

# Bio-diesel boost for railways, road

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Railways has decided to power a fleet of 4,000 locomotives with alternative fuels such as bio-diesel in an attempt to move towards a cleaner environment and decrease dependency on diesel.

The road transport ministry too has claimed it will decide on approving any engine that uses such fuel, within three months from the date of filing an application seeking a go-ahead.

Announcing the railway ministry's move at a convention organized by the Bio Diesel Association of India (BAI) on Wednesday, minister Sadanand Gowda said: "Railways is the single largest bulk consumer of diesel in the country and as mentioned in railway budget 2014-15, it will start using bio-diesel up to 5% of the total fuel consumption in diesel locomotives." He added this will save foreign exchange substantially.

The national transporter

consumes over two billion litres of diesel a year and foots a bill of over Rs 15,000 crore.

Road transport minister Nitin Gadkari also said while his ministry is pushing for more use of clean and domestically-produced fuel, he will take up the issue of allowing bio-diesel producers to sell their produce directly to bulk consumers in India. At pre-

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sent, only 20% of bio-diesel produced in India is sold here and the rest is exported.

"The rural development ministry is preparing a detailed plan for productive utilization of waste land by allowing both edible and non-edible oilseeds," Gadkari said.

BAI president Sandeep Chaturvedi said there is a restriction on selling clean fuel to bulk consumers. "Allowing direct sale of bio-diesel can help save up to Rs 420 crore of foreign exchange spent on buying crude," he added.