



The Rubber Board NEWS BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2023



HIGHLIGHTS

- **183rd Meeting of the Rubber Board**
- **Grower's Corner**
 - Mulching
 - Shading and whitewashing
 - Irrigation in rubber nurseries
- **Training Programmes**
 - Testing of DRC for Skill Development
 - Dry Rubber Goods Manufacture
 - Pest and Disease Control
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- **Rubber Price**

183rd Meeting of THE RUBBER BOARD



The 183rd meeting of the Rubber Board was held at Board's Head Office, Kottayam on 24 January 2023. In the meeting Dr. Sawar Dhanania, Chairman of the Rubber Board said that The Rubber Board would continue its functions with the current status as such and its efforts to stabilize the natural rubber (NR) prices with the cooperation of allied sectors would also continue. The central government has banned the import of scrap rubber, understanding the difficulties faced by farmers in the face of falling rubber prices already requested the Central Government to raise the import duty on compounded rubber. If Rubber Producers' Societies have modern warehouses with enough storage facilities, when rubber prices fall, farmers can store their produce without selling it until the domestic market improves. The Furniture and Fittings Skill Council have the latest technologies in wood processing and designing wood-based articles.

The Board can use their expertise to exploit the potentials of the rubber wood industry at the maximum. The Rubber Board has been conducting grower meetings on 'Farmer Producer Organizations and their scope in value addition' at various regions before their launch. The Board can also engage in MoUs with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Institute of Technology, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education etc., to explore the opportunities of NR in their related areas, Dr. Dhanania added.

Dr. K.N. Raghavan, IRS, Executive Director, presented the report on the current domestic status of Natural Rubber (NR) for April to November 2022. NR production in the country for April to November is provisionally estimated as 517,000 tonnes, with a growth of 14.9 per cent compared to 450,000 tonnes during the corresponding period of last year.

Interventions of the Board in promoting rainguarding, controlling diseases, adopting untapped areas etc., contributed to the increase in production.

Consumption of NR for April to November is provisionally estimated as 898,000 tonnes compared to 827,000 tonnes during the same period in the previous year, registering a growth of 8.6 per cent. The auto tyre sector registered 4.4 per cent growth from April to November, while the general rubber goods sector registered 20.2 per cent growth. Auto-tyre manufacturing sector accounted for 71 per cent of the total NR consumed in the country from April to November. The revised projection of production and consumption of NR for 2022-23 is 830,000 tonnes and

1,310,000 tonnes, respectively. Import of NR increased to 378,481 tonnes from April to November compared to 343,604 tonnes during the corresponding period of last year. 89 per cent of import was in the form of block rubber, Dr. Raghavan elaborated.

Mr. N.K. Premachandran (Member of Parliament - Lok Sabha), Mr. Vinay Dinu Tendulkar (Member of Parliament - Rajya Sabha), Mr. Prasenjit Biswas IFS (Rtd), Mr. P. Raveendran, Mr. C.S. Soman Pillai, Mr. Anil Kumar G., Mr. N. Hari, Mr. Korah. C. George, Mr. K.A. Unnikrishnan, Mr. M.P. Rajeevan, Mr. T.P. Georgekutty, Mr. Keshava Bhat Muliya, are the Board members who attended the meeting.

INCREASE IN IMPORT DUTY ON COMPOUND RUBBER WILL BENEFIT STAKEHOLDERS

Import duty on compound rubber declared by the Union Government in the recent budget will benefit the stakeholders and the allegations contrary to it are baseless, said Dr. K.N. Raghavan, Executive Director of the Rubber Board. He was commenting on the allegation of the United Planters Association of South India (UPASI) that the decision of the Central Government to increase the import duty of compound rubber would not be beneficial to the rubber farming sector as it would only apply to the country belonging to the category of 'Most Favored Nation' (MFN). The duty hike would not apply to the ASEAN countries involved in the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), so the import would continue. This statement does not cover the facts Dr. Raghavan said.

The Union government fixed the import duty of Natural Rubber (NR) at 25 per cent or Rs. 30 per kg, whichever is lower. Compound Rubber is an intermediate product used in manufacturing rubber products and is made by mixing NR with synthetic rubber, carbon black, chemicals, steel, textiles etc., based on the type of final product. Import duty of compound rubber was 10 per cent till 01 February 2023. The sudden increase in the import of Compound Rubber (from 57,000 MT in 2017-18 to 114,000 MT in 2021-22) has given rise to the suspicion that unscrupulous persons are trying to circumvent the higher import duty of NR by importing NR under the guise of Compound Rubber after doing nominal mixing. Import duty of compound Rubber has been increased to make it on par with NR in Union Budget presented on 01 February 2023.

NR has been kept outside the concessions provided to other nations through most preferential

trade agreements. There is no preferential rate of duty for NR in FTA with ASEAN nations, where most of the import of NR occurs. However, the FTA provides a preferential duty rate to compound rubber imported from ASEAN nations, ranging from 0 to 5 per cent. Presently, around 55 per cent of import of compound rubber is from ASEAN countries, while the remaining 45 per cent are from countries such as the USA, Germany, South Korea, Italy, France, the UK etc. Hence contention of UPASI is correct to the extent that some quantities of compound rubber can continue to be imported at concessional rates, subject to these imports following the procedures stipulated in FTA and producing the required documents. However, they have lost sight of the fact that we cannot change preferential rates of import duty through the Union budget, and that can be done only through renegotiation of FTA, which is a bilateral matter. Further, even for the renegotiation of the FTA, we need first to increase our tariff rate, which has been done now.

Further, compound rubber is made through a simple mixing process which can be done using mixing units. Many mixing units in Kerala are idle as most manufacturers prefer to import compound rubber. This increase in duty will help revive domestic mixing units and increase demand for domestic rubber.

The fact that compound rubber can continue to be imported at the preferential rate under the prevailing FTA was pointed out by the Rubber Board during meetings with stakeholders. But the request for increasing the tariff rate was pressed upon as this is a necessary first step to prevent circumvention of duty, Dr. K.N. Raghavan elaborated.

Important farm activities in February

**GROWER'S
CORNER**

Mulching



The soil around the plants should be mulched properly with cessation of rains to conserve soil moisture, maintain optimum soil temperature and control weed growth. Mulching acts as an effective soil conservation measure and adds to the fertility of soil. Dried plant materials or plastic can be used as mulch. Polypropylene woven fabric acts as good mulch material for young rubber plants, especially in dry areas.

Shading and whitewashing



Young plants during the year of planting are provided with artificial shade during summer with plaited coconut leaves or gunny bags. Contact shading (spraying of leaves with 10% china clay) of young rubber plants is also beneficial in reducing the radiation effect and transpiration loss. From the second year onwards, brown portion of the main stem is whitewashed using lime or china clay to prevent sun scorch till the canopy develop partial shade.

Irrigation in rubber nurseries

Irrigation will be essential if soil moisture is low. Daily watering may be preferred initially. Later frequency of irrigation can be reduced to once in two to three days. Summer irrigation helps to increase dry matter production and healthy growth of seedlings. When sufficiently grown, seedlings can be used for budding.



TRAINING PROGRAMMES OF THE RUBBER BOARD

1. Training on Testing of DRC for Skill Development from 13-15 February 2023

The three day training is on testing of DRC of field latex/concentrated latex as per standards. The fee prescribed for this course is Rs.3000/- + GST 18%. Medium of instruction is English. Those who are interested may register in the link <https://bit.ly/3feCcVj>

2. RM 02- Short term training on Dry Rubber Goods Manufacture from 13-17 February 2023

Entrepreneurs/interested persons from dry rubber product manufacturing industries can compounding ingredients, principles of rubber compounding, moulded, extruded and calendared goods, Process control tests and vulcanisates testing, production, planning and control etc. The fee prescribed for this course is Rs.5000/- (Non-residential) + 18% GST. Medium of instruction is English

3. Training on Pest and Disease Control on 21 February 2023

Training is on diseases and pests affecting rubber and methods to control them. Farmers, interested persons from plantation sector can apply for this course. The fee prescribed for this course is Rs.500/- + 18% GST

4. Training on Planting & upkeep on 28 February 2023

Farmers and interested persons from plantation sector can apply for this course. The course content includes methods of planting, up keeping, maintenance, intercropping, weeding etc. The fee prescribed for this course is Rs.500/- + 18% GST. For details of the on-going/upcoming training programmes of NIRT

A) Please follow the Facebook page of Rubber Training Institute: <https://www.facebook.com/RubberBoardofIndia>

B) Contact WhatsApp numbers 04812353201 (Industrial programmes) and 04812351313 (Plantation programmes).

| DAILY NATURAL RUBBER PRICE - JANUARY 2023 [Price/Rs/Qtl] | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|
| DATE | DOMESTIC | | | | | INTERNATIONAL | |
| | Kottayam | | | Kochi | | Bangkok | |
| | RSS-4 | RSS-5 | 60% LATEX | RSS-4 | RSS-5 | RSS-3 | RSS-4 |
| 01-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday |
| 02-01-2023 | 13750 | 13250 | 9035 | 13750 | 13250 | Holiday | Holiday |
| 03-01-2023 | 13750 | 13300 | 9035 | 13750 | 13300 | 13490 | 13419 |
| 04-01-2023 | 13800 | 13400 | 9090 | 13800 | 13400 | 13628 | 13556 |
| 05-01-2023 | 13800 | 13400 | 9090 | 13800 | 13400 | 13710 | 13637 |
| 06-01-2023 | 13750 | 13450 | 9140 | 13750 | 13450 | 13680 | 13607 |
| 07-01-2023 | 13750 | 13450 | Holiday | 13750 | 13450 | Holiday | Holiday |
| 08-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday |
| 09-01-2023 | 13750 | 13500 | 9245 | 13750 | 13500 | 13650 | 13577 |
| 10-01-2023 | 13800 | 13500 | 9300 | 13800 | 13500 | 13803 | 13730 |
| 11-01-2023 | 13900 | 13600 | 9300 | 13900 | 13600 | 13816 | 13742 |
| 12-01-2023 | 14000 | 13600 | 9405 | 14000 | 13600 | 13722 | 13649 |
| 13-01-2023 | 14000 | 13600 | 9405 | 14000 | 13600 | 13771 | 13698 |
| 14-01-2023 | 13950 | 13600 | Holiday | 13950 | 13600 | Holiday | Holiday |
| 15-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday |
| 16-01-2023 | 13950 | 13600 | 9405 | 13950 | 13600 | 13772 | 13698 |
| 17-01-2023 | 14000 | 13700 | 9405 | 14000 | 13700 | 14000 | 13926 |
| 18-01-2023 | 14100 | 13700 | 9405 | 14100 | 13700 | 14085 | 14011 |
| 19-01-2023 | 14100 | 13800 | 9455 | 14100 | 13800 | 14235 | 14160 |
| 20-01-2023 | 14100 | 13800 | 9455 | 14100 | 13800 | 14229 | 14155 |
| 21-01-2023 | 14100 | 13800 | Holiday | 14100 | 13800 | Holiday | Holiday |
| 22-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday |
| 23-01-2023 | 14150 | 13850 | 9455 | 14150 | 13850 | 14559 | 14485 |
| 24-01-2023 | 14200 | 13900 | 9455 | 14200 | 13900 | 14833 | 14758 |
| 25-01-2023 | 14250 | 13950 | 9565 | 14250 | 13950 | 15166 | 15091 |
| 26-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | 14851 | 14780 |
| 27-01-2023 | 14250 | 14000 | 9565 | 14250 | 14000 | 15508 | 15433 |
| 28-01-2023 | 14250 | 14000 | Holiday | 14250 | 14000 | Holiday | Holiday |
| 29-01-2023 | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday | Holiday |
| 30-01-2023 | 14250 | 14000 | 9615 | 14250 | 14000 | 15403 | 15328 |
| 31-01-2023 | 14200 | 13950 | 9615 | 14200 | 13950 | 15364 | 15289 |
| Average | 13996 | 13668 | 9354 | 13996 | 13668 | 14251 | 14178 |