

Gap to continue between rubber demand, output

Natural rubber (NR) production for 2012-13 will be 930,000 tonnes and consumption at 1.06 million tonnes (mt), representing a deficit of 76,000 tonnes or eight per cent, the Rubber Board has projected. However, there won't be a shortage in the domestic market, as the projected opening stock in April was 236,275 tonnes and 150,000 tonnes could be imported through duty-free channels, it said. The production and consumption levels were 903,700 tonnes and 964,415 tonnes, respectively, in 2011-12. The International Rubber Study Group forecast world production and consumption of NR at 11.3 mt and 11.2 mt, respectively, with a surplus of 137,000 tonnes during 2012. Production would be 11.8 mt and consumption 11.7 mt in 2013, with a surplus of 151,000 tonnes, it said. Production during the first half of 2012 increased 4.3 per cent, whereas consumption declined marginally by 0.7 per cent. Consumption in America declined nine per cent and by 14.8 per cent in the European Union countries during the period. Growth in consumption in China remained slow, especially in March and April, the IRSG report said. Production in India increased 4.8 per cent and consumption 1.8 per cent during 2011-12, said Sheela Thomas, chairman, Rubber Board. Consumption by the tyre sector increased 5.7 per cent, while it declined 4.9 per cent in the non-tyre sector during the period. According to the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association, tyre production increased by five per cent and export by 23 per cent in 2011-12 over the year before. Production during April-August was estimated provisionally as 313,700 tonnes, a marginal rise of 0.8 per cent over the same period in the previous year. Consumption was 420,440 tonnes, a growth of 4.9 per cent.