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Great potential for state's furniture industry



DATUK Jacob Dungau Sagan (second right) takes a close look at the 'nibong' wood sample as (from left) Hashim Bojet, Datu Sarudu Hoklai and Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod look on. PHOTO: JOHN CHAN

BY NORMASHEILA ZAIDI

KUCHING: The state's downstream development of timber industry is still at a very low level, revealed Deputy of International Trade and Industry (MITI) Datuk Jacob Dungau Sagan.

Up to September this year, only RM20 million worth of furniture, or approximately 0.3 per cent of the total value of timber, were exported.

"Sarawak is very rich in raw materials and we should explore more to give added value to timber in order to increase our income," he said.

Sagan said this when met

by the reporters at the closing ceremony of the Sarawak Furniture Industry Entrepreneur Development Seminar held at one of the leading hotels here yesterday.

The Deputy Minister reminded local entrepreneurs that the furniture industry has great potential to contribute to the nation's income.

According to the statistics, the total export value of the Malaysia's furniture last year stood at RM8 billion.

"Up to September this year, the export value recorded was RM5.6 billion and this figure will continue to rise because demand

from the international market is high," he said.

Sagan also hoped that more seminars on the furniture industry could be held and that more Bumiputera entrepreneurs would participate in the industry.

The seminar yesterday was organised by MITI in collaboration with the Sarawak Timber Industry Corporation (PUSAKA), Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) and University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

Also present were PUSAKA General Manager Datu Haji Sarudu Haji Hoklai and FRIM Director-General Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod.