



For Immediate Release
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DNFI Innovation in Natural Fibres Award 2019

Debasish Das and Subhas Ghosh Win 2019 Award:

“Biodegradable Weather-Resistant Cotton-Jute Fabric can replace non-biodegradable PVC-Coated Polyester”

Dr. Debasish Das, Professor, University of Calcutta, Department of Jute and Fibre Technology, and **Dr. Subhas Ghosh**, Professor, Eastern Michigan University, School of Visual Built Environments, College of Engineering and Technology, have won the 2019 Discover Natural Fibres Initiative Innovation Award.

The two researchers collaborated on the development of a biodegradable cotton-jute fabric with a waterproof coating that can substitute for non-biodegradable PVC-coated polyester. The new cotton-jute fabric is suitable for use in outdoor fabrics such as tarps, awnings, canopies, or automobile hooding material. In addition to being biodegradable, the natural fibre material meets fire-retardancy standards and allows the transfer of moisture vapor to avoid the accumulation of humidity on the underside of fabrics, while remaining waterproof.

Crucially, the natural fibre textile product developed by Das and Ghosh contains no carcinogenic plasticizer, no toxic formaldehyde-based adhesion promoter, and no non-biodegradable fabric components.

This cost-effective natural fibre product was developed within the Department of Jute and Fibre Technology, University of Calcutta, with support from the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The product will be produced on a commercial scale by MS. Ajanta Textiles, India,

Dr. Das earned a Ph.D. from the Department of Polymer Science and Technology, University of Calcutta, India. In addition to serving as a professor at the University of Calcutta, Dr. Das was a member of the faculty at the National Institute of Fashion Technology, Government of India. He teaches and conducts research in the areas of textile chemistry, technical textiles, coated textiles, and related subjects.

Dr. Ghosh earned a Ph.D. from Manchester University. Prior to joining Eastern Michigan University, he was a Distinguished Professor and Director of Research at the Institute of Textile Technology, Charlottesville, VA. He has also served as a visiting Professor at the University of Virginia. He has conducted research on a variety of subjects, ranging from thermo-regulating fabrics to bullet-proof composites.

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About DNFI

The Discover Natural Fibre Initiative (DNFI) was created in January 2010 as an outgrowth of the International Year of Natural Fibres 2009, declared by the United Nations General Assembly. The purposes of DNFI are to advance the interests of all natural fibre industries and to encourage increased use of natural fibres in the world economy. DNFI is a voluntary association of individuals and organizations with interests in promoting natural fibres through collaboration, consultation and cooperation. The Organization (www.dnfi.org) works to further the interests of natural fibres by serving as a platform for information exchange, by providing statistics on fibre production and use, and by working to raise awareness of the benefits of natural fibre industries to the world economy, environment and consumers.

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