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Title: Need to address the problems of rubber growers in the country.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMTHITTA): I request the Government to kindly redress the grievances faced by the rubber growers in the country who have been hit hard by continuous fall in prices and shrinking assistance from the Government. Prices of natural rubber in domestic markets plummet due to the massive flow of natural rubber from abroad. Rubber cultivation will be remunerative if the growers get Rs. 200 per/kilogram of latex, however, growers are getting Rs 130 per kg. The Government has already rolled back 15 types of subsidies. The Rubber Board is paralyzed, as the fund allocation to the Board has been curtailed drastically. The Government is closing down field offices and regional offices, which were constituted to extend technical assistance to rubber growers. Therefore, the Government has to earmark 10 per cent of taxes collected from the rubber sector for resuming subsidies and procuring natural rubber at a rate higher than that of Minimum Support Price (MSP).