

# Rubber production up 3.7% in January

## Next spell of good output expected in June/July season

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Rubber production in January 2012 was up 3.7 per cent at 1, 02,500 tonnes. However, the good production season for the country seems to be behind us as we enter the lean and dry months. The Rubber Board has estimated production for February to fall sharply to 61,000 tonnes while the prognosis for March is even lower at 59,000 tonnes.

We have had a fairly good production for December and January while the predictions for the coming months are not that bright, sources in the Rubber Board said. The Board has revised upwards the production for December 2011 from previous estimates

PERFORMANCE OF NATURAL RUBBER					
	Production	Consumption	Import	Export	Stock at the end
	(in tonnes)				
January 2011	98,800	81,000	8,163	6,664	3,34,664
January 2012 (p)	1,02,500	82,000	26,375	936	2,67,000
April 2010 to Jan 2011	7,49,950	7,89,705	1,74,626	13,957	
April 2011 to Jan 2012 (p)	7,84,400	7,99,980	1,62,927	23,408	
(% Growth)	(4.6)	(1.3)			

of 1, 04,000 tonnes to 1, 06,800 tonnes. While December was the month of de-foliation, January was when re-foliation of the trees was on.

The next spell of good production can be expected only in the June/July season with the advent of the next rainy season, sources said. The

hitch being the number of days when tapping operations would be possible. The dry summer months were not a good season for rubber production.

Consumption has meanwhile inched up by just 1.23 per cent in January. While exports from the country have declined, imports were up by

over three times. The country has adequate stocks of rubber estimated at 2, 67,000 tonnes.

On a longer term basis, rubber production was up 4.6 per cent in April-January 2012. This is also the period when bulk of the production for the current fiscal emerges. Production for the coming couple of months is expected to be

weak and the trends for the current fiscal would normally have been established.

Despite all the talk of increased capacity coming into production, consumption of rubber increased by just 1.3 per cent during the first ten months of the current fiscal. Industry sources partly attributed this to the slowdown in the economy and depressed demand for vehicles in the automobile sector. If the automobile industry revived, demand for rubber is also expected to perk up.

Despite having the right provision to import rubber, volumes continued to be relatively stable compared to last year. This was even as exports surged.

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