

KSRTC conductor dons a second hat

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K.N. Suresh, a conductor with the KSRTC Vaikom depot, travels to nearby Ernakulam district at least thrice a week as scores of households wait impatiently for the "coconut plucker".

Suresh says he relishes his part-time job of pluck-

ing coconuts, which he does to fulfil his dream to give quality education to his three children.

"I didn't want to compromise on their education but my conductor job was not sufficient to meet rising costs. These days we all face a shortage of coconut pluckers and hence I chose the job," Suresh, 42, a native of Vaikom toll, said.

● **Suresh works as a conductor for three days a week. On the rest of the days, he dons the role of a coconut climber**

● **2 years ago, he attended a program at the coconut board at Ettumanur**

Two years ago, he attended a training program conducted by the coconut board

at Ettumanur and since then there has been no turning back. He even bought a coconut climbing machine. "Since city dwellers pay me more, I go to Ernakulam. To climb a single coconut tree, I get ₹50 and earn double the income when compared to my job as a conductor," he says.

Suresh has been working

as an M-panel conductor for the past six years and gets ₹9,000 as his monthly salary. He works as a conductor for three days a week, including double duty. On the rest of the days, he dons the role of a coconut climber.

His eldest son is now pursuing the Hotel Management course while the other two are studying plus two and class 9.