

FIRST REPORT OF A LEAF DISEASE OF RAMBUTAN (*NEPHELIUM LAPPACEUM* L.) PLANT IN INDIA

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Abstract: Rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum* L.) member of the Sapindaceae is a native of Malaysia which is widely cultivated in peninsular India as a cash fruit crop, particularly in Kerala. It is a close relative of the lychee and an equally desirable fruit. In the vernacular, it is generally called rambutan, occasionally in India, *ramboostan*.

The plant reaches 5-10 m in height, and a dense, usually spreading crown. The evergreen leaves are alternate, pinnately compound, long, with reddish rachis, hairy when young.

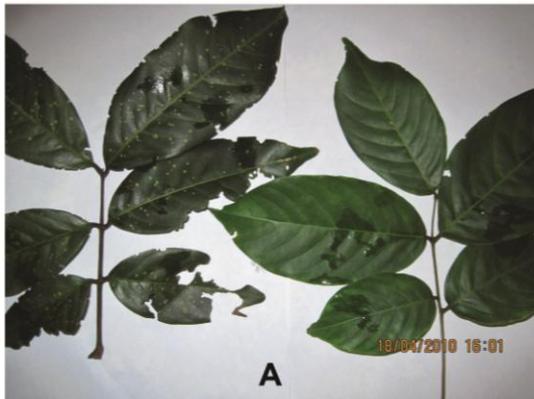
Key words : *Nephelium*, *Hemelia*, leaf disease

INTRODUCTION

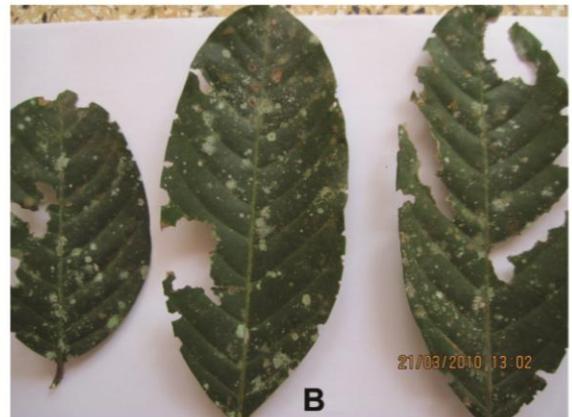
In a survey conducted in two districts of Kerala viz Eastern parts of Alleppey and western parts of Pathanamthitta from 2010 to 2012, where the Rambutan plant is widely cultivated was recorded with the association of a particular disease. The major symptoms of the disease was noted on leaves. The earlier symptoms are white spots away from the mid rib and on the margins, which results white spots at the early stages. Later the affected portions become brown and necrosis occurs. As a result the total leaf damage and shedding occurs. The pathogen forms acervulus formation on leaves (Sharma R C

2002). The pathogen was not able to isolate on any media tested. The anatomical investigation of leaf shows an acervulus containing many spores which resembles uredospores. It resembles the possibility of *Hemelia* sp. which is a common pathogen on Coffee leaves of the same area where the investigation carried out.

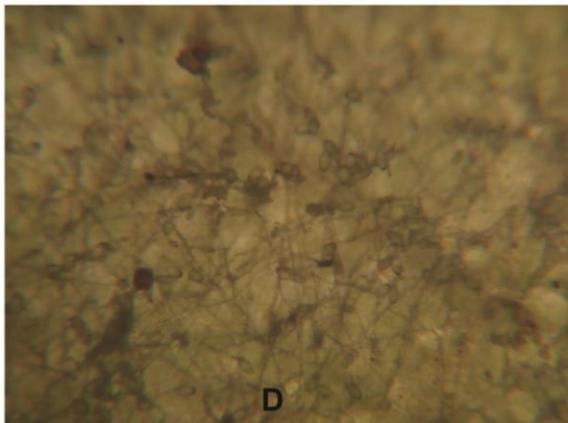
This is the first report ever of *Hemelia* sp. causing severe leaf disease on Rambutan. Many reported the *Hemelia* disease on Coffee (Holliday 1980, Bilgrami *et al*, 1991, Wilson D and Henderson M 1966).



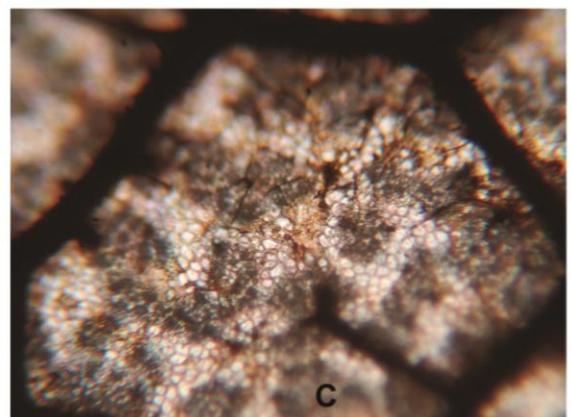
A. Healthy & Diseased leaves of Rambutan



B. Advanced stage of Infection



D. Spores of Hemelia



C. Acervulus showing mycelial growth

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