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Cheluvarya Swamy stresses on use of bio-fuel

Staff Reporter

Such a step will considerably help in reducing pollution, says Transport Minister



GREEN SIGNAL: Transport Minister N. Cheluvarya Swamy flagging off the KSRTC bus which uses a mixture of diesel and ethanol in Bangalore on Monday. Managing director of KSRTC M.R. Sreenivasa Murthy is at right. — Photo: K. Gopinathan

BANGALORE: The State Government would set aside Rs. 1 crore to promote the cultivation of *Pongamia pinnata*, a tree from which "honge" oil was derived, in dry lands, announced Transport Minister N. Cheluvarya Swamy on Monday.

Eighty Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) buses at the Doddaballapur depot use a blend of bio-fuel with diesel. KSRTC has found that the blend of 90 per cent diesel and 10 per cent "honge" oil is more environmentally friendly as well as cost effective. According to the KSRTC, use of bio fuel for 5,000 buses would result in an annual saving of Rs. 724.75 lakh for the corporation.

Inaugurating a seminar on 'Urban transport environment energy and clean development mechanism,' organised by KSRTC to celebrate the World Environment Day, Mr. Cheluvarya Swamy said the use of bio fuels would help reduce pollution considerably.

Earlier, Mr. Cheluvarya Swamy flagged off a KSRTC bus that uses a mixture of diesel and ethanol.

This is the first time that such a mixture of fuels is being used in a KSRTC bus and a

Singapore-based company has provided the technology.

The green diesel, which is a mixture of 7.5 per cent ethanol and 92.5 per cent diesel, reduced harmful emissions to a great extent, the Minister said.

Mr. Cheluvarya Swamy said the State Government had written to the Centre seeking reduction of excise duty on machine parts and diesel. "We understand the problem and have written to the Centre about it," he said.

M.R. Sreenivas Murthy, managing director of KSRTC, said the use of bio-diesel would soon be extended to 28 depots. "We are planning to use bio-diesel in depots where we get a supply of "honge" oil."

"Our constraint in extending it to other depots is the lack of supply of the oil," he said.

Mr. Murthy said the KSRTC would operate the bus where the diesel-ethanol mixture was used for a month before deciding on how to expand the service.

Srikanth Panigrahi, director of Planning Commission, said Karnataka was one of the nine States to approach the Union Government for the Clean Development Mechanism project.

"KSRTC has got clearance from the Centre. The project proposal has now been sent to the board at the United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change for its approval," Mr. Panigrahi added.

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