

**BINTULU:** Entrepreneurs in the timber industry in Sarawak are asked to continuously strive to meet the various new or additional requirements and regulations imposed by the importing countries.

Such compliance were essential as they would maintain the country's share in the global market besides safeguarding the safety and health of consumers as well as environment .

General Manager of Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) Datu Len Talif Salleh said this while officiating at a briefing session on new export requirements on plywood export to Taiwan which was held at Parkcity Everly Hotel here yesterday.

He explained that the Taiwan Government had notified World Trade Organisation on October 10, 2006 on their intention to regulate the import of all wood panel products using formaldehyde based adhesives. Plywood which has been widely used as a kind of furniture and building material these days was included in a list of restricted products.

Taiwan enforced these new requirements with effect July 1 this year, making it necessary among many importing countries to impose these similar requirements.

Talif's text of speech was read by STIDC Acting Senior Manager (Industrial Planning) Nicholas Andrew Lisem while the briefing was delivered by Chief of the Bureau of Standards, Metrology and Inspection (BSMI), Shinwei Ni of Ministry of Economic Affairs, Taiwan.

The objective of the briefing was to inform the timber industry about the technical specifications and administrative procedures required for compliance by exporters and manufacturers.

"The ability of the industry to meet the formaldehyde emission level set by the major importing countries constitute a positive development for both international and domestic consumers," said Talif.

He explained compliance to technical regulations could expand the industry market share aboard while, on the other hand, the domestic consumers benefited as as similar high



Shiwei Ni briefing the participants on new technical requirements on plywood export to Taiwan.

quality products being used by the local construction industry.

"The plywood, adhesive manufacturers and other supporting industry will gain directly in terms of technology transfer," said Talif. Talif also called on the players of the local timber industry to work closely with relevant authorities like BSMI to meet the newly imposed requirements.

He said this was because Taiwan an important and is the third largest plywood market for Sarawak after Japan and South Korea.

In 2006, Sarawak exported RM298 million worth of plywood which constituted 12 per cent of total export plywood revenue.

Talif also pointed out that the timber industry would continue to play an important role in improving the socio-economic development of the State as export revenue from timber and timber products had improved by 24.2 per cent from RM7.23 billion in 2005 to RM9 billion in 2006.

He said Sarawak today is the largest producer and exporter of wood panel products, particularly plywood, in Malaysia.

A total of 75 representatives from government agencies, plywood industry players, glue producers, MDF manufacturers and export associations attended the briefing.