

## A NEW LEAF AND SHEATH BLIGHT DISEASE OF RIBBON GRASS

**D**uring September 1989, a new leaf and sheath blight disease was noticed on ribbon grass (*Chlorophytum campen* L.) grown at the NARP (SS) farm at Kottarakkara, Kerala. Infected plants showed lesions measuring 1-2 cm x 0.1-0.3 cm on the leaves and leaf sheaths. The initial symptoms appeared as small elliptical or oval spots, and became greyish white in the centre with dark brown margin, which gradually enlarged. In severe cases of disease incidence, the spots coalesced involving large portions of the leaves causing blighting of the leaves. The lesions on the leaf sheath often appeared near the soil and later spread to other parts of the plant.

Specimens of the disease were brought to the laboratory and the

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pathogen was isolated on potato dextrose agar. The fungus produced fluffy white mycelium at first, later turning brown coloured with dark brown sclerotia. The pathogen was identified as *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn.

Pathogenicity tests were conducted by placing culture bits and sclerotia on the leaves and sheaths of healthy ribbon grass plants. Typical symptoms were produced within four to five days of inoculation. Cross inoculations with the isolate under study and that from sheath blight affected rice plants yielded positive results.

A perusal of the literature revealed that there is no report of leaf and sheath blight of ribbon grass caused by *Rhizoctonia solani*.

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