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Title: Need to protect the interest of rubber growers by maintaining the import duty of natural rubber at 20 percent.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMATHITTA): The interest of rubber growers in the country needs to be protected by maintaining the import duty of natural rubber at 20 per cent. Tyre Manufacturers Associations has filed a petition in the Court, seeking Government's intervention to reduce import duty of natural rubber from 20% and to envisage import of 2.00 lakh tonnes natural rubber with zero percent import duty. This will lead to collapse in the prices of natural rubber and will affect the economy of Kerala besides leading to farmers' suicides.

Prices of natural rubber will be always high in monsoon, as this season is difficult to extract latex. But this condition will be over in few days with the increased supply of latex.

Therefore, I request the Government to sustain the present rate of import duty at 20 per cent.