

India International Trade Fair and North East Craft Fair, etc.; besides, the five emporias of the Corporation located at Chennai, Calcutta, Bangalore, Guwahati and Shillong did their usual marketing operation.

Price of Rubber

546. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:
SHRI N.N. KRISHNA DAS:
SHRI P.C. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of Natural Rubber has steeply gone down;

(b) if so, the price of Natural Rubber during the last three years, month-wise; and

(c) whether any steps have been taken to help the farmers of Natural Rubber who are in great distress?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement showing domestic and international price of Natural Rubber for the last three years is enclosed.

(c) In order to arrest the declining trend in the price of Natural Rubber (NR), the State Trading Corporation, on the directions of the Central Government have procured 9596 MTs of Natural Rubber from the domestic market during 1997-98. To further improve the price situation of NR in the domestic market, the Government have recently directed the STC to procure additional 20,000 MTs of Natural Rubber from the market. A study into the cost of production of NR has also been undertaken for revising the Benchmark price of Natural Rubber.

Statement

Prices of Rubber

(Rs./Quintal)

Month	India (RSS-4)	International (RSS-3)
1	2	3
1996		
January	4273	4987
February	4673	5388
March	5195	5565
April	5441	5640
May	6047	5275
June	6171	4759
July	5231	4154
August	4295	4005
September	4197	4370
October	4694	4798
November	4925	5498
December	5598	5503

1	2	3
1996		
January	5587	5327
February	5249	5488
March	5007	5162
April	5005	4790
May	5252	4929
June	5385	4911
July	5121	4537
August	5033	4409
September	5060	4440
October	5121	4236
November	4897	4467
December	4752	4406
1997		
January	4700	4327
February	4286	4305
March	4199	4343
April	3979	4085
May	4483	3920
June	4224	3933
July	3937	3314
August	4298	3256
September	3892	3127
October	3495	3091
November	3389	3026
December	2970	2637
1998		
January	2890	2426
February	2700	2963
March	2700	2867
April	2663	2988

Regulatory Authority to oversee Financial Reforms

547. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government for setting up of an autonomous new regulatory authority to oversee the implementation of financial sector reforms;

(b) if so, the details of the functions to be assigned to the proposed regulatory authority indicating *inter-alia* the necessity and the reasons for setting up of such an authority; and

(c) the time by which the proposed regulatory authority is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.