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International bioenergy summit kicks off in New Delhi

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New Delhi: TheÃ?Â Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, along with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) launched a two-day International Summit on 'Bioenergy: Algae Biofuel and Synthetic Biology 2012' in New Delhi.Ã?Â In an endeavor to create a roadmap for the next five years for innovative technologies and policies for biofuels development in India.Ã?Â

The two-day summit will witness participation from renowned scientists from over seven countries, including India, USA, France, Belgium, Malaysia, and South Africa along with 10 eminent international speakers.Ã?Â

Delivering the inaugural address, Mr Jaipal Reddy, Minister, Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, opined that, "There is no denying the fact that the country is facing some serious challenges in food and nutrition, healthcare, energy and environment. To meet these mounting challenges, science and technology can play a crucial role in developing an instrumental framework both nationally and internationally. Innovation requires institutional framework and adequate human resources." The minister also released 'The Bioenergy Road Map - Vision 2020' of the Department of Biotechnology.

Dr M K Bhan, secretary, DBT and chairman, BIRAC, said, "We should use our science and engineering base and our industry strength to create an innovation nation for bioenergy for sustainable future." He emphasised on the need for redesign new institutional mechanisms for forthcoming innovation and Public Private Partnership. Dr Bhan further said, "I am hopeful this summit will witness some intelligent discussions, feedback and chalk out the way forward for cutting edge research in the field of algae and synthetic biology for biofuels."

Dr Pachauri, director general, TERI stated that, "The significance of this summit is very timely on account of the challenges that the nation has been facing. In order to have a green and sustainable future, we need to ensure that our resources are properly exploited. I am extremely sure that algae can play a pivotal role towards ensuring a better future. The future lies in coming up with innovative technologies that will give us a sustainable future."

Welcoming the guests, Dr Renu Swarup, adviser, DBT and MD, BIRAC opined, "India plays an important role towards creating a sustainable future. In this context, the significance of this summit needs to be emphasised. We need to tap the

potential of this sector."

The two-day summit will consist of plenary talks, invited talks, and panel discussions to deliberate on key issues for next generation fuels.Ã?Â The summit will highlight the various scientific themes like algal bioengineering, algae as production system, sustainable algae mass cultivation, synthetic biology for advanced bioenergy, system and computational biology in bioenergy, synthetic biology and industry potential and adoption of bio-energy solutions in industry and other sectors.

Dr Vibha Dhawan, executive director, TERI, said that, "I want to express my sincere gratitude to all guests and look forward for fruitful discussions in the next two days." She also briefly mentioned about TERI's successful projects such as micro-propogation technology, oil zapper technology, microbial enhanced oil recovery, mycorrhizal technology and biopesticides all developed with initial funding from DBT and hoped that soon TERI will offer technology in bioenergy field.

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