



# Weakening of Rubber Producer Societies (RPS) in Kerala

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**Subject Reference:** GS Paper III (Agriculture - Cooperatives & Markets)

- **The News (Dec 2025):** RPSs, once the backbone of Kerala's rubber farmers, are collapsing due to stagnant prices (below ₹180) and high production costs (tapping costs ~₹200).
- **Apt Topic:** "The Crisis of Smallholder Cooperatives in a Globalized Market"
- **The Middlemen Problem:** As RPSs weaken, private traders (middlemen) are regaining control, buying rubber at ₹5–₹10 below the official rate.
- **Import Dynamics:** Tyre companies are favoring **imported block rubber** over domestic "Ribbed Smoked Sheets" (RSS4), leading to a demand slump.
- **UPSC Perspective:** Discuss the need for a **Price Stabilization Fund** and the "Value Addition" of turning raw latex into specialized products like surgical gloves or high-tech adhesives to save the cooperative model.