

Caribbean nation seeks coconut board's help

Trinidad and Tobago wants expertise, crop varieties

Special Correspondent

KOCHI: Delegates from Republic of Trinidad and Tobago visited the Coconut Development Board office here on Tuesday. The objective of the delegation, comprising Nadeer Baksh, Director, Agricultural Services, and Nigel A. Grimes, Advisor, Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs, was to explore the possibility of getting technical expertise from CDB in coconut cultivation and processing sector.

The delegates sought the technical expertise of the board for improving yield in coconut plantation and for undertaking value addition through coconut processing. The team visited coconut clusters, demonstration-

• **Trinidad and Tobago team visits board office**

• **Moves to coconut clusters, farms**

cum-seed production farms, co-operative societies and coconut processing units to get an overall view of the industry. They visited a farm at Neriamangalam, and had discussions with officials of the board on various cultivation practices, hybridisation techniques, and coconut varieties. During the discussions with the chairman, director and senior officials of the board, the delegates explored areas for possible cooperation between the gov-

ernment of Trinidad and Tobago and Ministry of Agriculture, government of India. Expertise was sought on biological, chemical, and mechanical means for mitigation of red palm mite which affected coconut gardens in the country. Replanting the plantations with disease-tolerant coconut varieties, transfer of good genetic material of high-yielding coconut varieties, training on coconut palm climbing, and specific consultancy services for development of coconut industry were discussed.

The delegates requested the board to send a technical team to visit their country. The chairman, CDB, promised to share technical services with the coconut industry in Trinidad and Tobago.