

RUBBER PRODUCTS

Kerala is the top rubber-producing state in India, accounting for about 74% of the country's total rubber output. The natural rubber industry in Kerala has been in a severe crisis since 2012, primarily due to a significant drop in rubber prices, rising production costs, and declining yields from ageing rubber plantations. This crisis has impacted both large estates and smallholders. Many current planters in Kerala are holding off on tapping their trees in anticipation of better prices in the future. Despite challenges, the rubber plantation sector in Kerala remains strong compared to other crops in the state.

Natural latex is used by the people to make a lot of products like a raincoat, seals for engines, manufacturing sheets of rubber, footwear, toys, equipment for medical industry. There is an excellent demand in the transport sector, and there is an urge for the rubber industry to produce more as there is growing need for it. Even the aviation industry uses rubber as they need tires which is of high quality and specific to that industry. The rubber tree is very versatile as once they stop producing natural latex, they can then be used to make furniture. There are other uses of rubber too like shoes, eraser, balloons, equipment for sports, lifeguards on ships, aircraft, etc.

The employment opportunities are numerous given that the rubber sector is growing at a fast rate and the estimated growth is close to 8% every year. The industry will see tremendous demand and hence there will be a lot of development regarding exports. Moreover, the automobile industry which contributes majorly to rubber industry is growing, and thus there will be more demand for it even locally. The per capita consumption of rubber in India is only 800 grams compared to 12 to 14 kilos in Japan, USA and Europe. So far as consumption of rubber products is concerned, India is far from attaining any saturation level. This is another factor leading to tremendous growth prospects of the industry in the years to come.