

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To,
The Hony. Editor
The Indian Forester
PO. New Forest
Dehra un (Uttarakhand).

**Sub : Deep concern of H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam the President of India
about Bio-fuel in Chhattisgarh.**

Dear Sir,

The State of Chhattisgarh is known as the “Bio-fuel State”. The State of Chhattisgarh has fixed a target to plant 10 lac ha land under plantation of *Jatropha curcas* L. (Ratanjyot). It is a matter of pride for the state that H.E. President of India planted a *Jatropha* plant on 7th November 2006 during his two days visit to Chhattisgarh. He had very kindly visited the plantation of *Jatropha* of 40ha of 2005 at Sunderkera village of Raipur District.

The State launched the “Bio-fuel development scheme” to provide opportunity to farmers to enhance their income. Farmers can take advantage of this scheme by planting *Jatropha* on their farm bunds, fallow land or wasteland. Under the scheme farmers are given up to 500 plants free of cost and thereafter up to 5,000 plants/farmer @ Rs. 0.50 per plant from nearest nursery of Forest, Agriculture and Horticulture Department. Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Authority (CREDA), State Minor Forest Produce Federation and State Forest Development Corporation (SFDC) can also be contacted. The farmer willing to take plants has to apply in the prescribed application form duly verified by the Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat. The farmer is expected to plant 1,000 plants per acre. He is expected to get net profit Rs. 15,500/- every year from 8th year onward. The State Govt. has fixed support price for purchase of *Jatropha* seed at Rs. 5.50 per kg. There will be bio-diesel plants in large number within a few years.

While addressing *Jatropha* cultivators of Sunderkera village in Raipur District, Dr. Kalam said that bio-diesel is a field which can change the economic condition of the state and country. Chhattisgarh Biodiesel Authority could guide others on increasing production of biodiesel. He expressed the hope that the villagers of Sunderkera would guide others in the cultivation of Ratanjyot or *Jatropha*. He wished the farmers good luck in bringing about a bio-diesel revolution in country. He said with limited research for in bio-diesel sector, India aims to produce 6 MT of biodiesel annually by 2010, 30 MT by 2020 and 60 MT by 2030 in cooperation with all the stakeholders of the mission. Sharing his experience in *Jatropha* cultivation, Kalam said, the plant's seeds at other places contained about 25 per cent oil, the seeds in Chhattisgarh had 35 per cent oil content, which could be

increased further by carrying out proper cleaning and irrigation of *Jatropha*. He also suggested to farmers that they should grow Bamboo, Custard apple and Amla along with *Jatropha* to earn a larger income and in addition it will help in improving the soil fertility. He advised the State Govt. to start small extraction plants of 100-litres capacity for bio-diesel so that rural economy could take advantage of the bio-fuel. During his short duration interaction with farmers at village Sunderkera, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam invited them to see the bio-fuel park in the premises of Rashtrapati Bhavan at New Delhi and added that the Rashtrapati Bhavan based Bio-fuel Park is open for all the state farmers. He also replied to the questions asked by the farmers. His answers were translated in Hindi by Governor Lieutenant General (retired) K.M. Seth. The President went to observe the *Jatropha* plantation premises while discussing the progress of plantation work with cultivators. He too planted a *Jatropha* sapling in the said premises.

Chhattisgarh Bio-fuel Development Agency (CBDA) can play a leading role and become role model for rest of the country, he added while visiting *Jatropha* plantation in Sunderkera, he said "I am delighted to visit *Jatropha* plantation in Sunderkera where 100 acres has been covered for *Jatropha* plantation in this village for bio-diesel production and thus Chhattisgarh reigning ahead all over the country and can give new direction to bio-diesel production in entire nation." The President said that he found that Chhattisgarh has taken a lead in working towards *Jatropha* cultivation in one million hectares of fallow land by 2012. This gives me a confidence that our plan for realizing 60 million tonnes of bio-diesel 2030 will definitely be achieved in an integrated way by many states in the country. President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam said that the way Chhattisgarh is surging ahead in the field of bio-diesel is an honour for entire nation. He expressed happiness that the farmers are getting about more than 35% of oil from seeds of *Jatropha* plants in the state. He said that in order to get more production, pruning and cleaning of *Jatropha* plant should be done in such a way that there are minimum of 16 branches. Mentioning about Bio-fuel Park developed in President house premises. Dr. Kalam said that fruits from *Jatropha* plant in the first year are an average 400 gm and in the second year it is 800 gm wherever in Chhattisgarh the average in the first year 500 gm and 1000 gm in the second year. Answering the queries of *Jatropha* growers from all over the state, Dr. Kalam said that bio-diesel is such a field, which can change the future of entire nation. To a question he said though *Jatropha* plantation requires less water, but getting sufficient water it gives a higher production.

President Dr. Kalam has suggested a seven-point mantra to make Chhattisgarh a prosperous and poverty free state by the year 2015. President Dr. Kalam visualized 2015 through seven missions (Mantras). The mantra is aimed at (i) Increase per capita income, (ii) Reduce drop out rate, (iii) Medical facilities in rural areas, (iv) Eradicate poverty, (v) More Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA), (vi) Public-private partnership and (vii) Bring down infant mortality rate. Acknowledging Chhattisgarh pioneering in *Jatropha* plantation, he said that *Jatropha* mission which includes plantation to oil extraction, esterification and production of by-products and marketing will be able to generate employment for nearly one million people both in the agriculture and the industrial sector. According to him, seed development to oil extraction, esterification and

marketing has to be a mission mode operation, as it will bring an impact in the economic prosperity of the nation. The President also envisages an integrated programme of expansion of plantation of bamboo species, the scientific management and promotion of community level value addition and entrepreneurship.

Any vision for state finally has to become the mission of the people. President Kalam said that he would cherish the friendliness and hospitality of the people of this beautiful state.

Yours Faithfully

Sd/-

Dr. B.P. Nonhare, IFS

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