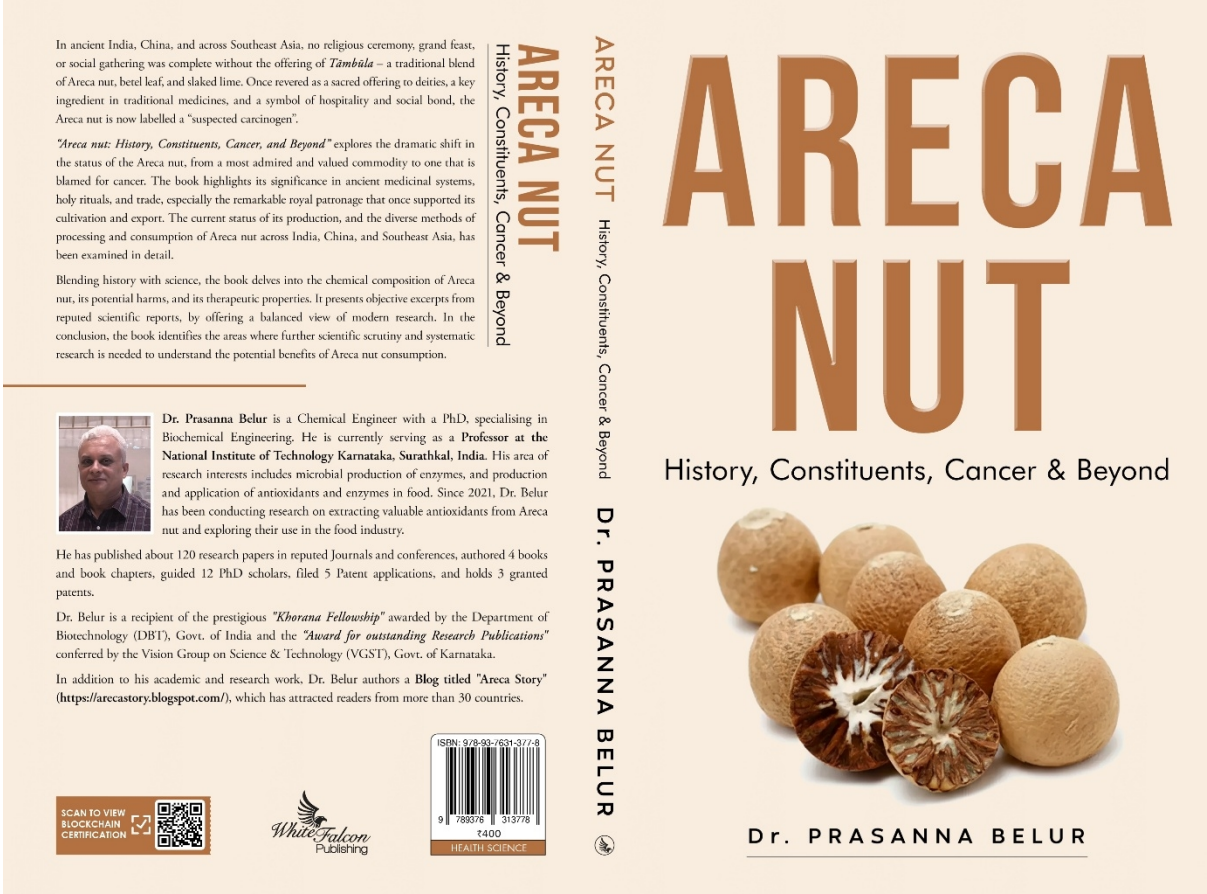
A book “Areca Nut – History, Constituents, Cancer & Beyond” authored by Prof. Prasanna Belur is released.

The Book has been released by Shri. S.R. Sathishchandra, President, The CAMPCO Ltd. and Prof. B. Ravi, Director, NITK Surathkal in a formal function held in CAMPCO Head Office in Mangalore on18.02.2026.

“Areca nut: History, Constituents, Cancer, and Beyond” explores the dramatic shift in the status of the Areca nut, from a most admired and valued commodity to one that is blamed for cancer. The book highlights its significance in ancient medicinal systems, holy rituals, and trade, especially the remarkable royal patronage that once supported its cultivation and export. The current status of its production, and the diverse methods of processing and consumption of Areca nut across India, China, and Southeast Asia, has been examined in detail.

Blending history with science, the book delves into the chemical composition of Areca nut, its potential harms, and its therapeutic properties. It presents objective excerpts from reputed scientific reports, by offering a balanced view of modern research. In the conclusion, the book identifies the areas where further scientific scrutiny and systematic research is needed to understand the potential benefits of Areca nut consumption.



In ancient India, China, and across Southeast Asia, no religious ceremony, grand feast, or social gathering was complete without the offering of *Tāmbūla* – a traditional blend of Areca nut, betel leaf, and slaked lime. Once revered as a sacred offering to deities, a key ingredient in traditional medicines, and a symbol of hospitality and social bond, the Areca nut is now labelled a “suspected carcinogen”.

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Dr. Prasanna Belur is a Chemical Engineer with a PhD, specialising in Biochemical Engineering. He is currently serving as a **Professor at the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Surathkal, India**. His area of research interests includes microbial production of enzymes, and production and application of antioxidants and enzymes in food. Since 2021, Dr. Belur has been conducting research on extracting valuable antioxidants from Areca nut and exploring their use in the food industry.

He has published about 120 research papers in reputed Journals and conferences, authored 4 books and book chapters, guided 12 PhD scholars, filed 5 Patent applications, and holds 3 granted patents.

Dr. Belur is a recipient of the prestigious *"Khorana Fellowship"* awarded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Govt. of India and the *"Award for outstanding Research Publications"* conferred by the Vision Group on Science & Technology (VGST), Govt. of Karnataka.

In addition to his academic and research work, Dr. Belur authors a **Blog titled "Areca Story"** (**https://arecastory.blogspot.com/**), which has attracted readers from more than 30 countries.