

# Governments urged to increase area under natural rubber plantation

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With more than 30,000 rubber products being made in the country and the demand for them increasing, the State governments and the Centre should increase the area under natural rubber, said Sawar Dhanania, president of the All India Rubber Industries Association.

Mr. Dhanania said rubber products fell into two major categories – tyre and non-tyre.

The non-tyre sector had several micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)



India consumes annually nearly 11 lakh tonnes of natural rubber and 6 lakh tonnes of synthetic rubber.

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and the challenges faced by these units needed to be addressed to reduce imports.

India consumed annually

nearly 11 lakh tonnes of natural rubber and 5 lakh to 6 lakh tonnes of synthetic rubber.

It imported almost 4 lakh tonnes of natural rubber and special rubber varieties.

If the import of special rubber should decrease, area under natural rubber should increase, especially in non-traditional geographical areas. The governments should take suitable measures for it, he said.

Earlier, rubber trees aged more than 30 years or trees that had fallen down were thrown away. Now, process-

ing units had come up in Kerala and Tripura to make rubber wood products.

These products gave more income to the growers and supported the rubber product manufacturing industry. India had huge scope to increase export of rubber products and the recent CEPA signed by India and the UAE would benefit the rubber industries, he added.

The association would prepare an action plan in the next 6-8 months to strengthen the rubber industry and plan for the next 25 years, he said.