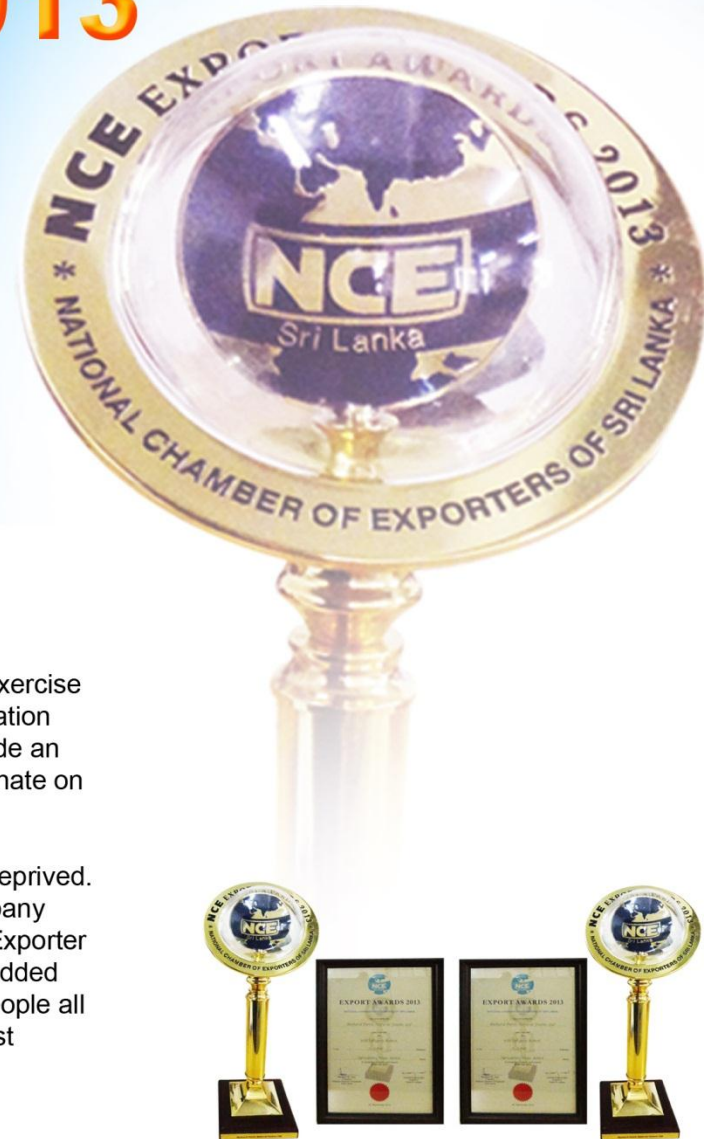


NCE Export Awards 2013



Gold Award Most Innovative Exporter 2013

Gold Award Agriculture Value Added Exporter (Large Category)



Rest=Restoration. Does it make sense? While exercise and movement are essential for stimulating circulation and the elimination of toxins, rest and sleep provide an opportunity for body to cleanse, repair and rejuvenate on a deep cellular level.

Most people in our society are chronically sleep deprived. It may be hard to believe...! yet a Sri Lankan company was recently presented with the Best Innovative Exporter Award and the Gold Award for Agriculture Value added Exporter 2013 for nourishing bodies millions of people all over the world with plenty of healing sleep and rest through 100% Natural latex mattresses.

Januka Karunasena, chief executive officer of Arpico, a Richard Pieris Natural Foams Ltd. company, with headquarters in Maharagama, Sri Lanka, discussed the company's increased production capacity and launch of a new sheet latex.

Richard Pieris Natural Foams Ltd.



Intrigued by the splendid achievement, Daily News supplements decided to make a courtesy call at their factory at Phase 01 of the Export Processing Zone in Biyagama and greeting us with a disarming smile was Januka Karunasena, guiding the destiny of his award winning company as its Chief Executive Officer.

Q. We at first would like to have your views about “sleep” and its beneficial effects on health?

Many people allow themselves the luxury of a nap only if they are sick. But the body has natural cycles of rest and activity and the desire for a few minutes of rest in the mid-afternoon seems to be an inherent physiological need. Although most people in our culture fight the desire for rest and even view it as a sign of indolence, in many cultures, a midday siesta is regarded as a necessity. Taking a few minutes out of the day for a nap can be wonderfully restorative. When you stop all activity to close your eyes and rest, both your body and your mind have an opportunity to relax deeply. When you sleep, make yourself as comfortable as possible. Take off your shoes, loosen tight items of clothing, find a comfortable mattress one that would be made of ultra-soft latex foam and dim the lights in the room before your head hits the pillow. Much of the body’s healing work takes place while you sleep this way. Without the need to attend to all the functions of daily life, your immune system and organs of detoxification can focus attention on cleansing and restoration. This is the time when your body does major housecleaning, taking care of waste that have accumulated during the day and repairing cellular damage.

Q. Can a mattress really impact our sleep?

Sleepless nights, tossing, turning and exhausted mornings – haven’t you had a feel of this nasty experience of late? Did you ever know that sleeping on the right mattress really do matter when it comes to getting a good night’s sleep. According to a research and development project undertaken by us, it was discovered that you may not have to be a princess like in the fairytale we learnt as children, to feel the pea under your mattress. The two-year study looked at how different support levels of mattresses impacted sleep, pain and daytime functioning.

The fact that people are very poor at selecting which mattresses would allow them to sleep pain-free should immediately interest consumers in the midst of mattress shopping. What’s the reason for this phenomenon? The answer lies in what happens to our body while sleeping. We pass through different stages of sleep each night. One of those stages called “rapid eye movement” (REM) is the stage of sleep when our most vivid dreams take place. To prevent us from acting out our dreams, we lose skeletal muscle tone. The skeletal muscles that support our back relax and we lose spinal support. So, a mattress that felt supportive while you were awake with the muscles active may perform differently when you are in REM sleep. This is where our 100% pure natural latex foam mattress come to your rescue as it would appear that we can all be a princess or prince when we sleep, meaning we really could feel those mattress differences, as they are not only healthy and environmentally friendly, they are extremely comfortable. The 100% natural latex mattress is one of the most luxurious mattresses in the global bedding market for global sleepers expect more comfort with the right body support than ever before. All our natural latex foam mattresses have an extremely long lifespan, stay incredibly cool and have excellent anti-microbial and anti-fungal properties. You may not know that we need latex from over 2500 rubber trees to turnout a queen-sized mattress. This alone speaks for the extent of rubber plantations required to meet container loads of mattresses for the global markets. Producing quality latex mattresses have been a challenge for many manufacturers around the world, owing to their lack of access to superior quality latex sap. We, at Richard Peris Natural Foams Limited (RPNF), source all our raw latex from our own FSC certified Kegalle Plantations which produces the best natural latex in the world and we are recognized as the largest and the best natural rubber manufacturer in the country. All our latex is configured at our own centrifuge plant housed on the plantations. The close proximity in location of the plant to the factory ensures freshness of the latex. The process is in line with the General Organic Latex Standard (GOSL) certified by the Control Union. Experience in the Dunlop process fused with fresh and best quality latex obtained from our own plantations gives us the edge in the market to manufacture the best structured latex blocks and sheets. Deploying high quality cutting edge machinery, RPNF has emerged the most preferred supplier to the leading 100% natural and all natural organic mattress brands around the world.

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Q. you have enlightened us enough about your wonderful product but hasn't mentioned much about the enterprise behind the revolution?

Richard Peiris Group of Companies famed as ARPICO is an 82 year old conglomerate trusted locally and globally and are pioneers in the manufacture of 100% natural latex foam in Sri Lanka through a natural latex foam manufacturing plant in Nawinna where our head office is situated. Since the production of our first mattress in 1952, RPNF's has taken vast strides through continuous research and development in the natural foam rubber technology. High quality 100% natural latex manufactured by Arpico under Kegalle Plantations Plc is our strength which is exhausted in manufacturing the purest all natural latex mattresses certified by globally recognized certifying bodies as ECO LGA, Oeko Tex, GOLS, STROKE, ABC and SATRA. We now supply the Arpico Organic Latex product line complying with GOLS (Global Organic Latex Standards) by the Control Union. The production prowess of RPNF has created a world market for our natural latex, enabling RPNF to emerge the global leader in 100% pure natural latex manufacturing. Today the versatile production capabilities of RPNF meet the demands of over 32 countries worldwide. During the 60's we used to manufacture omnibus seat cushions using our 100% natural latex. If you could remember, it was a grey coloured cushion with big holes in it. 80's were a turning point in our history and that was when our product generated interest and demand in the US market making us turn to exports in a big way. The present factory was setup in 1993 in the Biyagama Export Processing Zone with futuristic technology to manufacture 100% natural latex mattresses and pillows primarily for the US market. Our product dominates the US market and today we've grown to make 32 countries around the world and its countrymen and women have a restful snooze whilst being ever grateful to Richard Peiris Natural Foams.

Q. We'd like to know about your Research and Development facility?

Latex production is a delicate and a vigorous process. Variables such as form build up; gelation, vulcanization to name a few impact the key steps of the process, determining the quality of the final product. In this context, our Research and Development Department is engaged in continuous research for the improvement of the variables.

A considerable number of raw materials and process configurations are tested annually to enhance the quality of the process ability and the end product, thereby ensuring the quality edge of our products in the market. We use the finest raw materials sourced directly from our fully owned plantations. We use authentic natural rubber (100% polymer). The production is free of petroleum chemical, synthetic fillers, ash or chalk. We adhere to international standards approved by international independent institutions to ensure customer confidence and high quality. We ensure a consistent supply of superior quality centrifuged latex. We deploy state-of-the-art machinery in manufacturing of products. Our advanced online quality control system monitors the process at all stages up to product delivery.

Q. What are quality parameters you conform to?

Our diversified deep global reach is a testimony to the quality standards maintained by us. Today our 100% natural latex products have secured the best test results in the industry from globally accepted testing bodies as ECO Institute, LGA Quality Test Germany, Oeko-Tex Switzerland, ABC, STROKE- USA, SATRA UK and GOLS-Netherlands.

Oeko-Tex 100 Class 1 : This is a testing standard recognized for 'children- safe' material. LGA : This test evaluates the durability and the resilience characteristics of natural latex. Our rubber has got 99/100 in this test. SATRA : Our 100% natural flame retardant products comply with SATRA requirements. ABC Research Corporation : This test which is conducted in ABC labs, USA, evaluates the antibacterial efficacy of natural latex. Twin City Testing Corporation/Stork : Conducted by the Twin City Corporation, USA, this test evaluates the body interface pressure for latex products.

ECO : Conducted by the ECO Institute, Germany, this test evaluates the fillers, synthetic rubber and hazardous components and emissions in the product. ECO certification confirms that our products are free of fillers, synthetic rubber or hazardous particles, thus being certified as 100 % natural. Richard Pieris Natural Foam's latex blocks have been tested for its components with ECO certification over the last many years. Our products have no SBR and additional filler content and have passed with much higher ratings at the test. ISPA : We have been a member of the International Sleep Products Association, USA since 1989. SSA : We have been a member of Specialty Sleep Association, USA

Q. Can we know about your production process?

Dunlop Process has become the most preferred technology to manufacture 100% pure natural latex mattresses as the process is environmental-friendly and no toxic chemicals are emitted during production. All our natural latex foam products are manufactured through the Dunlop process. Compound latex is frothed and filled into molds and vulcanized at lower temperature. Each mattress is made individually in molds for the size of the product. The gravity and natural sedimentation makes the firmness gradient from bottom to top, enhancing back support firmness and luxury comfort of 100% natural latex mattress.

Nature's Comfort

100%

Natural Latex

