

Solar project at IIT-K to bring light to villages

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THE Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur (IIT-K) has decided to set up a 500 kw Solar Energy Research Experimental Station (SERES) at its campus.

For six villages near the campus, it will also mean an end to their dark lives as the institute will supply power produced by the solar stations to these villages free of cost.

The villages — Nankari, Bara Sirohi, Singhpur, Bakunthpur, Naramau and Kachchar — are electrified, but the power supply is

highly erratic. Work on the project will start in six months and it will be operational in four years.

The IIT-K has taken up the Rs 18 crore-project to celebrate its golden jubilee year — 2009. The project has already received the IIT Board's nod, and a 11-member team from the faculty and students has been constituted to work out the details.

The land has been identified at Shivli Road, near the institute, for setting up an energy distribution centre to supply power to the villages.

The IIT-K Director, Sanjay Govind Dhande, said, "There

is an acute power crisis in many parts of the country, and it is our responsibility to explore more resources to generate electricity."

Since solar energy is expensive than thermal or hydro energy, he said, "Through this project, we will undertake research on reducing the cost of solar energy so that it can become affordable for people," said Dhande.

The 500 kw plant will be sufficient to provide electricity to the six villages, he added.

The golden jubilee celebrations, meanwhile, will commence on Saturday.

Chief mentor of Infosys, N

R Narayana Murthy, an IIT-K alumnus, will be the chief guest at the inauguration.

His speech will be followed by the screening of a documentary film and a recital in the evening by Shubha Mudgal. On Sunday, the institute will hold a workshop on challenges in higher education.

A number of activities, including the launch of nano-Satellite 'Jugnu', have been planned to mark the golden jubilee year and will continue until December 2010.

Founded in 1959, the IIT-K has produced over 24,000 meritorious students.