

NCL's clean energy fuel to be ready in two years

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IN two years, the city-based National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) hopes to come out with clean energy fuel to generate electricity.

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is working on the project. Director-General of CSIR Samir K Brahmachari said this was under CSIR's New Millennium Initiative In Technology Leadership (NIMITL) programme.

"Generating electricity through fuel cell technology is being worked out by the NCL under the hydrogen fuel generating programme," he said at a press meet at the diamond jubilee celebrations of NCL.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh while inaugurating the celebrations on Thursday called upon scientists to overcome challenges in the areas of climate change, clean energy and environment friendly technology.

With the project also seeing a tie-up



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with the Reliance Industries, NCL director Dr S Sivaram said this is an academia-industry interface which will see the industry making use of the NCL process. NCL along with other CSIR laboratories are working out different components for the fuel cell that can re-

duce the cost and generate hydrogen to generate electricity. A representative of Reliance Industries said the idea is to get clean power from fuel cell technology.

Dr Sivaram added that this initiative would see fuel cells put up at remote areas along the pipeline to Dahej, in the Godavari basin. "We have prototypes at NCL and will see the same being rolled out in two years," he said.

The NCL is also working on a document regarding a prototype of 'a chemical plant 50 years ahead'. "It is essential to envision such a prototype so that we understand the demands and needs and then make the necessary requirements," said Sivaram. The central government is expected to give funds to the NCL to set up the prototype in Pune.

With the inauguration of the CSIR innovation complex in a public-private partnership, Dr Sivaram said they would tap the areas of biomass that can be converted into chemicals. "We want to make India the Saudi Arabia of biomass, as there is tremendous potential with depleting resources of oil and gas," he said.