

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas celebrates World BioFuel Day 2017

Shri Pradhan says Biofuel Policy to come out soon

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Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan said that the objective of **“World Biofuel Day”** is to sensitize youths (school and college going students), farmers and other stakeholders about the benefits of biofuel and seek their involvement in Biofuel programme run by the Government. These efforts should be take up on a public campaign mode, he added.

Highlighting the various efforts made by the Government in the BioFuel sector, Shri Pradhan said that The World BioFuel Day will be celebrated across 100 districts of the country in various states to create awareness about the bio fuel programme. These awareness campaigns are scheduled to be held between 11th to 14th August 2017 in partnership with stakeholders of the Bioenergy sector.

The Minister highlighted that the energy needs for Transportation and Domestic use in the country requires for 80 percent import of crude. Hon'ble Prime Minister has given a task to cut down the crude import by 10% by 2022. Shri Pradhan said that a roadmap on the use of biofuels will help in achieving this target. Promoting biofuels creates jobs, fosters economic growth, supports farmers and helps improve energy security for country.

Shri Pradhan said that the Ministry will be coming out with the BioFuel Policy soon. The policy will taken into consideration various facets like Role of Government, Return on investment, Minimum Assurance etc. Recently Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has been made responsible for BioFuel Policy. The Minister said that both the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will be working towards more utilisation of biofuels.

Shri Pradhan said that approx \$2 Billion is being invested by the Government Companies by way of R&D on Second Generation (2G) Biofuel Refineries across the country. Ways are being explored on conversion of urban, rural waste to fuel; use of waste/barren lands for cultivation of feedstock for 2G biofuels. The Minister said that the potential for the bio fuel industry in India would be around Rs 1 Lakh Crore in the next 1 to 2 years.

The Minister of Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari stressed upon the importance of biofuels as cost effective and environment friendly substitutes to conventional fuels. He said that besides bringing down pollution, biofuels produced indigenously from agricultural waste, plants like bamboo, non-edible oilseeds, or municipal waste will help reduce the country's huge import burden. In addition , it will also generate employment and boost the economy of rural areas, including the North East and the barren wastelands of the country. In this context, Shri Gadkari said, a Biofuel Policy will be a major milestone in the socio-economic development of the country .

Shri Gadkari also announced that he would ask the Finance Minister to reduce the GST on bio-diesel from the current 18 percent to 5 percent.

Talking about the transport sector the Minister said that the automobile growth in the country is an unsustainable 22 percent. So efforts are on in a big way to promote public transport based on cheaper and greener biofuels and electricity . India has brought in the necessary regulations for flexi engines. Nagpur city is running 55 buses on 100 percent bio ethanol and another 50 on Bio CNG derived from methane from sewage water. This is in addition to a 200 strong fleet of electric taxis and autos. The shipping and inland waterways sectors too are gearing up for running ships and barges on methanol.

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