

Title: Need to check steep decline in the prices of natural rubber particularly in Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI N. DENNIS (NAGARCOIR) :

The rubber growers of our country are facing grave crisis due to the steep fall in the price of the rubber. The small and the marginal farmers are the worst affected. The cost of production of rubber has increased, but there is steep decline in the price of rubber. The most common grade RMA was fetching about Rs.64 per Kg. in 1995 and it has fallen to Rs. 48 per kg. in 1996 and today it has fallen to Rs. 25 per kg. wage of an average worker is Rs. 65. The cost of production is about Rs. 35 per Kg. To get over the crisis, the import of the natural rubber, synthetic polyurethane and used tyre and Tubes has to be stopped.

Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu is a rubber growing area. It occupies the highest position in quality and in per acre production in the country. Kerala Govt. has arranged for the purchase of natural rubber through STCL at remunerative price. But the rubber growers of Kanyakumari district are not getting such protection. So several rubber growers have stopped tapping, as the cost of production is higher than the price of the rubber. This problem has become the most sensitive concern of the people of this region who largely depend on natural rubber plantation.

I urge upon the Govt. to take urgent steps to redress the grievance of the rubber growers particularly of Kanyakumari district to get over the current crisis of steep decline of the rubber price.