wind and frost damages.

7. Spice crops

These are crops which yield products containing essential oils and/or other resinous principles/substances which impart aroma, flavour, and taste to human food.

8. Garden land

This refers to a land cropped with the help of lift irrigation to supplement the rainfall to the extent necessary. It includes all small and medium holdings where the principal crop is a perennial crop. It is also managed intensively.

9. Coconut milk

It is the white liquid obtained by squeezing the mature endosperm (kernel) of the coconut.

10. Coconut water

Coconut water or nut water refers to the liquid endosperm.

11. Copra

It is the mature endosperm (kernel) of coconut when dried. Its weight is determined at 6% moisture content for recording yield.

12. Condiments

These are substances of plant origin with pronounced odour and picquancy and used for seasoning food and for stimulating appetite.

13. Hedge planting/single hedge planting

The method of planting where the spacing between plants within the row is closer than that between rows.

14. Double hedge planting

Pairs of rows of plants form a double hedge where the spacings within the rows and between the set of two rows are close but the spacing between pairs of rows is wider.

15. Harvest index

$$\text{For coconut} = \frac{\text{dry weight of ripe coconuts produced per year}}{\text{dry weight of total dry matter produced per year}} \times 100$$

16. Variety

It is a group within a species that possesses certain common distinguishing features within the group, but distinctly differing from other groups. For example, the Tall and Dwarf varieties of coconut, differ in their stature, number of leaves, flowering behaviour, and nut characters.

17. Cultivar

It is a botanical variety characteristic of a particular region where it has been under cultivation since long. Thus, WCT and ECT of India, Ceylon Tall, Malayan Tall, Fiji Tall, among the Talls, and Chowghat Dwarf (India), Malayan Dwarf, and Fiji Dwarf (Niu-Leka) are cultivars of coconut.

18. Form

It is a cultivar that differs from other members of this group in a single or a constellation of characters. For example, the Laccadive Micro differs only in the nut size from the Laccadive Ordinary while Chowghat Dwarf Orange and Chowghat Dwarf Green differ in a constellation of characters.