

Sixteenth Lok Sabha

an>

Title: Need to frame an appropriate National Rubber Policy

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to seek an intervention of the Central Government to address a longstanding grievance of the natural rubber growers of this country.

The rubber farmers have been consistently pressing for a fair price for their produce. The problems have been compounded by indiscriminate import duties. In June, 2014, the Central Government has constituted an Expert Committee to find the challenges and opportunities in the production of rubber and the impact of import on the domestic prices of rubber. The Government of India, on the Floor of this House, has declared that it will formulate a policy within six months. Almost, three to four years have been lapsed but till now there is no policy framed to protect the rubber growers in this country, especially, in Kerala.

Madam, about four years back, the price of natural rubber was Rs. 240 per kilogram which has come down to Rs. 120 per kilogram. Leave alone the surplus part of it; it has come down even below. This is mainly because of the indiscriminate import of natural rubber throughout last three or four years. In the last three years, about Rs. 3,335 crore has been collected by the Central Government through this Import Duty. Actually speaking, this is the sweat and hardwork of the rubber growers and it belongs to them.

Therefore, I would request the Central Government to pass on this money to the rubber growers so that a minimum price of Rs. 200 per kilogram should be provided to them.

Lastly, now, the Central Government has declared the minimum import price for cardamom, pepper and also for areca nut. I request that a minimum import price of Rs. 200 will be fixed by the Central Government to protect the rubber growers who are in distress now.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N.K. Premachandran, Shri Mullappally Ramachandran, Shri Anto Antony, Shri P.K. Biju, Dr. A. Sampath, Shrimati P.K. Shreemathi Teacher, Adv. Joice George and Shri M.B. Rajesh are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Jose K. Mani.