

Report stresses on need for a 'National Institute for Jackfruit Development'

AJ VINAYAK

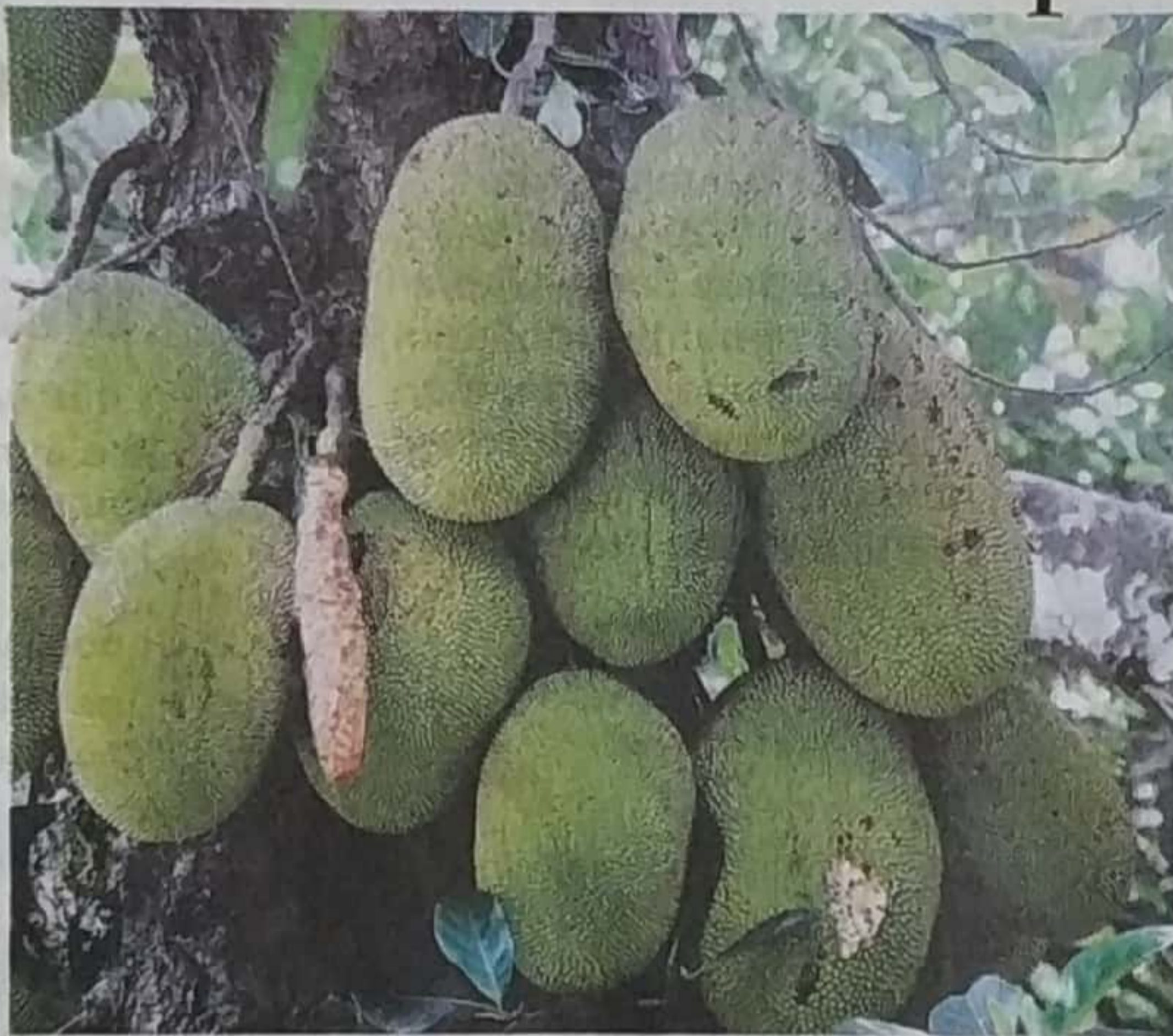
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A research project by the Jaipur-based National Institute of Agricultural Marketing (NIAM) and the Justice KS Hegde Institute of Management (JKSHIM), Nitte (Udupi district), has suggested the need for the establishment of a 'National Institute for Jackfruit Development' to boost the prospects of jackfruit in the country.

A team from these institutes — which included P Chandra Shekara, Director General of NIAM; K Sankaran, Director of JKSHIM; Ramesh Mittal, Director of NIAM; and AP Achar, Dean (Corporate Programmes) of JKSHIM — took up a research project on 'Market feasibility study for jackfruit value-added products' recently and came out with a report.

According to the team members, the proposed institute should act as a 'clearing house' for new ideas in cultivation, harvesting, post-harvesting technology and processing. The institute should identify research areas and facilitate market-driven research, they said.

The report also suggested that the institute facilitate the setting up of a national body on the lines of National Egg Coordination Committee to play a role in market development



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and market intervention, price support operations; and carry out promotion campaigns, market research, and consumer education programmes.

Such a body could also liaise with the government on vital issues concerning the sector, it said.

Mission Jackfruit

To improve the ecosystem for cultivation and value addition, the research report suggested a 'Mission Jackfruit' initiative.

Favouring the establishment of a 'germ-plasm bank' under

the 'Mission Jackfruit' initiative, the report said genetic studies should be done for exploiting the wide range of varieties. Efforts in this direction will help breed superior varieties.

Highlighting the need for including promotion of sorting and grading practices under 'Mission Jackfruit', it said jackfruit has a huge advantage over other fruits, as it can be consumed in five different stages of growth. Each of these stages has multiple uses across value-added products and in the re-

tail market, it said. 'Mission Jackfruit' should make micro-finance for the jackfruit sector a part of developmental process.

There is a need to involve micro-finance institutions in helping small and marginal farmers involved in jackfruit cultivation, and those involved in processing at household or micro enterprise level, it said.

Consultative group

The report suggested that a consultative group be formed to draft 'mission jackfruit' initiative. The group could consist of experts from State departments, Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, noted growers and processors, and specialists in the area of entrepreneurship. The group proposed for drafting 'mission jackfruit' initiative could be mandated to facilitate a feasibility study for the 'National Institute for Jackfruit Development', it said.

The team members said their study provides only broad spectrum of market potential for jackfruit and its value-added products. It is an attempt to educate, promote and influence masses, academia, governmental and non-governmental bodies to create and promote a 'yellow revolution', they added.