

Eyeing bio-diesel, govt may exempt used cooking oil from import duty

New Delhi, Feb 10: To encourage use of alternative fuel, the government is contemplating withdrawing import duty on used cooking oil for conversion into bio-diesel, which will help curb pollution, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Wednesday.

Moreover, the bio-diesel obtained from such oil would also be cheaper by ₹7 (per litre) than the petroleum diesel, the minister said.

"I have talked to Nirmala Sitharaman (minister of commerce and industry). The (cooking) oil is discarded in waste after frying once globally. That oil is available on a large scale in the world.

"We will be withdrawing (import) duties on that oil.

Union minister Nitin Gadkari said the bio-diesel obtained from used cooking oil would be cheaper by ₹7 per litre than the petroleum diesel

If that oil comes in the country then bio-diesel will be made from it," road transport and shipping minister Gadkari said while addressing Global Partnership Summit on Smart Cities by industry body ASSOCHAM.

He further said that "bio-diesel is cheaper by ₹4 than petroleum diesel but when we will withdraw duty, it will be cheaper by ₹7."

Vehicles running with alternative fuel not only pollute less but could also

be manufactured easily, he said citing the example of Brazil.

In Brazil, majority of vehicles have tanks in which both kinds of fuel could be accommodated, Gadkari added.

The minister also urged farmers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to switch to ethanol production from sugarcane to reap rich dividends as well as contribute towards minimising pollution.

There is also plan to run 100 buses on ethanol and cost effective electric cars are also on anvil as ISRO scientists were developing lithium-ion battery at a cost of barely ₹5 to 6 lakh instead of global ₹55 lakh to power buses, he informed.

A study is also in final stages to bury heaps of garbage under highways and expressways to be constructed to minimise pollution, he said.

Discussing other measures to curb pollution, Gadkari said 1% of the highways construction cost has been allocated for greening of highways and under the plan ₹1,500 crore out of ₹1.5 lakh highway contracts were earmarked for plantation. *PTI*