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## Redeems urged to spearhead R&D on bamboo

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Mohd Naroden Majais, Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Department

**BAU:** Redeems (Association of Research and Development Movement of Singai Sarawak) will become a research centre for bamboo and its downstream products.

Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Department Mohd Naroden Majais said yesterday that bamboo has great potential to be commercialised and urged Redeem to spearhead and intensify the research and development (R&D) activities.

He pointed out that the state government, on its part, would support the R&D and marketing.

"Given the potential of bamboo as a product by itself, and the handicraft made from it, the R&D need to be intensified and Redeems can spearhead it," Naroden stressed.

He said this when officiating at the closing of bamboo-based

handicraft course at Redeem centre here.

Assistant Minister of Environment Datuk Peter Nansian, who is Tasik Biru assemblyman and president of Redeem and Temenggong Datu Stephen Jussem were also present.

Naroden pointed out that bamboo has a great potential as furniture and flooring material.

Demand for it is increasing.

He cited China which was the prime exporter of bamboo-based products has benefitted significantly from the industry.

China, he explained, has also set up its International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) for the purpose of research, training and platform to seek advice.

Naroden, who is also Assistant Minister of Planning and Resource Management, noted that there were about 50 species of bamboo in the country, but only 15 were extensively used, mainly for handicraft.

Naroden also advised Redeem to market handicrafts in the city area and suggested that the association hold exhibition.

Meanwhile, Nansian said a state bamboo development team has been formed, to intensify the R&D with the participation of Sarawak Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority (Salcra).

According to him, Redeem was also working with Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) for the purpose.

"Of course we will like to make Redeem as the R&D centre and for this purpose we are also seriously considering working with Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM)," he told reporters.

Nansian disclosed that eventually bamboo-based products will become the product of Bau under the 'one district one product' concept.