

# Just plug your TV into a banana tree

TV aerals are a blot on every urban skyline. Now an Indian scientist has come up with a way of dispensing with aerals: you just plug into a tree instead. **RADHAKRISHNA RAO** reports...

DR. Shiv Prasad Kosta, a bearded space scientist of international standing, is a staunch champion of the natural way of living. He has found that plants and trees can transmit electromagnetic impulses like the metallic antenna used for TV signal reception.

Date palm, betel brush, papaya and coconut, and many more are natural substitutes for the man-made metallic antenna.

Aerials on housetops have become an ugly feature of the metropolitan scene all over the world. Kosta's innovation could eliminate this eyesore and bring about an ecological revolution in the cities of India.

Kosta is Deputy Director of the Indian Space Research Organisation's Satellite Centre on the outskirts of Bangalore. He believes he can effect a kind of "green revolution" and his findings have been received enthusiastically by West Germany's two leading telecommunications journals.

He is now communicating his research findings to technical journals and research groups round the world.

His discovery is based on the fact that green vegetation can sustain and propagate electromagnetic waves, in which form audio and video signals are transmitted.

Certain geometrically-shaped green vegetation on account of their water and organic content can sustain, propagate and radiate electromagnetic waves from their structure when suitably excited.

Kosta has devised an easy-to-use technique of connecting the TV to tree branches or leaves through an inexpensive cable. He says: "All you do is prick the TV cable to the stem or leaf of the plant".

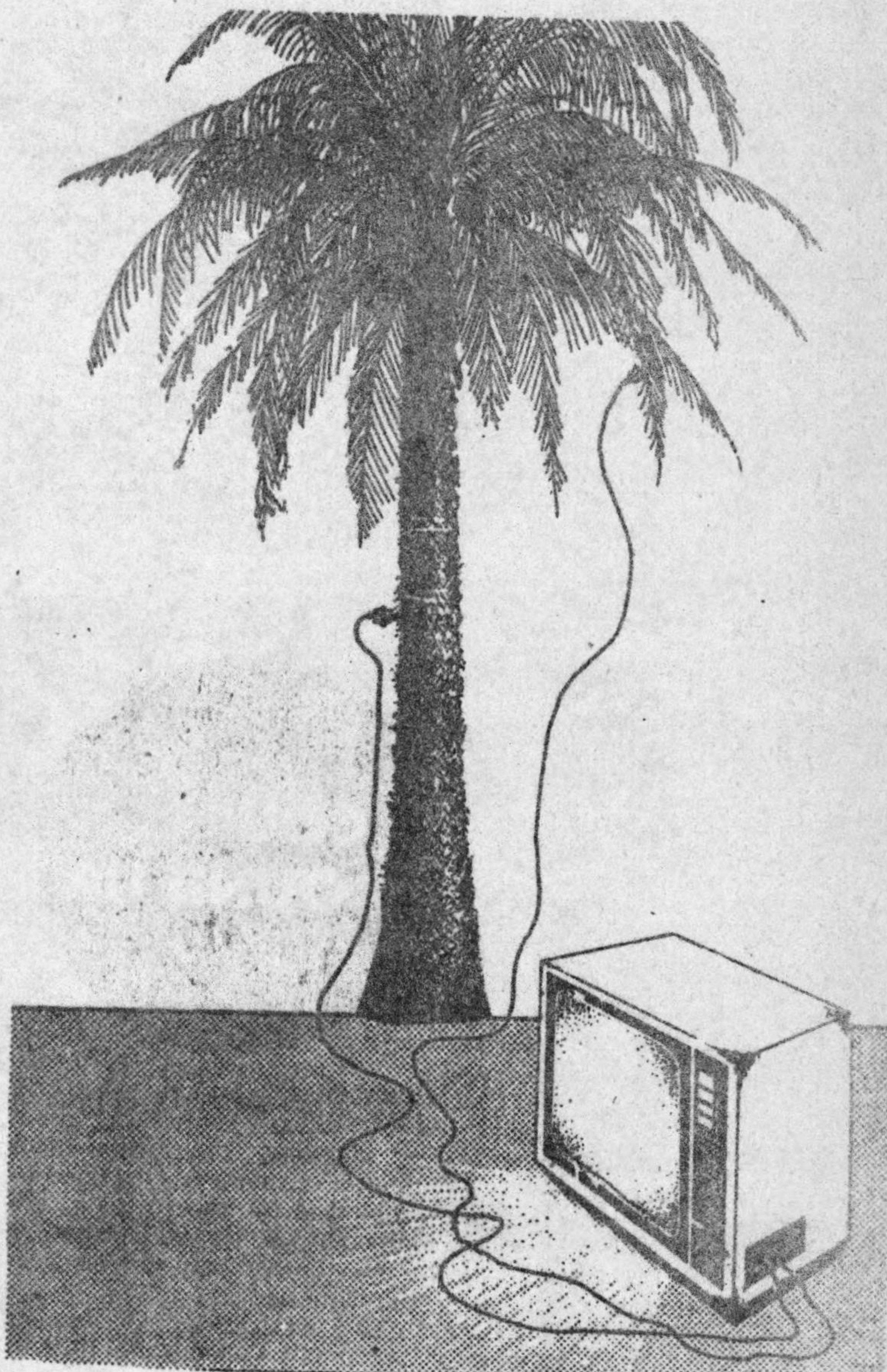
In a demonstration in Bangalore he showed how a TV connected to the stem of a banana plant can receive pictures of high clarity.

According to Dr. Kosta, it is the moist loop of the plants and trees that allows the transmission of electromagnetic impulses to the ground from where they are picked up by "suitably connected" cables.

More research is needed to neutralise the effects of wind, storm, rain and snow on clear reception.

But Dr Kosta believes he can take his work a stage further by using green vegetation as substitute for telephone cables.

Dr. Kosta is a writer as well as everything else. He has produced several technical books and poems — most of them centring on space themes in Hindi. A couple of his books in Hindi recently won state awards.



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