

## Selco Solar Light plans to illuminate 2 lakh homes

Our Bureau



At the helm: Dr Harish Hande, Managing Director, Selco Solar Light Belthangady, Dakshina Kannada, March 20:

Selco Solar Light Pvt Ltd is planning to install solar lighting systems in two lakh homes in the next four years, according to Dr Harish Hande, Managing Director of the company.

Speaking on the sidelines of a function to announce the launch of "Soura Jyothi" programme of the Rotary Club of Belthangady at Ujire on Saturday, he said that Selco has installed solar lighting systems in 1.2 lakh households in the country. A majority of them are implemented in the rural areas of Karnataka.

Asked about the implementation of an additional two lakh systems in the next four years, he said the needs of the rural population will be defined properly while implementing them. The solar power system should also meet the needs of the income-generation activities of the rural people, along with domestic lighting system, he said.

Referring to the recent nuclear accidents in Japan and the declining coal reserves in the country, Dr Hande said that India can become the global leader in the energy sector if it takes adopts decentralised energy solutions.

There are abundant opportunities for tapping solar, wind and mini-hydro power in the country. Nearly 60 per cent of the people in the country do not have access to any mode of power supply. In such a situation, decentralised power solutions such as solar, wind and mini-hydro will come to their help, he said.

Dr Hande thanked the Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank, which has come forward to provide financial assistance to beneficiaries under the Soura Jyothi programme in Belthangady taluk.

Mr Pratap Simha Nayak, President of Rotary Club of Belthangady, said the goals of Soura Jyothi are to identify and install solar lighting systems in rural households. Care has been taken to identify only economically backward families in the rural areas. Under the programme, the Rotary Club of Belthangady wants to bring nearly 150 families in three villages of Shishila, Kalanja and Nidle in Belthangady taluk. The aim is to make them complete solar villages, he said.

Of the 150 families, 100 families have already been identified. The process of installing solar lighting system has already been completed in 60 houses, Mr Nayak said.

Mr Narayana Bhide, Project Director of Soura Jyothi, Rotary Club of Belthangady, said the Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank extends 85 per cent of the total expenditure as a five-year loan at subsidised interest rate. Selco offers the equipment at discounted rate, and Rotary offers margin money for the project, he added.

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