

 **Rigorous marketing, of battery-operated vehicles soon**

SUBSIDY TO NETWORK OF CHARGING STATIONS

A rigorous marketing for battery-operated vehicles will be developed in the country soon. Addressing a meeting with the major battery-operated vehicle manufacturers yesterday, Shri V. Subramanian, Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, further stressed the need of rigorous marketing and opening of dealers network and charging stations for leasing batteries in major cities for battery-operated vehicles by the manufacturers. Shri Subramanian said while the prices of crude oil has crossed US\$ 140 per barrel and vehicle population has also been increasing, the country is facing serious impact on its economy and inflation in prices of various commodities. At this moment, with a view to work out a conducive policy for large use of battery-operated vehicles in the country, the existing scheme will be changed to accommodate two-wheelers also in its purview, secretary added. At present only three and four-wheelers of institutions are eligible for this scheme. Besides this, the ministry will give subsidy to a large network of charging stations established by the companies, Shri Subramanian informed.

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy through its research & development and demonstration programmes has made successful efforts for using bio-fuels in automobiles and stationary engines and development and production of battery-operated vehicles during past 20 years. Several battery-operated models of two-wheelers, three-wheelers and four-wheelers are manufactured by a number of industries. However the numbers of such vehicles are quite small in comparison to conventional fuel vehicles.

During the discussion, it was felt that while the running cost of battery-operated vehicles is cheaper than the petrol/diesel run vehicles, the replacement of batteries of battery-operated vehicles is quite costly. The aspects of leasing of batteries and central charging facility of batteries of battery-operated vehicles were also considered as a step-forward for promotion of battery-operated vehicles. Battery-operated vehicles manufacturers have assured all efforts by them for expanding their marketing network and creating awareness about these vehicles. The Delhi state has already announced supporting 30% of battery-operated vehicles costs and procedures for availing the incentives. Shri J.K.Dadoo, Secretary, Department of Environment, Delhi Government informed during this meeting.

The leading battery-operated vehicle manufacturers, namely, M/s Mahendra & Mahendra, M/s Bajaj Auto Limited, M/s Honda Motors, M/s Reva Electrics, M/s Electrothurps, M/s Eco Vehicles, M/s Yo-Bikes, M/s E-Bikes etc. participated in the meeting. Representatives from Society for Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) and M/s Tata Motors also attended the meeting.