



Rubber industry concerned over duties

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 16: The rubber industry has been quick to express concern over any move to hike import duties on rubber, despite the Prime Minister's assurance in Kerala. Import duties on NR in India, according to the industry, are already among the highest in the world, restricting value addition in the country and facilitating cheaper import of finished goods from China despite adequate domestic manufacturing capacities.

"The Prime Minister's move to encourage domestic rubber based industry is a welcome step. However, we need to ensure that raw material is

High import duties, according to the industry, facilitating cheaper import of finished goods from China

available to the industry at internationally competitive prices. Only then can Indian industry face the challenge of unabated imports", said Raghupati Singhania, chairman, Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA).

At the same time, both AT-

MA and AIRIA (All India Rubber Industries Association) hailed the Prime Minister's announcement that rubber will be included in the Make-in India Initiative. "It is good news for over 5,00 MSMEs in rubber sector," says Mohinder Gupta, president, AIRIA.

However, the industry believes that rubber plantations can be made competitive only by increasing efficiencies and not by import curbs. Domestic production of rubber is far less than consumption so imports are inevitable. Gupta claimed that domestic NR prices are also 20% higher than international prices.

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