



RUBBER BOARD OF INDIA - ECONOMY

NEWS: The Rubber Board of India has introduced two significant initiatives, **iSNR (Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber)** and **INR Konnect**, as part of its efforts to enhance India's rubber industry globally and boost domestic production.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

iSNR: Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber

- **Objective:** Align Indian rubber production with the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) standards and introduces traceability certification.
- **Benefit:** Facilitates easier access to European Union markets for stakeholders in the rubber supply chain.

INR Konnect: Web-Based Productivity Platform

- **Objective:** Connects owners of untapped rubber plantations with adopters to improve productivity.
- **Features:**
 - **Certified Network:** Rubber Board certifies growers, adopters, and tappers for credibility.
 - **Training:** Offers training in production management and sustainable practices.
 - **Database:** Maintains a comprehensive list of certified tappers.
- **Significance:** Addresses the challenge of underutilized plantations, which comprise 20-25% of India's rubber holdings, often neglected due to low rubber prices and absentee ownership.

India's Rubber Industry

- **Brief:** India is the third-largest producer of natural rubber globally, following Thailand (1st) and Indonesia (2nd). India is the fourth-largest consumer of natural rubber.
 - Kerala accounts for over 90% of India's natural rubber production. Other states include Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Tripura, Assam, and Meghalaya.
- **Key Challenges:** Climate Change impacting yields, competition from other rubber-producing countries, and labour shortages.
- **Government Initiatives:** **National Rubber Policy 2019** aims to enhance rubber production, improve productivity, and strengthen the domestic rubber industry.
 - **Sustainable & Inclusive Development of Natural Rubber Sector Scheme** focuses on promoting sustainable rubber cultivation practices and improving the livelihoods of rubber growers.



- **INROAD Project:** Focuses on maximizing the potential of untapped rubber plantations.

About Rubber Plantation

Scientific Name: *Hevea brasiliensis*.

Origin: Native to the Amazon River Basin.

Introduction: Brought to tropical Asia and Africa by the British during colonial times.

Rubber Extraction: Obtained as latex, a milky fluid that flows when the bark of the tree is tapped.

1. Latex is collected and processed to make natural rubber.

Climatic Conditions Required:

1. Requires a tropical climate with annual rainfall of 200–300 cm, Temperature needed is 25°C to 34°C.

2. Grows best in deep, well-drained, lateritic soil. Requires good water retention capacity and organic matter.

About Rubber Board of India

Brief: The Rubber Board of India is a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

1. Established under the Rubber Act, 1947, the board focuses on the development, promotion, and research of the rubber industry in India.

Headquarters: Kottayam, Kerala.

Mission and Objectives

1. Development of the Rubber Sector.

2. Facilitate price stabilization and market access.

3. Promote domestic and export markets for natural rubber.

4. Undertake research on rubber cultivation, disease control, and high-yield varieties.

5. Provide training to rubber growers, tappers, and processors.

What is the Current Rubber Landscape in India?

▪ About Natural Rubber:

- Natural rubber is a versatile and essential raw material derived from the **latex or milky sap of certain plant species**, primarily the rubber tree, scientifically known as *Hevea brasiliensis*.

- This latex contains a **complex mixture of organic compounds**, with the primary component being a polymer called **polyisoprene**.



RUBBER PRODUCING STATES



▪ Growing Conditions:

- Tropical climate with annual rainfall of **2000 – 4500 mm** is suited for cultivation.
- It requires **deep and lateritic fertile soil with an acidic pH of 4.5 to 6.0** and highly deficient in available phosphorus.
- Minimum and maximum temperature should be ranged from **25 to 34°C with 80 % relative humidity is ideal for cultivation.**
 - Regions prone to heavy winds should be avoided.
- Bright sunshine amounting to about 2000 hours per annum **at the rate of 6 hours per day through all the months.**



▪ Rubber Production and Consumption:

- India is **currently the world's fifth largest producer of natural rubber** while it also remains the second biggest consumer of the material globally. (About **40% of India's total natural rubber consumption is currently met through imports**)

▪ Rubber Distribution:

- As of now, India boasts approximately **8.5 lakh hectares of rubber plantations**.
- Major rubber producing states include: **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Assam**.
 - The lion's share of this rubber farming, nearly **5 lakh hectares, is concentrated in the southern states of Kerala and the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu**.
 - Additionally, **Tripura contributes around 1 lakh hectares** to the rubber production landscape

▪ Major Applications:

- **Tyre Manufacturing:** Rubber is a key component in tire production due to its excellent grip and wear resistance.
- **Automotive Parts:** Used in seals, gaskets, hoses, and various components for vehicles.
- **Footwear:** Commonly used in shoe soles for its cushioning and slip-resistant properties.
- **Industrial Products:** Found in conveyor belts, hoses, and machinery components.
- **Medical Devices:** Used in gloves, syringe plungers, and medical equipment.
- **Consumer Goods:** Used in products like balloons, erasers, and household gloves.
- **Sporting Goods:** Found in items like tennis balls, golf balls, and protective gear.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/rubber-board-launches-projects-for-raising-global-value-and-ramping-up-domestic-production/article69104698.ece>