

# 'Natural rubber production has gone up'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kottayam**

SHOWING positive signs in the natural rubber sector, the domestic rubber production is continued to be in upward trajectory in the ongoing fiscal year. According to the statistics released by the Rubber Board, natural rubber production in the country showed an increase of 11.5 per cent in July as compared to that during the same period last year.

Production during July 2017 was 58,000 tonnes whereas it was 52,000 tonnes in July 2016. As per statistics, there is 7.5 per cent increase in production in the current fiscal so far.

The production was 2,01,000 tonnes during April-July period. However, it was 1,87,000 tonnes during the same period last year. Meanwhile, the board is anticipating a total production for the current fiscal at 8 lakh tonnes.

The Rubber Board is continuing

## Rubber Board call centre to answer queries

Kottayam: Rubber growers can contact the Rubber Board call centre to know more about fertiliser application and online fertiliser recommendation in rubber. Rubber Research Institute of India joint director M D Jessy will answer the questions in this regard on Wednesday from 10 am to 1 pm. The call centre number is 0481 - 2576622.

its activities to make rubber cultivation remunerative by increasing production and productivity and reducing cost of cultivation and production.

"For this, the board is promoting practices such as weekly tapping, controlled upward tapping, rain-guarding and online fertiliser rec-

ommendation. The board has been implementing several activities at the regional and field levels, with the active cooperation of Rubber Producers' Societies. These include schemes for intercropping in collaboration with the Kerala state Agricultural Department and skill development training programmes under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)," the board authorities said in a press release.

As part of the 'Digital India' campaign, the board is increasingly using digital extension services. Facilities provided by the board such as call centre, IVRS and 'Online Rubber Clinic' supported by WhatsApp and YouTube, in addition to web-based fertiliser recommendation are being used by rubber growers.

Apart from these, the board is also taking steps to increase the consumption of NR by promoting rubber goods manufacturing sector.