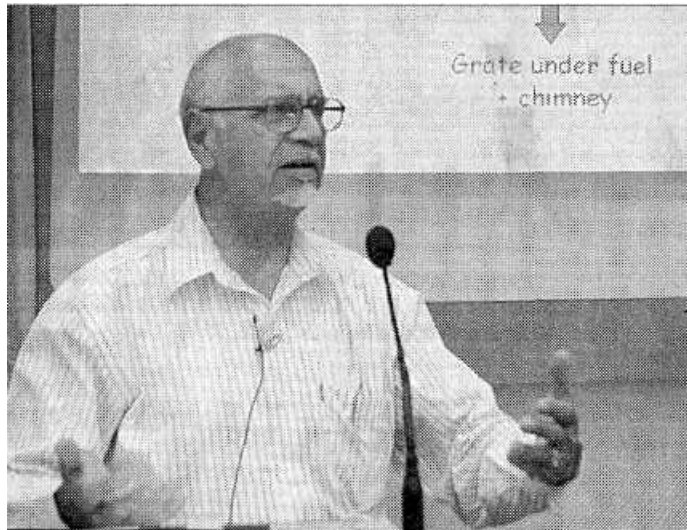


Experts encourage biomass for rural kitchen stoves

Cheap and environment-friendly, it is a suitable alternative to present fuel options which are health hazards



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FUEL from biomass is one for the future and will play an important role in the times to come because it causes less pollution, said Dr Anand Karve, founder director of Phaltan-based Appropriate Rural Technology Institute (ARTI). Karve was speaking on 'Biomass-based fuel and improved cookstoves' at the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pashan, on Thursday to mark National Technology Day.

Anand Karve speaking at NCL on Thursday. *Pavan Khengre*

Dr Karve said that in the rural areas, smoke from domestic fuel such as dung cakes is a major cause of pollution. He quoted World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics that highlighted alarming figures of the annual deaths — more than two million women and children — due to exposure to smoke emitted by these fuels.

Terming biomass as a suitable, cheap and environment-friendly option, Karve spoke about some of the successful projects undertaken by ARTI in this area. Speaking about 'Compacted sawdust fuel technology', Karve said that using balls of sawdust — with a mixture of starch and soil — as a

cooking fuel, gave better fuel efficiency and reduced pollution levels. Another product of ARTI, the Vivek Sawdust Stove, has been approved by a US-based NGO, Ap-provecho, for having met WHO standards of low pollution levels. ; Dr Karve said that the biomass segment has huge potential as plans for the future involved biodiesel and other fuels which cause low levels of pollution,

Director of NCL Dr S Sivaram said that the idea of holding such lectures was to expose scientists at NCL to the work of those who have put science and technology to good use for the welfare of society.