

A Rubber plantation within Guwahati city



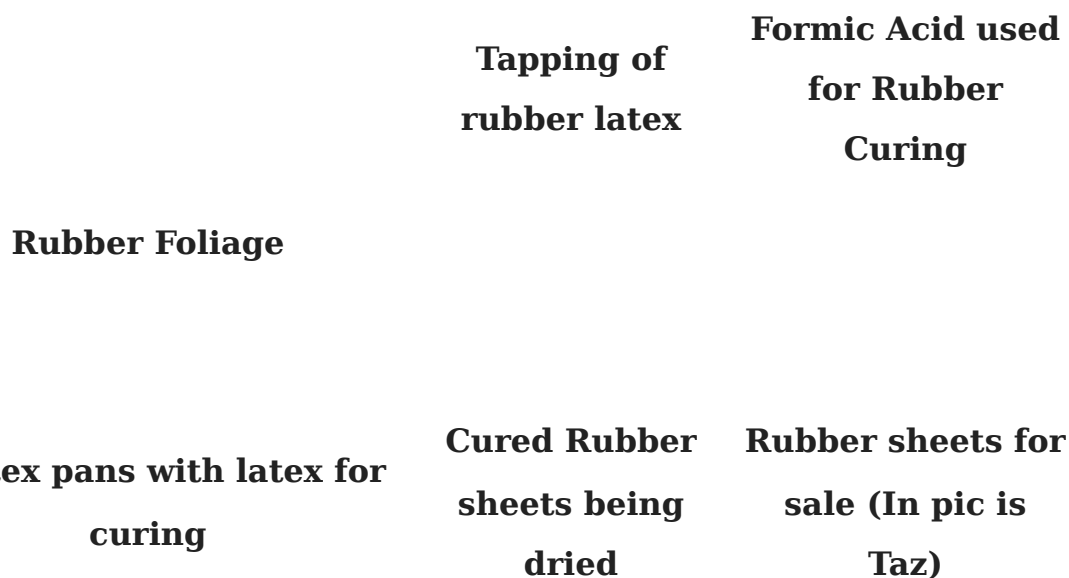
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Manoj Kumar Das 3 January 2013 Updated 7 Jan 35801 views

Indrajit Narayan Dev is the 14th generation of the chronological lineage of the erstwhile Koch Dynasty from the days of the great Koch King Maharaja Naranarayan & his General brother Chilarai, of the then 16th century Assam. He dwells atop the ancestral bungalow, the “Little Hillock”, overlooking the sprawling 30 bighas (1 bigha = 1600 sqyd) estate of Ranibagan situated at Beltola Tiniali in the metropolitan city of Guwahati, in the state of Assam, a serene environment amidst the crowd.

The estate has a collection of numerous fruit, flower bearing trees and plants and a host of varied species of other valuable trees too. Within the contour terrain, an approximately 5 bighas (approximately 1.5 acres) has been concentrated on the plantation of rubber trees (*hevea brasiliensis*) and as Indrajit says – there is wider scope for increasing plantation of more rubber saplings in the next monsoon seasons of 2013.



A few months back we had a casual discussion about unlocking the value of the land at his disposal without losing the right over it. I suggested him an expert on Medicinal Plants, who advised him to plant a high value aromatic plant – the Sandalwood (*Santalum album* L) and tap the rubber, which was lying unutilised. He hired a tapper and is making about Rs. 20000/- per month from 80 rubber trees.

I have not seen a rubber estate in action. It was wonderful to see the rubber tapping. Mr. Indrajit didn't tap the rubber trees for the past 14 years. Now he is getting 500 gms of latex per day per tree. I spoke to his tapper Mr Taz, who told me that it can be done for 9 months.

Next process after tapping is drying of the latex by mixing with anti fungal Formic acid. 200 gms of Formic Acid is



mixed with 20 litres of latex and latex is kept in pans for 24 hrs.

Indrajit Narayan Dev with cured rubber sheets in the background

After the rubber solidifies, its kept for drying. After 3 days drying, the rubber sheets are packed and kept ready for sale.

People of North East, particularly from the hill states has huge land resources and can benefit from rubber plantation.

Rubber is beneficial for the following reasons:-

1. Traditional areas like Malaysia, Indonesia, Kerala are reducing areas under rubber plantation
2. It suits some of our soil, mostly loamy and hilly
3. Mixed farming with spices is possible
4. Rubber has a ready market
5. Rubber product is compact
6. There is future demand
7. The rubber tree can give latex upto 50 years
8. At the end of the economic life rubber wood is available for furniture making
9. Rubber Board has various incentives which can be viewed at www.rubberboard.org.in

Sale price of rubber sheets is Rs. 84/ kg. Rolled rubber has double the price.

Rubber Board approved Buyer in Guwahati:

M/s Manimalayar Rubber Pvt Ltd

Br. Dr B N Saikia Road

Behind SBI Beltola Branch

Guwahati 781029

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Manoj Kumar Das

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