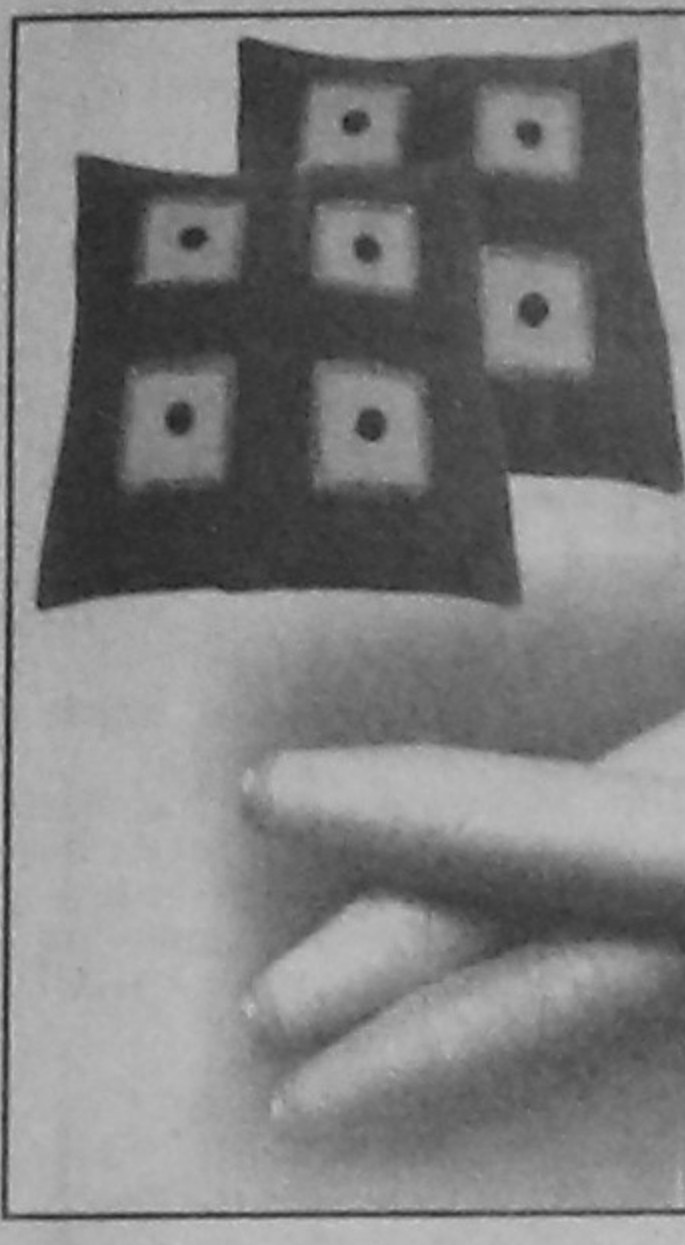




EXHIBITION on DIVERSIFIED JUTE PRODUCTS

October 7, 2000, Sheraton Hotel, Dhaka
October 8 & 9 2000, IJO Premise, Farmgate



Ministry of Jute, EPB, IJO, European Commission, Dhaka

Planning & Designing : Conference & Exhibition Management Services

Message



It is heartening to note that at a time when jute has been facing unequal competition from synthetic substitutes, the Ministry of Jute and Export Promotion Bureau in association with International Jute Organization and the Delegation of the European Commission in Bangladesh, has undertaken an initiative to organize a Three-day Exhibition on 'Diversified Jute Products' from 7 to 9 October 2000 in Dhaka.

I am also glad to learn that the IJO Secretariat is launching a new project on "Biotechnological Application of Enzymes for Making Paper Pulp from Green Jute/Kenaf (the whole plant)". Successful implementation of this project will make substantial savings in terms of foreign exchange by substituting the imports of pulp and paper. The international community has a responsibility to ensure full realization of the potential of jute, which can complement the interests of the developed world and the jute producing developing countries.

I wish this exhibition and the new project all success.

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed
President
People's Republic of Bangladesh

Message



I am happy to know that a three-day Exhibition on Diversified Jute Products will be organised jointly by the Ministry of Jute and Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh in association with International Jute Organization (IJO) and Delegation of the European Commission during 7 to 9 October 2000 in Dhaka.

Jute is an important natural fibre, which is a source of livelihood for millions of farmers and thousands of workers of the jute producing countries including Bangladesh. The commodity has been a major source of foreign exchange earnings for a number of producing countries, but has suffered severe decline in its trade internationally in the recent years due to competition from the synthetic products.

The development of non-traditional diversified jute products in the recent years through joint collaboration of the donors, such as, the EC and the CFC has increased the potential of jute substantially in the international market, which is expected to help jute regain its market. Introduction of such new products and emerging technologies will help salvage the jute economy from such a collapse.

I wish every success for this Exhibition, which will open up a bright future for jute.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh live forever

Shah A.M.S Kibria
Minister for Finance
Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh

Message



It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction for me to express a few words, being in charge of the Ministry of Jute, on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, on the occasion of the Three-day Exhibition of Diversified Jute Products being held from 7 to 9 October 2000 in Dhaka which is being jointly organised by the Ministry of Jute and Export Promotion Bureau in close association with IJO and Delegation of European Commission.

It is indeed tragic to see the jute market dwindling so fast, once known as the "Golden Fibre of Bengal" and a major source of foreign exchange earning, on which depends the livelihood of millions of farmers and workers of Bangladesh. With the introduction of synthetics, the international market for jute and its traditional products has seriously eroded in the recent years. Fortunately, the non-traditional diversified uses of jute have been explored recently through the joint collaboration and generosity of the donors and our friends.

In this connection I take note with utmost satisfaction of the fact that the use of jute in producing paper pulp has revealed that this will increase the domestic consumption of jute in Bangladesh to a great extent, so much so that this annually renewable resource will replace the precious forest resources that are being used currently in the paper industry and thus will stop deforestation, protecting the environment. I believe that the multiple use of jute products will increase to a great extent on the ground of environmental consciousness of the new millennium, which will help to regain the past glory of "Golden Fibre".

I am sure the diversified uses of jute will increase the markets of jute and jute products and thereby the foreign exchange earnings of Bangladesh.

I wish all success of this Exhibition and its enhanced impact in the multiple uses of jute and jute products.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu,
May Bangladesh Live for Ever

A.K. Faezul Huq, MP
Minister of State
Ministry of Jute
Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh

Problems and Environmental Issues of Jute Sector



Ghulam Rahman
Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh

The invention of non-traditional diversified jute products in recent years through joint collaboration of the donors, such as, the EC and the CFC has increased the potential of jute substantially in the international market, which is expected to help jute regain its market and thus augment our foreign exchange earnings. While the jute industry suffers the lack of demand, it will be worthwhile to introduce new products and emerging technologies to help salvage the jute economy from such a collapse.

In recent past, the jute industry has been facing a number of problems, particularly because of over-reliance on only one end-use sector - packaging. This is a field where there are many substitutes. The main competition comes from the synthetic industry, mainly polypropylene, which is preferred as a packaging material in the developed countries, in view of its lower cost as well as local and immediate availability. Further, the current trend of bulk handling of commodities in the market of developed countries has also significantly reduced the demand for traditional packaging materials of jute. Hence, a declining trend is seen in the consumption as well as price of jute packaging products in the market of developed countries. In some producing countries jute is also facing competition from other more remunerative crops, mainly food crops, and, as such, jute cultivation is gradually being shifted to marginal and less fertile lands.

The limited production base (South and South-East Asia) of jute, relocation of manufacturing base from the developed countries to the jute producing developing region, growing demand for jute in the producing countries themselves, lack of investment in agricultural and industrial research and development for jute, are some of the other forces that have led to the perception that jute is a third world commodity and/or a 'dying' commodity and has essentially re-inforced the reduction of global interest in jute.

Jute, being a natural fibre, is available annually and is eco-friendly and bio-degradable. It is a crop whose potential is yet to be realised given the new prioritise of today's world, including the increasing attention being given to environmental issues. The international community has a responsibility to ensure full realisation of its potential so that jute can complement the interest of the developed world and the jute producing developing countries.

Jute is one of the few crops, which can be grown in the monsoon season, and can be rotated with rice to restore the soil fertility and structure. The leaves and roots of jute plants enrich the fertility of soil for sustained agriculture and have good nutrition value as vegetables. Use of jute sticks as fuel and fencing material as substitute for wood prevents deforestation. Therefore, given the increased global concern for the environment, the future prospects of jute remain high particularly in the areas where it can directly contribute to the protection of environment.

The lost days of golden fibre will come back if the diversified commercial use of jute could be ensured. Thus, it will then immensely contribute to the improvement of the lot of the impoverished millions of the country.

Strategy to Regain "Golden Fibre" Status for Jute



Dr. R. Mandal
Officer-in-Charge, International Jute Organization

Jute the "Golden Fibre" of yesteryears started losing its glory, with the advent of synthetics as substitutes into the picture. Consumption in the domestic market for all the jute producing countries not being sufficiently high, the structural imbalance of supply over demand started widening, forcing the marginal farmers into a great difficulty. The intervention of the Governments was never adequate to protect the interest of the farmers. Concerns and sympathies are expressed at regular interval by the Governments, critics and well-wishers of jute, but no tangible solutions seems to be in sight.

Shrinking demand of jute goods has also led the industry into a stage of virtual sickness. The traditional products like hessian cloth, sacking and carpet backing, which are being replaced by synthetic substitutes, on account of cheaper price, easy availability, being cleaner to handle and also on account of the fact that most of the importing countries of jute have their own manufacturing capacity of synthetic products. It has become a fait accompli for the jute farmers and the industry. Notwithstanding the fact the whole world is being vocal in favour of eco-friendly, biodegradable natural products, the onslaught of synthetic on jute continues and there seems to be no respite from the sufferings of the farmers and the workers engaged in jute economy. One therefore, needs to have a strategy as to how best an alternative way of regaining the "golden status of the fibre" could be invented, better sooner than later.

This was one of the major objective of setting up of an organisation like the International Jute Organisation (IJO) to address the cause of jute and ensure that the interest of this important cash crop, on which millions of farmers depend in jute producing countries, can be appropriately addressed. However, the organisation have never had access to enough resources to undertake activities that could produce new products, processes and technologies to supplement the traditional products of jute, through which this commodity could regain its position. Fortunately during the past few years, some important projects were undertaken by IJO and implemented through the financial assistance of major funding agencies, like Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), FAO, IFAD etc. and also through an extensive program undertaken by some member countries of IJO, a number of new products, processes and technologies have come to a stage for successful commercial exploitation. Jute can now be converted into composite material both thermosetting and thermoplastic, to be used as wood substitutes and moulding material respectively with substantial benefit. Wood substitutes produced from jute, can be used to be converted into any products manufactured with wood with additional benefit such as jute-based thermosetting products are fire retardant, termite proof, has low water absorption and poor thermal conductivity. Door frames, window frames, backrest (seat), floor board, a number of gadgets for transport vehicles and even the corrugated sheets to replace CI sheets or Asbestos sheets for roofing purpose, can be produced from jute at a competitive cost. These wood substitutes could be used with equal ease like wood and can be nailed, polished, sawn, cut or shaped as the product demands. The forestry in our country is limited. Using jute to produce wood substitutes would help conserving such limited forestry and thereby protect the environment. The products will not only have domestic market, but could enter the export market in large volume, on account of the fact that the environmental regulation in the developed countries are also coming heavily against felling trees and deforestation. This technology is now readily available for entrepreneurial venture and technical know-how could be obtained through IJO for any interested entrepreneurs to undertake such entrepreneurial venture.

Jute as a fibre, can be reinforced with plastic to improve the physical properties by more than 50 percent with addition of upto 40 percent jute. Granules produced with jute reinforced plastic, can be moulded with equal ease as virgin polymer in injection moulding, compression moulding or blow moulding. Apart from the gain in physical strength, the cost of the production is also likely to be reduced significantly on account of the differential in price between virgin polymer and the jute fibre. While jute bags are losing in competition on price with synthetics, on account of the lighter weight of the synthetic bag, when it is compared in weight to weight, price of jute fibre is still one-fourth that of polypropylene.

CFC funded IJO project, implemented by ATO-DLO in the Netherlands suggests that jute reinforced plastic can compete with glass fibre products at a relatively cheaper cost. The total consumption of plastic all over the world is about 100 million tons. If we can add 40 percent jute, we need 40 millions tons of jute, to be produced. The world production of jute is only between 3 - 3.5 millions tons. Therefore, we do not need to go for reinforcing plastic for every end-uses and in as large percentage as 40 percent. Only limited percentage for selective packaging products can consume large volume of jute to help create demand and thereby stabilize price for the jute farmers.

The jute can be used for producing non-woven mats through needle punching method or stitch bonding method. Such products can be moulded for use in automobile sector in a big way. The environmental regulations in developed countries are forcing the manufacturers, to use recyclable materials. One would be surprised that there are 38 places in a vehicle, where different synthetic fabrics are used and it should be possible to replace that synthetic fabrics by non-woven products made of jute or jute blended mats. This is an area where the potential for consumption of jute is very large and value addition is high. A whole range of products have been developed through an IJO project and all their technical details are readily available. All it requires is an entrepreneurial venture to produce the mats for catering to the market looking for such products. Such non-woven products would be very useful for using as shoe-in-soles, for which there could be a large demand as the world produces nearly 12 million pair of shoes every year. A strategic marketing program needs to be undertaken to exploit this opportunity.

I am glad to mention here that some beginning has already been made by setting up of a joint venture unit here in Bangladesh with a German Company to semi-process the jute, to be taken to Europe, convert them into the moulded products and supply to a renowned automobile industry. This is small but a prospective beginning and once successful, many automobile industries may enter into this field of using jute as a raw material for producing a number of automobile components through moulding.

The other opportunity of consuming large volume of jute as insulating materials in construction activities in Europe, which usually uses foams. Again the environment regulations will force them to replace foams with a substitute that could be biodegradable and eco-friendly. Here again jute being one of the cheapest fibre and available aplenty can replace large volume of such insulating products for construction activities. Consultation for setting up of such a manufacturing unit in Bangladesh is in progress and technology transfer is likely to take place, if successful negotiation

Message



I am very pleased about the organization of the Exhibition of Diversified Jute Products and New Generation Technologies.

New Generation Technologies have opened up possibilities for bulk use of jute as a raw material in the production of high value added and price competitive intermediary or final products. This outlook together with the growing global environmental awareness provide an exciting window of opportunity to rejuvenate the importance of jute in world trade as an environment friendly, bio-degradable fibre and replenishable natural resource.

The European Commission is aware of the importance of the jute sector for Bangladesh's economy and the livelihood and welfare of millions of people in this country. Over the last decade, the European Commission and its Delegation in Bangladesh have actively supported the endeavours for the development of jute and diversified jute products, with a particular emphasis on the commercialisation of new technologies and non-traditional jute products which were developed by joint efforts of the European Community, the Common Fund for Commodities, the International Jute Organisation, and other donors.

Europe has links with jute and jute products for more than a century. The diversified application of jute in the fields of automobile construction and insulation technology have renewed the interest of European industrialists and European attraction for jute. The successful use of jute in paper production at competitive prices is another potential field. I believe that the new generation technologies for diversified jute products will open exciting new opportunities for collaboration and joint ventures between entrepreneurs in Bangladesh and in the Member States of the European Community.

I hope that this Exhibition will encourage further inventions with respect to the diversified uses of jute in the near future and thus contribute to the economies of the jute producing countries.

Antonio de Souza Menezes
Ambassador and Head of Delegation
Delegation of the European Commission-Bangladesh

Message



I am delighted to know that a Three-day Exhibition of Diversified Jute Products is being organised jointly by the Ministry of Jute and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) in association with International Jute Organization (IJO) and the Delegation of the European Commission (EC) in Bangladesh.

Jute is a versatile and environment-friendly natural fibre. It is an important cash crop of Bangladesh. The livelihood of millions of growers, traders and workers of the country depend on jute industry. But the advent of synthetics has caused sufferings to the jute growers throughout the world during the last three decades. It has adversely affected the industry squeezing its international market. But jute fibre has a great deal of potential in diversified applications and uses. So there is also a further scope of expansion of jute market globally.

Donors including EC have played a key role in the research and development of raw jute fibre and products and thereby uplifting the economics of Bangladesh and other jute-producing countries. Such efforts have been strengthened by the establishment of IJO in 1984, which provided an effective forum for dialogue and link between the jute producing and consuming countries. The organization helped improve the quality of jute fibre and invent diversified jute products. The products thus developed have already created a solid footing towards recovering jute's lost market to synthetics, while several other diversified jute products are in the offing.

I am also delighted to understand that among others IJO is launching a project to use jute in producing paper pulp through application of bio-technology with the assistance of the EC, the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the Government of France. I hope this will surely increase the use of jute enormously in the domestic market of Bangladesh and save the previous foreign exchange used in importing paper pulp.

I fervently wish this Exhibition to boost further promotion and use of jute.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever

Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister
Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh

Message



It is a great pleasure for me to know that the Ministry of Jute and Export Promotion Bureau in collaboration with International Jute Organisation and the Delegation of the European Commission in Dhaka, are organising a three-day Exhibition of Diversified Jute Products on 7 - 9 October 2000 in Dhaka.

Jute is the most important natural fibre, which is a source of livelihood for millions of small and marginal farmers in the Asia-Pacific region. Hundreds and thousands of workers are employed in the jute industry, both in the jute producing and consuming countries. The commodity has been a major source of foreign exchange earnings for Bangladesh.

In fact, the pace of development in the global jute sector has been facing great difficulties, particularly due to the advent of synthetic substitutes. I am sure, considering the environmental implications, the next century is going to be for jute. The Government of Bangladesh has already initiated a number of programs, including production of paper pulp from green jute. In this regard, I am pleased to know that the IJO Secretariat is also launching a new project on "Biotechnological application of enzymes for making paper pulp from green Jute/Kenaf" jointly funded by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), European Commission, Government of France and Government of Bangladesh. This project, once successfully implemented, will make bulk use of jute as raw materials for pulp. Induction of emerging technologies will create new avenues for more consumption of jute and develop new industry with opportunities for creation of employment and foreign exchange earning through exports.

I wish every success of this exhibition.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh live forever

Md. Abdul Jalil
Minister for Commerce
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Message



I take this opportunity to say a few words on the occasion of the Three-day Exhibition on Diversified Jute Products and New Generation Technologies from 7 to 9 October 2000 at the IJO headquarters.

The international market for jute and its traditional products has alarmingly shrunk by the introduction of synthetic products during the last two/three decades. The invention of non-traditional diversified jute products in the recent years through the joint collaboration with the donors, such as, the EC countries, the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the tremendous efforts made by the IJO have, fortunately, increased the chance that jute can be made more competitive against synthetics in order to regain its lost market.

The recent global awareness about the environment has further strengthened the position of this environment friendly, bio-degradable natural fibre. Among others, the use of jute in making paper pulp has increased the chance of massive domestic consumption of jute in Bangladesh, so that this annually renewable resource can be used in paper industry instead of precious forest resource and thus resisting deforestation and protecting the environment.

The invention of geo-jute has already increased the diversified use of jute. I am also glad to note that diversified uses of jute now can be considerably extended to the homotextile and automobile sector. While several technologies have already been developed, some more are in the offing, increasing the chance of further diversified use of jute. These, definitely, will expand the market of jute and result in the increase in the foreign exchange earnings of the producing and exporting countries including Bangladesh.

I hope that such efforts will tremendously promote the use of jute in the background of the stiff competition from synthetics.

Md. Mahfuzul Islam
Chairman, International Jute Council