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Bid to revive glory of golden fibre

Entrepreneurs from IJO-member states meet on jute products

Entrepreneurs from the IJO-member states yesterday began a two-day meeting on diversified jute products with an aim to exchange their experiences in a bid to revive the lost glory of the golden fibre, reports UNB.

International Jute Organisation arranged the workshop to initiate a dialogue between entrepreneurs, bankers, NGOs, funding agencies and endusers for promotion of diversified use of jute.

Some 15 entrepreneurs as well as the relevant players in the field participated in the meeting.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed, who inaugurated the workshop, stressed the development and marketing of diversified jute products which were environment-friendly.

"This is a development which needs more encouragement for the economic uplift of the rural people as well as that of growers," he said. He called for a strategy to increase production and export of jute derivatives.

Prof Sayeed noted that the future of this natural fibre appeared to be bright due to increasing awareness about environmental issue and said jute research and development should be promoted generously.

Grameen Bank Managing Director Prof Muhammad Yunus, called on people to pro-



Professor Abu Sayeed, State Minister for Information, inaugurated the two-day IJO International Workshop of Entrepreneurs of Diversified Jute Products at a city hotel yesterday.

tect jute, a product on which lives of millions closely depend.

He said jute was a minor crop, even in the rural economy, because of its low price.

For several decades in the past, Prof Yunus said, scientific research had been devoted more enthusiastically to finding synthetic substitute for jute which was only considered a cheap packaging material.

Rabbani agreed the technologies were still in the laboratory stage. "What we need now is wide dissemination of the

knowledge of these new technologies, initiative on the part of enterprising entrepreneurs and NGOs, he said.

"We also need financial

back-up from the financing institutions and donor agencies and appropriate incentive and policy support from the government," he said.

On Monday's technical session, the entrepreneurs discussed production and raw material problems and design facilities and marketing strategies.

The Finance Minister also informed Pronk about an investors' forum to be held in Dhaka following the next aid group meeting early November this year.

During the meeting they discussed matters relating to bilateral and mutual interest, particularly further development of economic cooperation between the two countries.

Pronk recalled his long and close association with Kibria while he (Pronk) was assigned to UNCTAD and Kibria was head of ESCAP.

The Finance Minister ap-

proised Pronk of present government's economic policy and overall present economic condition of the country.

The Dutch minister expressed his satisfaction at the macroeconomic stability prevailing in Bangladesh. He also expressed satisfaction at the political stability which is very essential for investment.

Pronk said there should be more close cooperation among the entrepreneurs of the two countries to exchange information and find out more investment and trade opportunities.

Netherlands Ambassador in Dhaka Robert A Vornis was present on the occasion.

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