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Chinese firm to produce jatropha in DR Congo

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KINSHASA, Jan. 18 (Xinhua) -- A Chinese firm, Greater Kingdom Group, aims to cultivate jatropha, a plant that retains humidity and produces seeds just like soya, in four provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo).

A source from the Congolese rural development ministry told Xinhua on Monday that the government had signed an agreement with the Chinese firm to carry out this program.

Rural Development Minister Yangya Undji said in order to execute this project, the Chinese group had asked for reinforcement of security in the fields where they will operate, a minimum radius of 10,000 hectares in each of the concerned provinces and exemption of taxes for their equipment.

Faced with the demands of the Chinese group, the Congolese minister indicated that regarding tax exemptions, he would have to consult his finance counterpart in order to fix the modalities so that this does not pose any problem.

Regarding the issue of land to be cultivated, Undji affirmed that this would not be a problem at all since DR Congo has about 145 million hectares of land covered by forests and this, he said, was almost 60 percent of the national territory.

The four provinces where cultivation will be carried out include Bas-Congo, Katanga, North Kivu and South Kivu.

The anti-erosion plant could also be used in the production of biofuels. Scientists have discovered that the fuel coming from its seeds is much more ecological environmentally friendly.

Editor: Deng Shasha

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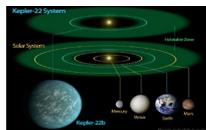
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