

## Now, litchi wine from UB stables

**PATNA:** Vijay Mallya-promoted United Breweries (UB) is planning to set up a litchi processing plant at Patahi in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district to make wine, an official said on Friday.

The company has taken 100 acres of litchi gardens on lease at Kanti and Motipur blocks in Muzaffarpur. It has plans to take another 1,000 acres from the farmers.

The processing plant would come up by the end of next



year. "The UB group has already initiated move to purchase land to set up the plant," a district administra-

tion official told IANS.

About 70 per cent of litchis produced in India are grown in Muzaffarpur and neighbouring districts. The group was keen to use the sweet, pulpy and juicy fruit. A company official, Rajeev Ranjan Ojha, said litchis would be sent to Bangalore directly from the gardens this year to produce wine. But from next year, the litchis would be processed locally.

The UB group and Litchika International have approached Muzaffarpur-based National Litchi Research Centre to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to use its technology for making litchi-flavoured wine, said K K Kumar, director of the centre.

Kumar said that scientists at the centre had developed litchi-flavoured wine by mixing pulpy extracts of the fruit with various types of spirits. IANS