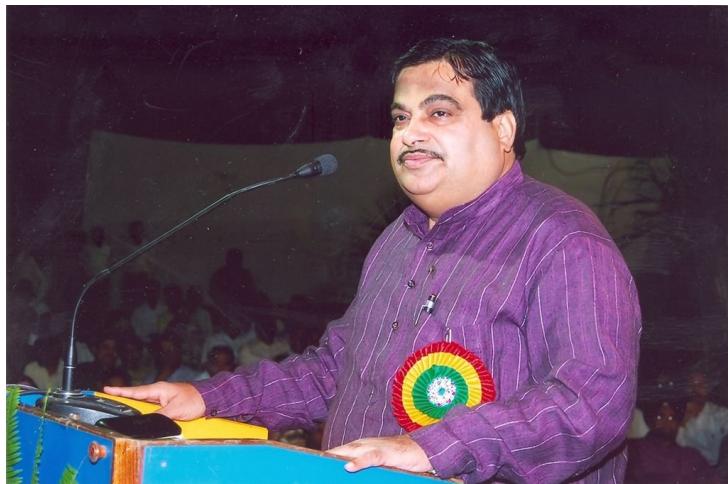


'Bioethanol production has to be encouraged'

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Bioethanol production has to be encouraged: Mr Nitin Gadkari



"I often dream of the times when people from urban areas would like to shift back to villages for building their bungalows and not vice versa. And also when the Indian farmers would be the richest among entrepreneurs," stated Mr Nitin Gadkari, Union transport and rural development minister at a recently held awards show in New Delhi.

Emphasizing on the role of adopting technology and promoting entrepreneurship, Mr Gadkari, who is known as a serial entrepreneur, explained, "Pilot projects led by farmers must be encouraged to find ways to improve irrigation facilities. The minister minced no words while saying that the fertilizer prices have gone up umpteen number of times, but that the crop prices have grown merely by an average of 2 percent. Talking about the creation of a bank of innovation led by Dr R A Mashelkar, former director general, CSIR and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former president of India, he said that the government will ensure that the best ideas do not go waste.

Further stressing upon the need to produce biogas and ethanol at local levels, Mr Gadkari mentioned that the conversion of bioethanol from molasses resulting from bagasse can in longer run present itself as a viable alternative fuel. Giving an example, he talked about the running of buses on bioethanol efficiently. "We have to find ways to lessen our dependence on gas cylinders and create options for gas pipelines," mentioned the minister.

"Conversion of waste into wealth should be the top priority. And that is possible by innovation, research, cooperation, and coordination. We have to utilize biotechnology and modern techniques to boost growth especially when the GDP has come down significantly," opined the former chief of the ruling Bharatiya Janta Party.

The agriculture minister, Mr Radha Mohan Singh who was also present at the agriculture awards show of Crystal Group on August, 27, remarked that agriculture was sidelined in all the previous budgets. "This is for the first time that it has received its due attention in the budget besides the dairy technology which has been allocated Rs 500 crore," he said.