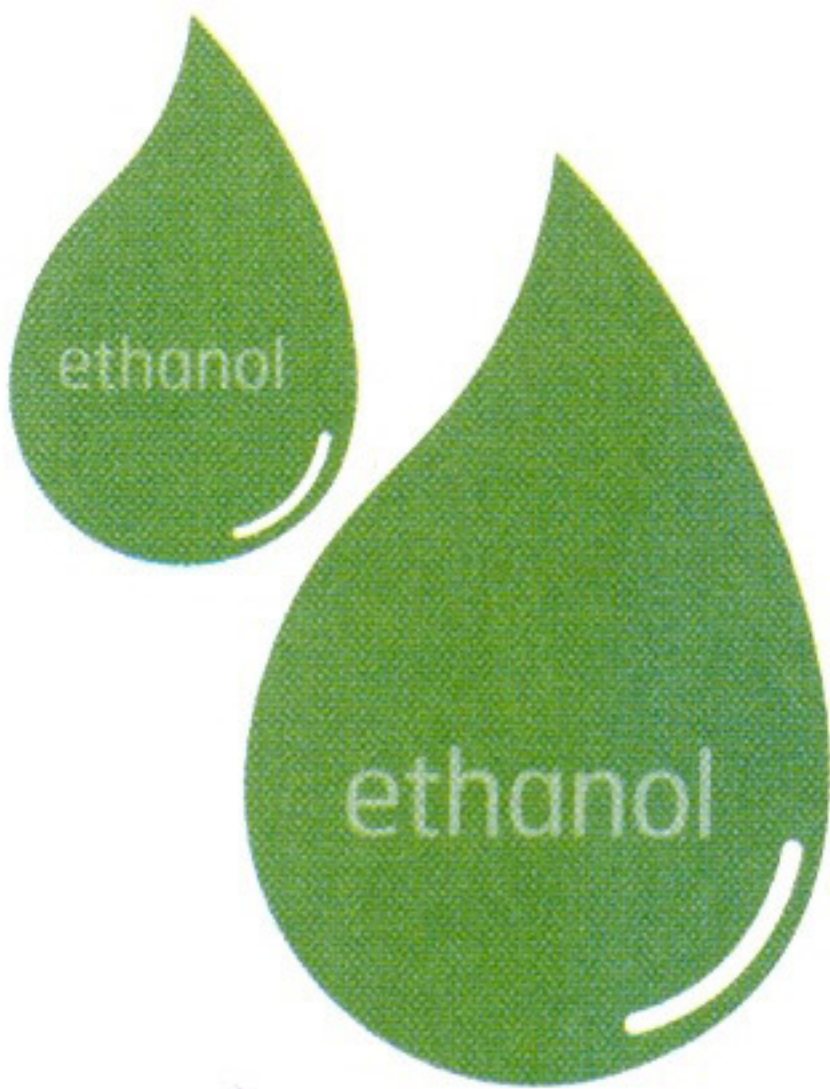


Waste Disposal **The Green Way**

IN A SIGNIFICANT push for green energy, the Modi government has proposed the setting up of five pilot plants to produce initially 300,000 tonnes of ethanol a year from non-food, bio-mass and bio-waste feedstock. The government has sanctioned a viability gap funding of Rs 3,686 crore or 40 per cent of the cost of the project. Private ethanol producers will come in with 40 per cent, while the balance 20 per cent will be raised from banks. A government-commissioned study estimates



that India has the capacity to produce 16 million tonnes of such ethanol a year. The initiative will help us come closer to the target of 25 per cent ethanol-blended petrol. More importantly, the use of farm waste like paddy husk and bagasse as feedstock for ethanol will counter the criticism that ethanol producers are eating into vital food stocks of corn and sugar. Praj Industries, which has been working on the knowhow for ethanol based on bio-waste, is finally ready for commercial deployment. It is also working on technology models that will convert urban waste to ethanol. The quicker this loop is closed the better, as it will solve the problem of expensive waste disposal, and bring us closer to the vision of zero-waste 'smart cities' — *Gurhir Singh*