

# Input shortage may hit small, medium-sized rubber units

## Flood-hit producers bracing for 25% crop loss

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

The financial health of small and medium players in the Indian rubber industry may suffer a setback due to the impending shortage in natural rubber following floods in Kerala, according to Vikram Makar, senior vice-president, All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA).

Mr. Makar, who was in the city to promote the India Rubber Expo 2019, said that it was possible that the overall profitability of these units may be hit.

Natural rubber producers of Kerala, which produces 85% of India's natural rubber, are bracing for a 25% crop loss (over last year) in the wake of the unprece-



**Tough times:** Large units may import synthetic rubber to tide over input shortage, says Vikram Makar. ■RITU RAJ KONWAR

dented rains over last few months, according to the United Planter's Association of South India (UPASI).

### 'Larger hit'

"It is a great calamity and industry will suffer a temporary setback, but the small and medium players may

take a larger hit," Mr. Makar said, adding that large industries may resort to imports of synthetic rubber to tide over any raw material crisis. Mr. Makar is also the chairman and MD of Oriental Rubber Industries Pvt. Ltd. Rubber is also grown in Assam and Tripura, he added.