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## NEWS

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### RICE STRAW INTO ALCOHOL

A technology for converting rice straw into alcohol has been developed by the Biochemical Engineering Research Centre (BERC) at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), New Delhi.

Besides alcohol, the BERC process yields byproducts, such as improved and easily digestible fodder for animals, carbon dioxide gas which can be made into dry ice for storing vegetables, and pure lignin—a basic raw material for making a host of aromatic chemicals, presently made from coal and imported petroleum.

Prof. T. K. Ghose, head of BERC, says that the 70 million tonnes of rice straw available in India annually can be turned into liquid fuel and a chemical feedstock while creating a viable agroindustry utilizing agricultural wastes.

Following the success of the process in the laboratory, BERC, in collaboration with the Unique Biochemical Engineering Company in Bombay, has prepared a detailed project report for setting up a pilot plant that will produce daily 500 litres of alcohol, 965 kg of mixed fodder, 370 kg of carbon dioxide gas and 235 kg of lignin.

Besides rice straw, the pilot facility can process cane bagasse and wheat straw and will be non-polluting unlike the present alcohol industry based on molasses. The only effluent will be the combustion products of coal used in boilers which will be dispersed through a 35-metre stack. (*The Patriot*, 8 September 1983).

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### TV KNOW-HOW TO INDONESIA

Samsung Electronic Company, an affiliate of the Samsung Group, has signed a contract with Telesonic Company of Indonesia to export a plant manufacturing colour and black and white TV sets. The company will begin delivery of the plant facilities worth \$15,000 by March, 1984. The plant in Indonesia is envisaged to produce 100,000 B/W sets and 60,000 colour sets annually. When the plant is constructed Samsung will be able to export \$15 million worth of parts and

components for TV sets annually to the Southeast Asia. Samsung also plans to send six Korean technicians immediately to provide technical guidance to Telesonic Company. According to official sources, the demand of colour TV sets in Indonesia is expected to be 300,000 sets worth \$120 million and B/W to one million sets worth \$150 million this year. (*Korean News*, Jan.-Feb. 1984, p. 23)