

'Kerala rubber convention can help showcase technology'

C.J. Punnathara

Kochi, June 15

The Confederation of Indian Industry and the Rubber Board organised a one-day conference in Kottayam to create a platform showcasing developing technologies and ideas related to rubber processing. The theme of the conference, held under the banner of Kerala Rubber Convention 2011, was "Sustainable rubber manufacturing and processing."

Inaugurating the session, Ms Sheela Thomas, Chairperson of Rubber Board, Government of India, said, "Kerala Rubber Convention will create a platform for showcasing technology, ideas and solutions and help rubber planters and micro, small and medium industries as well as regional and national players to attain economic sustainability in their operations." The conference was also expected to enhance technological interventions and highlight Kerala's potential as a promising investment destination.

India is the fourth-largest producer and third-largest

consumer of natural rubber in the world. Over one million people are directly involved in farming of rubber, while another six million people are indirectly associated with this business. There are around 4,500 manufacturing units dependent on rubber.

STATE'S ECONOMY BENEFITS

Rubber is seen as key to the development of Kerala. The recent rally in rubber prices is estimated to have contributed significantly to the 10 per-cent-growth registered by the State's economy. Close to 92 per cent of the nine lakh tonnes of rubber produced in India comes from Kerala.

"Today's session will enhance technological intervention and highlight Kerala's potential as a promising investment destination. This will also provide a platform for business meetings and knowing more about financing options," Mr K.T. Thomas, Chairman of Kerala Rubber Convention 2011 and Director of Paragon Polymer Products, said.