

Title: Urged upon the Government to withdraw the order, issued through the Director General, Foreign Trade relating to import of natural rubber latex to advanced license-holding industrialists.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (IDUKKI): Sir, the Government of India has allowed the import of natural rubber latex through the Director General, Foreign Trade to advanced licensed holding industrialists. This is a totally unwarranted step because the price of natural rubber latex has remained the same for the last two months and, in fact, it is also going down. This order will ruin the whole lot of small farmers and also public sector and private sector latex producing factories. This is a life and death issue for the ordinary small and medium rubber farmers of this country especially for the small and medium rubber cultivators of Kerala because 95 per cent of the rubber is being produced by the ordinary farmers of Kerala.

So, I urge upon the Government to withdraw this order that has been issued through the DGFT to import natural rubber latex. That is all and thank you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members Shri Kodikunnil Suresh and Shri P.C. Thomas have also given notices on the same subject. They can associate themselves with Shri Francis George.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (ADOOR): Sir, the Government should immediately intervene in the matter and stop the import of latex and natural rubber and protect the interests of the farmers. Thank you.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir

MR. SPEAKER : You can also associate yourself.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, there is one more aspect. This import of rubber was actually stopped. Now, as per the policy, there is no import. But now, as per this particular order, the rubber latex is being imported. This is the same thing. So, the purpose of this will be to defeat the policy itself. So, some immediate steps have to be taken. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, this is a very serious issue on which we would like to have the response of the Government.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, this affects thousands of farmers of Kerala. This should be withdrawn. I also associate myself with Shri Francis George on the subject. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, this is a very serious issue.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : Sir, we have enough of production in our country. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, hon. Minister Shri Pramod Mahajan is here.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : Sir, we want the response from the Government.

SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN (CALICUT): Sir, the Government should respond. This is a very serious matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, this is on the decrease in the price of rubber. Is there any response from the Government?

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : This is outside the policy and going away from the policy. ...*(Interruptions)* You must do something. It comes under the Ministry of Commerce. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. I am asking the Government for its reaction.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I will check up with the concerned Minister. I do not know about it. I will talk to the concerned Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*