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Title: Need to restrict the import of rubber.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): The Indian rubber market is on the decline over the past two years. The cost of 1 kg of rubber which was Rs 240/-in April 2011 has come down to Rs. 144 in May 2014. Such drastic fall in the price by more than 60% has made the crop economically unviable. The main reason for the fall in rubber price is excessive imports without taking into account the supply-demand gap.

While the country has produced 8.07 lakh mt tonnes of rubber during 2013 the consumption was *9.55* lakh Mt tonnes leaving a gap of 1.48 mt tonnes. Instead of bridging the gap by imports, the actual imported quantity was 3.00 lakh Mt tonnes leaving a surplus supply of 1.52 Mt tonnes. So import restrictions form the crux of the issue.

Rubber being agricultural product, WTO norms permit imposition of import duty from 20 to 70 percent. Presently what is levied for rubber is a minimum duty of 20 percent only. It has to be enhanced to 50 percent.

No import of rubber during peak rubber production season (September- January) is to be allowed. The number of discharge ports should be limited so that buyers may be tempted to utilize more domestic rubber. 100 percent inspection has to be employed to avoid import of inferior quality at lesser price. A monitoring mechanism to avoid excess imports is to be created. Price stabilization scheme for rubber may be implemented by Government of India. For this purpose a corpus fund of Rs 1000 crore may be created.

I request your good self to kindly look into the above suggestions and take immediate steps to provide support to the rubber farmers.

HON. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 3.00 p.m.

14.17 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till

Fifteen of the Clock.

15.00 hrs

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Fifteen of the Clock.

(Dr. M. Thambidurai *in the Chair*)

...(Interruptions)

At this stage, Shri Kalyan Banerjee and some other hon. Members came

and stood on the floor near the Table.)

...(Interruptions)