

Regarding need to establish a regional office of Coconut Development Board in East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh- laid

SHRIMATI DAGGUBATI PURANDESWARI (RAJAHMUNDRI): India is the third-largest coconut-producing country, with Andhra Pradesh ranking as the fourth-largest coconut cultivating state. The state has 1.23 lakh hectares of coconut plantations, primarily in Krishna, East Godavari, and West Godavari districts with Kerala nearing saturation, in terms of coconut cultivation. Andhra Pradesh's fertile soil and favorable agro-climatic conditions offer immense potential for expanding coconut cultivation, boosting both the rural economy and employment opportunities. The Coconut Development Board, established in 1981, plays a crucial role in guiding farmers on technical practices, pest control, quality planting materials, and fertilizer recommendations. However, with the Board headquartered in Kerala and regional offices far from Andhra Pradesh, farmers face significant challenges in accessing timely support and advice. The recent severe whitefly infestation, along with persistent threats like bud rot, leaf rot, stem bleeding, and tatipaka disease, has highlighted the urgent need for closer assistance. Farmers struggle to avail essential services like disease management, insurance for tree climbers, and access to subsidies due to the geographical distance. Given Andhra Pradesh's status as a leading coconut producer, establishing a dedicated Coconut Development Board office in East Godavari would provide farmers with direct, immediate support ? boosting productivity, securing livelihoods, enhancing exports, and unlocking the state's full agricultural potential. Hence we demand the establishment of a Coconut Board in Andhra Pradesh.