

## BLEACHING AGENTS FOR CREPE RUBBER MANUFACTURE IN PLACE OF XYLIL MERCAPTAN (RPA. 3)

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The superiority of Sri Lanka crepe rubber due to its light colour is well known all over the World. The two main factors which have contributed to this are: (i) the nature of clones found in Sri Lanka and (ii) the use of a bleaching agent during the manufacture of rubber. Bleaching is an essential step in pale crepe and sole crepe manufacture if whiteness of the product is a critical requirement. An aromatic thiol, viz. xylyl mercaptan has been the most widely used bleaching agent for this purpose. Recent laws in developed industrial countries, where xylyl mercaptan has been produced

Up to now, have restricted its manufacture categorising it as a toxic and hazardous chemical. Therefore xylyl mercaptan will no more be available in the market and pale crepe producers are faced with the task of finding suitable substitutes for this chemical. Work has been carried out by the Chemistry Department of the RRI and very promising results have been obtained. It is hoped that it might be possible to recommend alternate products very soon. The methods of manufacturing these substitutes have also been studied so that the possibility of producing them in Sri Lanka as a further step is also given serious consideration. This paper compares the effects of these substitutes and RPA. 3 on the qualities of crepe rubber produced, and the technological properties of its vulcanisates.