

# Coconut Rejuvenation Scheme to be Extended Statewide

## Express News Service

**Kochi:** The Coconut Development Board's (CDB) 'Re-planting and Rejuvenation' scheme is set to be extended from three districts to all the fourteen districts of the State. The programme is set to be a major boost to the ailing coconut productivity in the State.

Kerala now stands at the ninth position out of the total

16 coconut growing states in the country.

The scheme was launched by the Union government in 2009 to check the root wilt disease and to increase the productivity.

The programme aims at replacing old, senile, unproductive and disease advanced palms with quality seedlings and rejuvenation of the existing gardens.

"Kerala received an



amount of ₹475 crore for the project, for a period of three years, for three of its dis-

tricts- Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Thrissur. But the CDB has been able to utilise only an amount of

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₹44 crore after two years of its implementation. The balance amount after the utili-

sation in the third year and an additional spillover will be diverted to the new project in the 14 districts," CDB

deputy director Ramany said.

"There were certain crite-

ria for the release of the funds in the scheme. One was that the amount would be sanctioned only after the CDB carried out a survey and determined the total number of trees. The number of trees was much lesser than what was expected. So the amount spent was quite low. This year we will be utilising about ₹ 35 crore. Apart from this a considerable amount will be utilised for

input supply and others. The balance amount will be used for the remaining plots in the same districts or for the other districts in the next five year plan," said Ramani.

"Under the project, the CDB aims at replacing unproductive palms with healthy tender palms, hybrid palms and tall palms in the ratio 25:25:40. The presence of a large number of very old

trees and the trees infected by root wilt are among the major factors affecting the productivity in the State. As of now we can only control wilting, there is no permanent cure. We hope that in the next five years, with a project like this, we will be able to raise the productivity of the State from the 9th position to the third in the country," CDB chairman T K Jose said.