

INDIA RUBBER MEET 2018
Rubber Board, Kottayam-686 002, Kerala, India.
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Press Release

Centre to come out with rubber policy to benefit the entire value chain - Suresh Prabhu

Kochi
30 October 2018

The Central Government is working on an aggressive way to come out with a rubber policy to benefit the entire rubber value chain, said Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry in his video message displayed at the inaugural session of India Rubber Meet (IRM 2018). The Central Government along with State Governments of Kerala and Tripura has formed a taskforce for the purpose and their report is ready. He also assured that action would be taken on whatever deliberations, discussions and findings were made in IRM 2018, for the benefit of the rubber growers and the industry and for accelerating economic growth.

Multifaceted approach combining institutional, developmental and regulatory measures to research, innovations and quality upgradation; skill generation and improvement; and modern modes of trading is essential to ensure sustainability of entire rubber value chain, said Ms. Sheela Thomas, Former Secretary General, Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries and Former Chairman, Rubber Board in her speech in the inaugural session of IRM 2018. Rubber industry value chain in India annually produces items worth around Rs 85,000 Crore with annual export reaching Rs 19,000 Crore. There is vast potential for the industry to grow in terms of range of products, value addition, technology upgradation, quality enhancement, export and employment generation. We cannot overlook the vulnerability of weak and marginal sections of rubber value chain in restructuring to suit to the new environment. The precarious situation of small and marginal rubber growers to low and volatile rubber prices, low productivity, rising costs, climate change etc. needs special mention. Viability of economic sectors depends on net returns, the maximisation of which needs adoption of measures to enhance cost and quality competitiveness. This is true of rubber producing and consuming sectors as well, said Ms. Sheela Thomas. She also lighted the lamp to make the opening of IRM 2018.

ORGANISERS | The Rubber Board (Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India) | All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA) | Association of Latex Producers of India (ALPI) | Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) | Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA) | Block Rubber Processors Association of India (BRPA) | CAPEXIL (Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India) | ExxonMobil | GRP Ltd. | Harrisons Malayalam Ltd. | Indian Cycle and Rickshaw Tyre Manufacturers Association (ICRTMA) | Indian / International Rubber Journal | Indian Rubber Dealers Federation (IRDF) | Indian Rubber Growers Association (IRGA) | Indian Rubber Institute (IRI) | Indian Rubber Manufacturers Research Association (IRMRA) | Indian Synthetic Rubber Private Limited (ISRPL) | Kerala State Co-operative Rubber Marketing Federation (Rubber Mark) | Latex Rubber Thread Manufacturers Association (LARTMA) | National Federation of Rubber Producers Societies (NFRPS) | Reliance Industries Ltd. | Rubber Asia | Rubber Skill Development Council (RSDC) | The Cochin Rubber Merchants Association (CRMA) | United Planters Association of Southern India (UPASI)



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The India Rubber Meet (IRM), the biennial event organized by the Rubber Board in partnership with stakeholder associations in rubber and related sectors, is being currently held at Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty on 30 and 31 October 2018.

Mr. D. Anandan IAS (Chairman & Executive Director, Rubber Board and Chairman of the Organising Committee) welcoming the delegates of the IRM 2018 said, “The prospects of rubber sector is closely linked to macroeconomic trends, developments in end product sectors, technological change, oil market developments, weather conditions, speculative and other factors. NR prices have seen both low and comfortable levels, on and off, over the decades. Sustainability has economic, social and environmental dimensions. The present slump in rubber prices has been prolonged challenging the sustainability of rubber cultivation in terms of its economic and social impact. Other segments of rubber industry are beset with other forms of challenges arising from global competition, dumping, non-tariff barriers, technological bottlenecks etc. Deliberations on sustainability are more critical during challenging times as compared to normal situations. In this context, the theme of IRM 2018 “*Towards a Sustainable Rubber Value Chain*” has great significance.”

Mr. Vinod Simon (Chairman, Rubber Skill Development Council and Vice Chairman, Organising Committee IRM 2018) proposed a vote of thanks in the inaugural function.

The theme of India Rubber Meet 2018 is ‘Towards a sustainable rubber value chain’. IRM 2018 has a combination of invited talks and panel discussions, with ample time set for networking. Topics of invited talks and panel discussions cover global economic outlook, rubber industry outlook, global and domestic NR scenario, synthetic rubber developments, trends in auto and tyre sectors. Speakers are internationally known experts in the respective fields and represent major industry bodies and key enterprises. Participants will get an opportunity to interact with world known practitioners in various fields related to the rubber industry for formulating appropriate strategies.

There were four technical sessions on the first day (30 October) of IRM 2018. The first session ‘Economy & Sustainability – I’ was chaired by Mr. Ajay Shah (President, Polymer Chain,

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Reliance Industries Ltd). Dr. D.K. Joshi (Chief Economist, CRISIL) gave keynote address on 'Global and Indian economic scenario' and Mr. Gunther Lottmann (CEO at Grupo Fortaleza, Guatemala) presented the theme address on 'Towards a sustainable rubber value chain'.

Mr. M.P. Cherian (Chairman, UPASI Rubber Committee) chaired the second session on 'Changing Technology Landscape - Impact on the Value Chain'. Mr. Mathew George (General Manager, Petrochemicals, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, Mumbai) and Mr. Rakesh Batra (Partner and National Leader, Automotive Sector, Ernst & Young) gave presentations on the topics 'Electric mobility- Impact on rubber value chain' and 'Mega trends in auto and tyre sectors' respectively, in the second session.

Mr. Rajiv Budhreja (Director General, ATMA, New Delhi) chaired the third session on 'Natural Rubber & Synthetic Rubber Scenario - New Technologies & Focus on Productivity and Quality'. Mr. Jom Jacob (Sr. Economist, ANRPC, Malaysia) gave a 'talk on Global natural rubber scenario'. Dr. James Jacob (Director, Rubber Research Institute of India) delivered presentation on 'Current scenario of Indian natural rubber sector' and Mr. Kishor Katkar (Head, Technical Services and Business Development, ISRPL) spoke on 'Outlook of synthetic rubbers in India' in the third session.

Dr. A. K. Krishnakumar (Former Rubber Production Commissioner, Rubber Board of India & Adviser, IL&FS) chaired the last session of the first day on 'Innovations / Breakthroughs / Success Stories- Learnings & Takeaways'. Mr. Jose Mathew Kochukudy (Planter) gave a talk on 'Indian experience- natural rubber small grower'. Mr. N. Dharmaraj, Director (Harrisons Malayalam Ltd., & Advisor to Sector Head, HML (SBUA) delivered the last presentation of session on 'Indian experience- large estates/ processing centre.'

India Rubber Meet 2018 is conceptualized as a unique platform of rubber industry stakeholders for facilitating networking and information sharing.

Member Secretary
(Publicity Committee- India Rubber Meet 2018)

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Ms. Sheela Thomas IAS lighting the lamp in the inaugural function of IRM 2018 at Hotel Grant Hyatt, Bolgatty, Kochi. Mr. Vinod Simon (Vice Chairman, IRM 2018), Mr. D. Anandan IAS (Chairman & Executive Director, Rubber Board) and Dr. Shanmugha Sundaram IAS (former Chairman, Rubber Board) are also seen.

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