

PROMOTE TRADITIONAL PRODUCTS
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The Swadeshi movement should be promoted as it generates employment, Minister for Labour Shibu Baby John has said.

Wrong notions of social status had been compelling people to pursue professional courses. This attitude contributed to rising unemployment in the State, he said after inaugurating a 13-day Swadeshi Festival organised by the Gandhi Centre for Rural Development at the Olayil Rotary Centre here on Tuesday.

Kerala had many traditional products that deserved to be developed and promoted in markets outside the State. The trend was that the people of the State craved for brands from outside the State. Such an attitude should change, he said.

Quality and proper packaging could improve marketability of such these products. The Minister said he had seen neatly packed jackfruit pod in supermarkets in Canada many years ago.

Government was turning out to be a 'poor employment provider.' The government provided only 12,000 jobs a year. The number of those registered with employment exchanges crossed 43 lakh, the Minister said.

The employment exchanges, to be christened employability exchanges from May, had identified 2000 job-oriented courses. Aspirants would be provided training to tap the opportunities available, he said.

Gandhi Centre for Rural Development director Jacob Pulickan presided over the function. B. Harikumar, president, Rotary Club of Kollam East, delivered the keynote address.

Seminars on various aspects of Swadeshi movement will be held at the venue. There will be training sessions on making home products.

Over 300 local products were on show at the festival. The Centre for Gandhi Studies and Research, the Kollam East Rotary Club, and the Kollam District Sarvodaya Mandalam are organising the event.