

STRETCH

A quarterly publication of the
Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council

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YB MINISTER LAUNCHES MREPC SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The MREPC Scholarship Awards –
An initiative by MREPC, with strong
support from the industry, to attract
the best young Malaysians to the
rubber product industry



The most significant event in the MREPC calendar for the second quarter of 2011 was the launch of the MREPC Scholarship Awards by YB Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, the Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities. This event marked the culmination of months of concerted effort by the Scholarship Committee comprising MREPC management and industry representatives, the selection committees, as well as MREPC staff, to determine the procedures, agreements and selection guidelines, call for applications, shortlist and interview candidates, and finally select the recipients of the Awards.

The MREPC Scholarship Awards are part of on-going efforts to attract the best and the brightest to the rubber products industry. The future of the rubber products industry in Malaysia depends on improvement and innovation in products and processes, dynamism in marketing, efficiency and focus on quality in production, with far sighted and dedicated leadership. To ensure that these are the qualities that describe the industry in years to come, young people with the requisite talents and capabilities need to be brought into the sector. With the 2020 target for the rubber industry set at RM52.9 billion, the firms in the sector need to ensure that this most important resource, human capital, is given adequate attention.

This is an initiative that has far reaching implications. The MREPC Scholarships provide opportunities for talented young individuals to receive tertiary education, develop marketable skills, and gain entry into an industry with strong prospects for growth. There is greater appreciation among undergraduates and potential job seekers of the diverse employment opportunities offered by the rubber products industry. The companies that accept scholarship recipients into their workplace benefit, as the brightest and the best join their talent pool.

At the same time, the Scholarship Awards are an opportunity for the industry to play its part in keeping the best young Malaysians in the country.

The MREPC Board of Trustees is encouraged by the excellent response from the industry to the inaugural MREPC Scholarship Awards. It is hoped that in years to come more companies will come forward to cosponsor students, reflecting the dynamism and the excellent prospects the industry offers employees and investors.



CEO of MREPC Dato' Teo Suat Cheng

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Editor-in-Chief: **DATO' TEO SUAT CHENG**

Editor: **EN. ADNAN ABDULLAH**

Sub-editor: **P. UTHAYA MALAR**

For comments, enquiries and advertisements, please contact:

**The Editor,
MREPC,
Block 2A, Level 13A-1, Plaza Sentral
Jalan Stesen Sentral 5, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**
Tel : 603-2780 5888
Fax : 603-2780 5088
E-mail : stretch@mrepc.com
Website : www.mrepc.com

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1. The market for rubber products in the Middle East

The Middle East is an economically diverse region. Strong growth in GDP in the region over the last few years has been driven by the substantial economic activities taking place in the oil-rich countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Robust economic growth in recent years has led to rising incomes and changing demographics. The average income per capita for the nearly 300 million people in the region stood at US\$20,530 in 2009, indicative of the significant purchasing power of the population.

Overview

The market for rubber products in the Middle East was valued at US\$5.5 billion in 2009. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia) are the two largest markets in the Middle East. The UAE is the distribution hub for rubber products destined for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). UAE re-exported approximately 41% of its imports in 2009. The market for rubber products is highly dependent on imported products as manufacturing of rubber products is not significant in most of the GCC countries.

The market for industrial rubber goods (IRG) in the Middle East was valued at US\$326.8 million in 2009. Saudi Arabia has the largest market for IRG, accounting for 32.7% of the total market in 2009. It registered a strong CAGR of 13.5% for the period 2005-2009. The UAE has a sizeable market for IRG and the market expanded by an impressive CAGR of 15.7% during the same period. Hoses (HS Code 4009), primarily used in the oil and gas and construction industry, were the most significant products under the IRG category.

**The market for rubber products in the Middle East,
by Product Category, in 2009 (US\$ million)**

Rubber Products	Total Middle East	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Iran	Egypt	Qatar
Tyres	3,178.6	1,350.4	1,014.9	438.4	299.5	75.4
Footwear	1,098.0	738.9	278.3	47.9	12.5	20.4
Rubber Medical Devices	91.0	25.4	23.8	17.8	21.9	2.1
Rubber Automotive Components & Parts	297.1	121.1	84.0	50.2	38.5	3.3
Industrial Rubber Goods	326.8	96.1	106.9	46.1	41.4	36.3
Other Products (including inner tubes, rubber threads, mattresses, sporting goods)	520.6	187.3	54.2	80.5	184.3	14.3
Total	5,512.1	2,519.2	1,562.1	680.9	598.1	151.8

Note: The market size for rubber products is estimated from import values

The market for rubber automotive components and parts (RAC) in the region was valued at US\$297.1 million in 2009. The UAE and Saudi Arabia are the two largest markets for the products accounting for 69% of the total RAC market for the region in 2009. Imported RAC are for the replacement market as there is no automotive manufacturing in these two countries. Iran and Egypt have significant automotive manufacturing sectors and offer opportunities in both OEM and aftermarket segments. Imports of RAC into Egypt recorded a CAGR of 16.4%, the highest among the four major markets.

The market for rubber medical devices on the other hand, is relatively small, valued at US\$91 million in 2009. Gloves are the main products in the category and Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt are the main markets in the region. In terms of growth, Egypt and the UAE registered the highest CAGR for gloves, at 34.8% and 19.1% respectively for the period 2005-2009.

Opportunities

Malaysia is currently the leading exporter of surgical and non-surgical gloves to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran and Egypt. Demand for medical gloves is expected to increase with the completion of a number of private healthcare facilities that are under construction in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Malaysian exporters may do well in the public healthcare sector in the region if they are able to offer low priced gloves that conform to the USFDA and EN standards recognised in these markets.

Newly launched industrial and construction projects in Abu Dhabi (UAE), Saudi Arabia and Qatar will expand the market for industrial hoses. Malaysia was among the top five countries supplying dock fenders and floor mats to the UAE, conveyor belts to Saudi Arabia, and dock fenders, floor mats, and rail pads to Iran in 2009. Although quantities exported are relatively low, there are opportunities for Malaysia to further expand exports of these products, as demand is increasing, based on imports for the period 2005-2009.

In the automotive sector, strong demand for quality spare parts such as anti-vibration products, gaskets, washers and seals, and hoses can be expected given the growing number of vehicles on the roads in Saudi Arabia, Iran and Egypt.

2. The rubber products market in India

India has become one of the world's fastest growing economies. The economy is now the fourth largest in the world, measured by purchasing power parity. As a country with increasing supply of natural rubber, India has a substantial rubber product manufacturing industry. India is a net exporter of condoms, surgical gloves and conveyor belts. However, the rapidly growing size of the market requires significant imports to meet domestic demand for many products.

Overview

For the fiscal year 2008-09, the market for rubber products was valued at USD 7.7 billion, registering an average growth of 6.6% over the last 3 years. The automotive sector was identified as the main driver of growth for the rubber industry. Demand for automotive products, including rubber parts grew by 30% on average per annum between 2007 and 2009. Other growth factors are a sizeable middle class population, strong economic growth and rapid growth in the industrial sector.

• Rubber Automotive Components & Parts

Rapid increase in vehicle production and increase in automotive investments has led to high demand for rubber components and parts. Rubber gaskets, rubber rings and rubber seals are India's main imports of rubber automotive components, with a combined value of US\$83.1 million in 2008-09. Hoses, under HS Codes 400911, 400931, 400932 were other significant imports into India, valued at US\$18.5 million.

Hoses and gaskets are identified as products with potential in the Indian market for rubber automotive components. Imports of the products into India registered a CAGR of more than 25% between 2005 and 2009. In 2009, Malaysia was the largest exporter of tubes, pipes and hoses of vulcanized rubber, other than hard rubber not reinforced with other materials without fittings (HS Code 400911) to India with 18% market share.

• Industrial Rubber Goods

The market for high quality products such as power transmission belts and high pressure hoses relies heavily on imports, as India does not have adequate technical capabilities for the manufacture of these products. Import of hoses was valued at US\$50.6 million in 2008-09 and the value of imports grew by a CAGR of 31.2% over the 5 year period. However, the market for conveyor belts, amounting 26,096 tonnes in 2008-09, is mainly supplied by local production. Export of conveyor belts is also significant, at US\$54.8 million. Imported conveyor belts, valued at US\$18.1 million, accounted for only 8.2% of the total market.

• Rubber Medical Devices

Condoms and gloves are the main rubber medical devices in India. Production of all types of gloves in India amounts to approximately 6 billion pieces annually with almost 60% of the gloves made of natural rubber. Exports of surgical gloves were valued at US\$21.8 million in 2008-09. However, India's combined imports of rubber surgical gloves and non-surgical gloves increased more than seven-fold from US\$1.8 million in 2004 to US\$13.5 million in 2009 (CAGR 49.6%), as the production of gloves, primarily examination gloves is not able to keep pace with expanding demand. Malaysia was the largest exporter of the products to India in 2009 but there is growing competition from Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

India is a global producer of condoms with a total output estimated at 2.7 billion pieces in 2008-09. Exports of condoms were valued at US\$59.13 million in 2008-09. Imports of condoms were relatively small, valued at US\$2.4 million in 2008-09. Malaysia was the main supplier of condoms to India with strong competition from Spain and China.

Examination gloves are identified as the product with the greatest market potential given the strong import growth and limited supply of quality gloves. The market for urinary catheters (HS Code 90183910) also showed some potential, with Malaysia being the largest exporter of the products to India.

Export of rubber products from Malaysia to India is poised for further growth in the future with the implementation of the Asean-India FTA. Beginning in January 2010, tariffs imposed on rubber automotive components and non-automotive industrial rubber products from Malaysia will be reduced to 0-5% by 2014, while for rubber medical devices, tariffs will be completely eliminated by 2016. However the market poses some challenges, with numerous domestic charges, interstate duties, and logistic costs. Ideally, the Indian market should be addressed by region, with distributors or representatives in each major city.

An initial assessment of the market for rubber medical devices

Healthcare has emerged as one of the largest service sectors in India. It is expected to grow by 12% per annum to contribute 8% of GDP and employ around nine million people by 2012. Official statistics indicate that there are currently more than 48,000 clinics and hospitals in India with over a million beds, serviced by half a million doctors.

Increasingly, a large section of middle income families will be able to afford healthcare services, as health insurance becomes more affordable and prevalent. Some major healthcare service companies, both domestic and international, have established facilities in India, to provide quality healthcare facilities and services. They have been successful in catering to the growing demand in specialisations such as cardiology, nephrology, and geriatrics, as well as the more traditional areas of general healthcare.

Healthcare (hospitals and allied sectors) which is currently a US\$35 billion industry in India is expected to reach over US\$77 billion by 2012 and US\$150 billion by 2017. Medical tourism is one of the drivers of growth of the healthcare sector, offering high quality educated, English-speaking staff, state-of-the art private hospitals and diagnostic facilities, and relatively low cost. Indian medical tourism was estimated at US\$350 million in 2006 and has the potential to grow into a US\$2 billion industry by 2012.

These developments have helped the medical devices market to grow by 12 per cent annually for the next few years to reach US\$6 billion by 2015. High-quality products are sought after by the private sector, and the hi-tech end of the medical device market is dominated by multinationals. Indian purchasers are, however, price-sensitive, seeking value for money.

In March 2011, MREPC officers and some Malaysian rubber medical device manufacturers visited Delhi to gain some insights into the potential for rubber medical devices in this growing market. In addition to meetings at the Malaysian High Commission and at the Confederation of Indian Industry, meetings were held

with representatives of Apollo Hospitals, Max Healthcare, Columbia Asia Hospitals and Fortis Healthcare. These meetings provided insights into the prevailing usage norms, requirements and purchasing policies for rubber medical gloves and other rubber medical devices of these private hospitals in India.

In discussions, it was apparent that the private hospitals were concerned about the quality of the gloves used in their facilities and the users, particularly senior doctors and surgeons have considerable influence on the selection of gloves. ASTM and ISO standards were generally used as reference by the hospitals in establishing their quality requirements. Natural rubber is the preferred material and most doctors used powdered gloves, but there was interest in nitrile as an option if prices were favourable. While there was some awareness of latex allergy issues, these were not a consideration in glove purchasing. The officials met indicated that price was always a major factor in the decision making process.

Generally, the hospital chains undertake group purchasing of gloves and other medical disposables. The practice is to test samples, obtain feedback from internal users, and negotiate on price and quantity. While the large chains have their own network for distribution and delivery, the norm is for suppliers to arrange for delivery through existing distributors or agents. Hospitals were willing to consider new suppliers if quality, price and reliability of supply requirements are met competitively.

Given the potential for growth and the increasing sophistication of the market for healthcare products, Malaysian manufacturers who venture early into the Indian private healthcare sector are likely to benefit. The quantities required by the hospital chains may not be significant now, but as these chains of private hospitals, clinics and pharmacies expand, the demand for quality gloves and other rubber medical devices is expected to grow more than proportionately. Also, there are opportunities to establish brand identities in the Indian market, compared to mature markets in developed countries.

Classification of Medical Devices in the United States

S. Jegathesan

*Principal Consultant, Qualitec Services,
Senior Lead Auditor/Assessor for SIRIM QAS,
Velosi QMIL Appointed Management
System Auditor, BSI, SGS, QMS Appointed
Management System Trainer*

Definition of a medical device

A medical device is defined within the Food Drug & Cosmetic Act as “...an instrument, apparatus, implement, machine, contrivance, implant, in vitro reagent, or other similar or related article, including a component part, or accessory which is: recognized in the official National Formulary, or the United States Pharmacopoeia, or any supplement to them, intended for use in the diagnosis of disease or other conditions, or in the cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, in man or other animals, or intended to affect the structure or any function of the body of man or other animals, and which does not achieve any of its primary intended purposes through chemical action within or on the body of man or other animals and which is not dependent upon being metabolized for the achievement of any of its primary intended purposes.”

Device Classification

There are 3 FDA regulatory classifications for medical devices: Class I, Class II and Class III. The classifications are assigned by the risk the medical device presents to the patient/users and the level of regulatory control the FDA determines is needed to legally market the device. As the risk to the patient increases, the classification level increases and FDA regulatory controls become correspondingly more stringent. Accessories to medical devices, and devices used with a medical device to support use of the device, are considered as falling in the same classification as the medical device.

The FDA classification of medical devices is based upon classifications for devices currently legally marketed in the United States. The FDA determines the device classification by the intended use of the device and the risk the device presents to the patient. New medical devices are compared to medical device classifications currently legally marketed in the US with the same intended use and technological characteristics to determine the device classification.

Class I devices present minimal potential harm to the user and have the least amount of regulatory control. Class I devices are typically simple in design, manufacture and have a history of safe use. Examples of Class I devices include tongue depressors, arm slings, and hand-held surgical instruments. Most Class I devices are exempt from the premarket notification and may be exempt from compliance with regulations pertaining to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

For Class II medical devices, additional methods/standards/guidance documents are available to provide assurances of safety and effectiveness as General Controls are not sufficient to provide the assurance required. In addition to compliance with General Controls, Class II devices are required to comply with Special Controls. Special Controls include:

- ✓ Special labelling requirements,
- ✓ Mandatory performance standards, both International and United States
- ✓ Post-market surveillance
- ✓ FDA medical device specific guidance

Class II devices typically require pre-market notification by submission and FDA review of a 510(k) clearance to market submission. A few Class II devices are exempt from the premarket notification. Information on Class II exempt devices is located within the device regulation, 21 CFR 862 through 892. Examples of Class II devices include physiologic monitors, x-ray systems, gas analyzers, pumps, and surgical drapes.

Class III medical devices have the most stringent regulatory controls. For Class III medical devices, sufficient information is not available to assure safety and effectiveness through the application of General Controls and Special Controls. Class III devices usually support or sustain human life, are of substantial importance in preventing impairment of human health, or present a potential unreasonable risk of illness or injury to the patient. Typically a Pre-Market Approval (PMA) submission to the FDA is required to allow marketing of a Class III medical device. A few Class III medical devices are required to only have a 510(k) cleared by the FDA to be marketed. Examples of Class III devices that require a PMA are: replacement heart valves, silicone gel-filled breast implants, and implanted cerebella stimulators.

SBIM 12

Brand Name Registration

Register your brand and protect your business opportunities in potential markets.

You can claim 50% of costs incurred to register your brand names in international markets, subject to a maximum of RM50,000 per company.

For details on eligibility and application procedures visit MREPC website:



Malaysia's Exports and Imports of Rubber Products (RM'000)

	Exports		Imports	
	2011	2010	2011	2010
January	1,072,198	1,017,347	291,461	270,484
February	978,449	919,712	246,124	223,067
March	1,304,657	1,112,862	332,316	280,390
January–March	3,355,304	3,049,921	869,901	773,941
% Change (January–March) 10/11	10.0		12.4	

Major Destinations of Malaysia's Rubber Product Exports (RM'000)

Country	January–March 2011	January–March 2010	% Change	% Share (2011)
EU-27	902,811	804,856	12.2	26.9
USA	837,024	829,927	0.9	24.9
ASEAN	330,603	250,365	32.0	9.9
Japan	183,047	163,216	12.2	5.5
Brazil	151,443	171,184	-11.5	4.5
China, P.R.	135,400	132,274	2.4	4.0
Australia	86,549	80,930	6.9	2.6
Turkey	68,049	33,676	102.1	2.0
South Korea	65,702	48,105	36.6	2.0
Hong Kong	55,290	51,701	6.9	1.6
Canada	48,441	71,204	-32.0	1.4
UAE	27,049	28,815	-6.1	0.8
Subtotal	2,891,408	2,666,253	8.4	86.2
World Total	3,355,304	3,049,921	10.0	100.0

Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia

The launch of the MREPC Scholarship Awards by the Honourable Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, was an occasion to honour the recipients of the Awards as well as to mark the 10th Anniversary of MREPC's inception in 2000. The premier showing of the Glove Story video was also held during the event, on 9 June 2011 at the Kuala Lumpur Hilton.

In his opening address, the Minister highlighted the achievements of the Malaysian rubber products industry over the last ten years, tracing the growth in exports and some of the challenges faced by rubber product manufacturers. He paid tribute to the latex sector of the industry and highlighted its contribution to national income. The Minister pointed out that the rubber industry is targeted to contribute RM 52.9 billion to the GNI by 2020, and that this can only be accomplished if there is an influx of talented, well-trained and capable young people to the rubber product sector. The MREPC Scholarship Program is a commendable effort to address the industry's long term needs for trained and qualified manpower.

At the same time, the Awards enable the rubber products industry to attract able young people to an ever expanding sector that constantly needs skills and talent. In order to attract the best young minds to the rubber products industry, the MREPC Board of Trustees has established the MREPC Scholarship Fund with an initial allocation of RM 5 million, with provision for a RM2 million top up when required.



The scholarship award recipients

MINISTER LAUNCHES MREPC SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



The Hon. Minister launches the Scholarship Awards

He noted that the MREPC Scholarship program not only assists the recipients to complete their university education but also provides them with assurances of employment upon graduation.

Nineteen young men and women received the inaugural MREPC Scholarship Awards from the Minister. The Scholarships are for a variety of courses including polymer science and technology, engineering, environmental science, marketing, business studies and statistics, at private and public universities in Malaysia. The award presentation was witnessed by the proud parents of the recipients, the CEOs and senior management of rubber product companies, representatives from the universities, Ministry representatives and media.



Representatives of co-sponsoring companies with the Minister, MREPC Chairman, KSU of KPPK and CEO of MREPC

The Scholarship recipients, who are all enrolled at Malaysian universities (including foreign universities with Malaysian campuses), have excelled academically as well as in extra-curricular activities. They have undergone a rigorous selection process and impressed the selection panel with their knowledge, maturity and commitment. At the end of his speech, the Minister was of the opinion that the Award recipients would be worthy of the trust placed in them by the industry members as well as their parents and hoped that they would contribute positively to the industry and the nation.

Ten of the Scholarship Awards were cosponsored by six rubber product manufacturing companies, i.e. Topglove, Hartalega, Supermax, Careglove Global, Kossan and Karex. The representatives of the six companies joined the Minister on stage for the presentations.

The Honourable Minister also commended MREPC on producing a promotional video on the glove industry in Malaysia, which would also help in attracting young people to the industry. The video could also be used in market promotion as well as for informing the public of the industry’s contribution to national development.

On MREPC’s ten years of contribution to the rubber products industry, the Minister commented, “I congratulate MREPC on a job well done, and hope that it will continue to serve the rubber products industry as effectively in years to come”.

A book depicting MREPC’s first ten years, titled “Milestones”, was distributed at the event.

“ We have seen MREPC evolve from a market promotion body to a multifunctional agency addressing the needs of the rubber product industry comprehensively ”

Tan Sri Bernard Dompok



Datuk Billy Abit Joo presents a memento to the Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok

“The future of the rubber products industry will depend to a large extent on our ability to attract and retain the best”

Datuk Billy Abit Joo,
Chairman,
MREPC Board of Trustees

Quick Facts: MREPC Scholarship 2011

No of students sponsored 19

Specific courses sponsored

- Chemical Engineering (9 students)
- Polymer Engineering/Technology (5 students)
- Mechanical Engineering (3 students)
- Engineering (1 student)
- Analytical Economics (1 student)

Participating Universities

- University of Malaya
- Mara University of Technology
- University Malaysia Pahang
- University Malaysia Perlis
- National University of Malaysia
- Kuala Lumpur University
- University Tunku Abdul Rahman
- Multimedia University
- Nottingham University
- Monash University

Co-Sponsors

- Careglove Global Sdn Bhd (3 students)
- Top Glove Sdn Bhd (2 students)
- Hartalega Sdn Bhd (2 students)
- Karex Industries Sdn Bhd (1 student)
- Kossan Rubber Industries Berhad (1 student)
- Supermax Latex Products Sdn Bhd (1 student)

Milestones: 10 years of MREPC

This book traces the first ten years of the Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council, from its humble beginnings in the MRB building in Jalan Ampang, as a council set up to promote Malaysian rubber products in world markets. The growth of the rubber product industry in the 21st century is shown in pictures and graphs. The book also depicts the major events and activities undertaken by MREPC since its inception. The personalities who contributed to the growth of the industry and MREPC during this period are also highlighted in the book.

“Milestones” has been distributed to rubber product manufacturers, Malaysian trade offices, and government departments. The book will also be used during trade missions, to introduce MREPC and Malaysia as a source of quality rubber products.



The MREPC 2011 Scholarship Awards were launched on June 9, at the KL Hilton. Nineteen young scholars marched up to the stage to receive their scholarship awards from the Honourable Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, witnessed by proud parents, co-sponsors, members of the industry and distinguished guests. The award recipients, who were referred to as ‘young achievers’ by the minister, are outstanding students, who have excelled academically as well as in extra-curricular activities, and gained admission to private or public universities. The awardees have chosen field of studies such as chemical engineering, polymer engineering, mechanical engineering, environmental technology and analytical economics, all of which are skills much in demand in the rubber product industry. We talked to some of the students, to understand their background, motivation and their views about the MREPC scholarship.



Jesslyn Lim is a first year chemical engineering student in Universiti Malaysia Pahang. She grew up in a small family of four, with an identical twin. As she and her twin sister grew into their teens, their looks changed, along with their fields of study, with Jesslyn excelling in the science stream, while her twin sister pursued her studies in the arts. Before securing the MREPC scholarship, Jesslyn never envisaged herself pursuing a career in the rubber industry. On being shortlisted for the scholarship interview, Jesslyn discovered that there is more than meets the eye to this industry. As she has been selected by Hartalega under the co-sponsorship program, she is keen to visit her future employer’s factory to understand the processes involved in rubber glove manufacturing. She is very grateful to her parents for all their guidance and the values they have instilled in her.



Ganapathy s/o Ramachandran is a first year mechanical engineering student at UTAR. Upon gaining admission to the university, he found that paying the university fees was an uphill task. His parents could not afford it and he didn’t want to burden them. Ganapathy’s contingency plans were to work part time or to defer semesters so that he could work for several months to earn enough for the following semester. Thus being awarded the MREPC scholarship is a true blessing for him, and he is truly grateful for the opportunity to focus on his studies. Born as a second child in a family of 3 siblings in Masai Johor, ‘discipline’ is Ganapathy’s mantra in life. Having completed his foundation studies last year, Ganapathy worked in a piping company in Pasir Gudang for four months to earn sufficient wages for his first semester fees for a degree programme in UTAR. That short employment stint was an eye opener as he has learnt the hard way to fend for himself. Ganapathy, who was an Assistant Head Prefect in SMK Taman Megah Ria, credited his school teachers for the opportunity to hone his leadership and communication skills. Having secured an MREPC scholarship, he looks forward to applying what he learns in university to the rubber product industry.



Mohd Haziq bin Mohamed never expected to be one of the lucky recipients of the scholarship award. Judging from the stiff competition faced, Haziq realised that MREPC was looking for a dynamic candidate and he did his best to convince the selection panel that he would be an asset to the industry. The news of success came as a pleasant surprise and he was thrilled to be chosen. Haziq, a first year student in Polymer Technology at UiTM, is very familiar with the rubber and oil palm plantation environment as his dad is a Felda settler. As such, the smell of latex and dry rubber is not a strange to him. He feels that rubber has been crucial to the development of Malaysia and the younger generation should understand the significance of rubber to the economy of Malaysia, as reflected in MREPC’s tagline, “No one knows rubber like Malaysia does”. The experience gained during study tours to the Malaysian Rubber Board and in a research project with Felcra Hoses helped him to handle some of the tough questions posed to him during the scholarship interview. Haziq admitted the interview was arduous and at one point he was struggling to speak fluently.



Some members of the selection panel



Minister with members of the industry

MARGMA Committee Members visit MREPC

(6 May 2011)

The Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers' Association (MARGMA) newly elected committee members visited MREPC on 6 May 2011. The objective of the visit was for the committee members to meet MREPC senior officers, to share MARGMA's plans and strategies for the rubber glove industry and to further strengthen the relationship between MARGMA and MREPC. Dato' Teo Suat Cheng, CEO of MREPC welcomed MARGMA office-bearers to MREPC and briefed them on MREPC's activities and planned programs. Mr. Lim Kwee Shyan, the new MARGMA President, expressed his appreciation for MREPC's services to the industry, particularly the rubber glove manufacturers, and indicated that the incoming committee would continue to work closely with MREPC on issues that affect the industry. He looked forward to MREPC's support, particularly with respect to formulating representation related to trade and quality regulations in major markets. To facilitate information sharing, MREPC agreed to grant access to MARGMA to the Members' area of the MREPC website. The newly appointed committee members of MARGMA for the period of 2011-2013 are as follows:



MARGMA Committee members at MREPC: Mr. Lim Kwee Shyan, Mr. G. Baskaran, Mr. Lim Khoon Kang, Dr. S. Subramaniam, Ms. Christina Lee



CEO of MREPC with the President of MARGMA

President	Lim Kwee Shyan	Rubbercare Protective Products
Vice President	Denis Low Jau Foo	Supermax
Hon. Treasurer	Patrick Leong Loh Kong	Tekmedic
Hon. Secretary	Kuan Mun Keng	Hartalega
Immediate Past President	Lee Kim Meow	Top Glove
Committee Members	G. Baskaran Lim Khoon Kang Lawrence Lim Siau Thian Ong Boon Kee Dr. S. Supramaniam	Brightway WRP Asia Pacific Kossan GB Industries Bonric
Auditors	Lee Seek Ping Ian Ng Tze Cheu	Perusahaan Getah Asas YTY
Secretary	Christina Lee	

AL-QASSIM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SAUDI ARABIA) VISITS MREPC

[8 April 2011]

An 11-member business delegation from the Al-Qassim Chamber of Commerce and Industry, visited MREPC on 8 April 2011. The delegation, led by the Chairman, Dr Yosuf A. Al-Orini comprised of business owners, traders, manufacturers and leaders sectors such as agriculture and horticulture, pharmaceutical, electronics, printing and publication and real estate in the Qassim region in Saudi Arabia. The objectives of the visit were to explore prospects for mutual business opportunities, to bolster bonds of bilateral economic relations and to open new avenues of cooperation between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

MREPC agreed to cooperate with the Al-Qassim Chamber of Commerce and Industry in providing all relevant information and to strengthen trade ties especially in the export of rubber and rubber related products to Saudi Arabia. The delegates indicated that they were interested in sourcing rubber products from Malaysia, mainly rubber medical devices and rubber automotive components.



Dr. Yosuf A Al-Orini presenting a memento to the CEO of MREPC

NETHERLANDS FOREIGN INVESTMENT AGENCY (NFIA) VISIT TO MREPC

[24 March 2011]

A meeting between MREPC & NFIA was held on 24 March 2011 at MREPC. The objectives of the meeting were to establish contact and forge closer relations and to discuss areas of potential collaboration between both organizations.

In Malaysia, NFIA's focus is to assist Malaysian companies establish their business in the Netherlands. NFIA provides the following services:

- Set up preliminary meetings to provide up-to-date, personalized information on the Netherlands in general, relevant business locations, Dutch legislation and tax regulations, labor issues, permit procedures, governmental incentives and other relevant topics;
- Organize customized fact-finding trips in close cooperation with its network of regional economic development partners;
- Arrange contacts with relevant business partners, government authorities, a variety of Dutch networks and service suppliers, and other parties relevant to the investment process.



DCEO and officers of MREPC with representatives of NFIA



Participants discussing a case study

Problem Solving Skill with 7QC Tools

The workshop on Problem Solving Skills with 7QC Tools was held from the 28 Feb to 1 Mac 2011 at MREPC Multipurpose Hall. A total of 32 participants from 14 companies participated in the event. The trainer for the workshop was Mr Kelvin Chung, principal Consultant and Trainer from KC Quality Management. The participants found the workshop very beneficial as it comprised both analytical and statistical case studies which provided valuable input on how to solve problems and carry out improvement through a continual and structured approach.



Participants listening attentively to Dr. Sharon's presentation

INCOTERMS, Export and Import Fundamental Principles

MREPC organized a two day workshop on "INCOTERMS, Export and Import Fundamental Principles" on 28 & 29 March 2011. The workshop was conducted by Dr Sharon Tong Bee Eng from FMM who has 27 years of extensive knowledge and experience in the airfreight and training industry. The programme was attended by 20 participants from rubber product manufacturing companies. The main objective of the programme was to inform and educate the participants on the theoretical and practical principles of import and export, the use of contemporary skills to minimize shipping risks and utilisation of tools available to plan the documentation and cargo flow in an effective manner.



Participants with Mr. Billy Ong

The Branding Workshop

Mr Billy Ong from FMM began his presentation at MREPC's Branding Seminar held on 26 May 2011, by saying that each and every one of us is branded upon our arrival to this world. Yes, he was referring to our 'names'. For successful marketing, products need to be identified with a brand identity, for recognition and differentiation. Successful businesses are grounded on recognizable, appealing and unique brands. If these ultimately become a generic name associated with a particular product, the brand can be said to be unassailable. Mr. Ong's 30 years experience in marketing and sales, and his humorous delivery style, made this a successful training event.



Participants in a group activity assigned by Mr. Andrew Cheah

Productivity Improvement for Profit Maximization

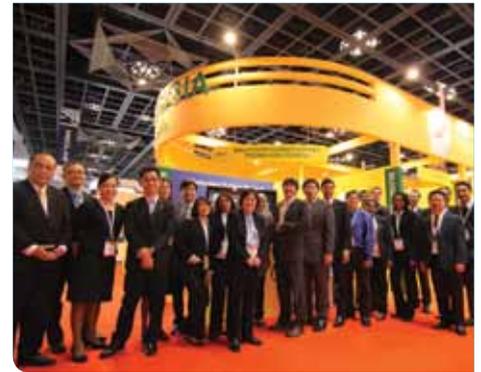
Some organizations do less with more and some organizations do more with less. Which organization do you want to belong to? This was the crux of the two day seminar on Productivity Improvement for Profit Maximization held on 10 & 11 May 2011. The programme was conducted by Mr Andrew Cheah from FMM and attended by 22 participants. The program outline included discussions on some key concepts such as key volume indicators, Parkinson principle, international and industrial benchmarking, value added concept and how cost reduction and spending can exist side by side.

Arab Health, Dubai

24-27 January 2011



Arab Health, the Middle East's leading healthcare exhibition and congress was held from 24 until 27 January 2011 in the Dubai International Exhibition Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. More than 2,790 companies from 62 countries participated in Arab Health this year. MREPC led the participation of eleven Malaysian rubber product manufacturers, namely Hartalega, Nulutex, Bonric, Riverstone Resources, Medical-Latex (DUA), TCS Quality & Productivity, Kossan Latex Industries, Latexx Partners, Karex Industries, Supermax Glove Manufacturing and Adventa Health. Three other rubber product companies from Malaysia also participated in the event, Takaso Rubber Products, YTY Industry and Top Glove. Visitor interest was primarily on gloves, including examination, surgical, radiation, cleanroom, food grade, industrial, chemotherapy and dental gloves. Other products attracting attention were condoms, Foley catheters, finger cots and probe covers. A considerable number of inquiries were received, both by MREPC and the participating exhibitors, reinforcing the belief that this event is fast becoming the most important international trade show for medical products after MEDICA.



Malaysian exhibitors at Arab Health 2011

Medical Fair India, New Delhi

25-27 March 2011

The 17th edition of Medical Fair India was held from 25 to 27 March 2011 at the Pragati Maidan Exhibition Complex New Delhi. The exhibition organized by Messe Dusseldorf had a total participation of 263 exhibitors from 14 countries. MREPC participated in the exhibition with eight rubber medical devices manufacturers; Adventa Health, Comfort Rubber Gloves Industries, Supermax Glove Manufacturing, Bonric, Latexx Partners, Qube Medical Products, Sanctuary Health and TCS Quality & Productivity.

A significant number of enquiries were received, especially for examination gloves, surgical gloves and catheters. The majority of the enquiries were from India, followed by a small percentage from Nepal, Sri Lanka, China, Taiwan, Turkey, Czech Republic and USA.



En. Adnan attending to a visitor at MREPC booth

MREPC also participated in the conference which was held concurrently with Medical Fair India. En Adnan Abdullah, the Director of Corporate Planning and Research presented a paper on "Medical Gloves: What You Need to Know". The presentation generated interest among the audience, who asked questions on the permeability, biodegradability and reusability of natural rubber gloves.

ISPO

6-9 February 2011

ISPO is the world's leading trade show for the sporting goods and sports fashion industry. The show was held from 6 until 9 February 2011 at the New Munich Trade Fair Centre in MesseGelande, Munich. For the first time, both ISPO Winter and ISPO Summer were held in one place at the same time. The exhibitors participating in ISPO are manufacturers, distributors and service providers from the sporting goods sector. The New Munich Trade Fair Centre has sixteen (16) halls that cater for the main categories of the show, namely, skiing, board, outdoor, performance, sourcing and sport style. The trade show attracted over 2,200 exhibitors and more than 80,000 trade visitors from over 106 countries, mainly from Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and France.



Mr. Raj with a visitor to MREPC booth

MREPC participated in ISPO for the first time with a promotional booth, with the intention of exploring business opportunities for Malaysian manufacturers from the rubber sporting goods sector and also to gauge the response from visitors to the trade show. Apart from MREPC, a few companies from Malaysia participated in the show. The companies from Malaysia were Elledi (M) Sdn Bhd, ARB Worldwide Sdn Bhd, Swim Fit Worldwide Corporation, Mad Wave Worldwide Corporation and Superlon Worldwide. MREPC received a number of enquiries from trade visitors, mostly for swim fins, exercise bands and swim caps. These enquiries have been referred to the relevant Malaysian manufacturers. Based on feedback received by MREPC, Malaysian rubber sporting goods manufacturers may consider participating in next year's ISPO, to be held from 29 January until 1 February 2012.

Procurex National

8-9 March 2011

MREPC participated in Procurex National 2011 at the NEC in Birmingham, UK, on 8 and 9 March 2011. This exhibition provides opportunities for suppliers to promote their organisation's capabilities and products to public sector agencies in the UK as well as to other participating businesses. Exhibitors had an opportunity to reach buyers who are not usually accessible to sales personnel, i.e. a government officials at many different levels, local government, central government agencies, not-for-profit organisations, as well as private sector participants, across different sectors, including health, education, police, fire and other services.



Dr. Habsah with visitors at the booth

The MREPC European representative, with the assistance of officers from TARRC, met with representative of several commercial and government entities, including the NHS Supply Chain, the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, MOD Defence Contract and Supply Service, the Contract Buying Consortium (representing various local government purchasing organisations) and the Economic Counsellor of the Embassy of Belgium. Specific inquiries from these organisations were addressed and networking contacts initiated. Follow up visits and discussions will be undertaken to increase awareness of the range and quality of Malaysian rubber products.

CCBE 2011

19–21 May 2011

The 5th China (Chongqing) International Building Science and Technology 2011 (CCBE 2011) was held from 19–21 May, 2011 at Chongqing, China. CCBE 2011 was organized by the Chongqing Construction Industry Association and Chongqing Federation Industry and Commerce. The exhibition focused on building structures, control and ventilation systems and construction equipment as well as architectural and landscape design. A total of 231 exhibitors participated at this show with MREPC being the only foreign exhibitor at the show. It is estimated that 3,000 people visited the exhibition.



Ms. Shamiezza with Malaysian manufacturers

MREPC led the Malaysian participation, with Doshin Rubber Product Sdn Bhd and Min Industries Sdn Bhd sharing the stand at the show. Both manufacturers showcased a wide range of rubber construction products such as seismic bearings and expansion joints. MREPC displayed rubber mountings, rubber pads, rubber hoses, seals, and water stops and other rubber products related to the construction industry.

Mr. Lee Jiang Jun from the Malaysian Rubber Board (MRB) presented a paper on Malaysia's Contribution to the Development of Seismic Bearings, which was attended by representatives from local construction companies. MREPC received 18 enquiries on seismic bearings, rubber flooring, and industrial rubber products. Although CCBE is a relatively a small local trade show, MREPC hopes it will serve as a stepping stone to promote Malaysian rubber industrial products in China.

EDITORIAL CHANGE



Dr. Lim Chong Lian retired from MREPC in April 2011, after serving as technical consultant cum editor of STRETCH for the last four years. Dr. Lim was the editor of STRETCH since the first issue which was published in the second quarter of 2007. MREPC records its appreciation to Dr. Lim for his contribution and wishes him well in all his future undertakings. En. Adnan Abdullah, the Director of Corporate Planning & Research division will take over from Dr. Lim as editor of STRETCH, assisted by Ms. Uthaya Malar, Senior Executive from Industry Relations & Public Affairs Division.



3 words inspire confidence

Made in Malaysia



For quality rubber medical devices manufactured to international standards, look to Malaysia. Malaysia – world's No. 1 in medical gloves, world's No.1 in condoms, world's No. 1 in rubber catheters.



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