

Title: Need to declare support price for natural rubber.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN (KASARGOD): I would like to invite the attention of the Government to the fall in price of natural rubber and to save the farmers in Kerala by declaring Support Price for rubber.

The demand of rubber producers to declare support price for natural rubber has been rejected by the Central Government. The Government is of the view that this will cause heavy burden on the exchequer. The Ministry of Commerce has opined that fixing a support price for important cash crops will not be lawful. It is also contended that the proclamation of benchmark price for natural rubber recently announced by the Government, is sufficient to console the farmers.

B The Government is following the liberalisation policy, as a result of which trade in this country is regulated by foreign monopolies. The poor farmers are made to suffer. This has led to mass suicides of cotton farmers in Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country. Though the rubber farmers were getting a fair price for rubber till the middle of last year, it has been considerably lowered for the last 17 months. International market price of rubber is less than what prevails in India. Moreover, synthetic rubber is widely used in the manufacture of tyres. Ever since the control on rubber and rubber tyre was abolished, the rubber price started falling. If support price for rubber is announced, the farmers can receive at least minimum support price.

It is, therefore, just and necessary that the Central Government declares the Support Price for rubber without any further delay.