DISEASES IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATURAL RUBBER[1]

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Using the two contrasting situations as presented by Bra
zil and Malaysia, the type and nature of the major rubber
diseases, along with their effects, on the growth and
development of the natural rubber industry are discussed.
Brazil, the natural home of Hevea spp.where the destruc
tive leaf blight SALB (Microcyclus ulei)is endemic, rubber
plantations turned viable only in the last decade. The
classic case of failure of Ford plantations at Fordlandia
and Belterra in the 1930s attributed to SALB may now be
contrasted with the successfully rehabilitated rubber as
evident from the 1970s in South Bahia and around Belém, or
with satisfactory new rubber established under the PROBOR
project. Both having benefited greatly from the results of
research and government - funded SALB - control programme
(PROMASE), their extension to cover all aspects of rubber
growing was ensured with the establishment of CNPSD under
EMBRAPA in Manaus in 1975. In the case of Malaysia, planta
tion rubber grew smoothly, being free of the ravages of
SALB and aided, from the outset, by a unique and benefi
cial research and advisory scheme financed by the industry.
Among the debilitating indegenous diseases, root pathogens
proved troublesome in the early years, followed by from

the 1960s by stem and leaf diseases on a few modern high yielding clones. However, the first was quickly overcome by an efficient assisted biological control scheme worked out in the 1950s while the second effectively checked by the many effective fungicidal treatments, combined with long - term disease avoidance through the rational use of clonal resistance under the Enviromax principle.