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Gujarat to train army of solar technicians

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With many state governments pushing for rooftop solar power, the need for solar technicians is fast rising.

To meet the increasing manpower demand, the Gujarat Energy Research and Management Institute (GERMI) in Gandhinagar has launched a Certification Programme for Solar Rooftop to train 10,000 professionals.

"This programme is designed to meet the challenge of developing skilled and qualified manpower to install rooftop photovoltaic systems throughout the country and is open to technicians, students as well as entrepreneurs," GERMI director T. Harinarayana told IANS on phone.

He said the ministry of new and renewable resources has set a target of installing 40,000 MW of rooftop solar systems by 2022, and many states are launching similar policies and programmes.

"Today India has only 300 MW of solar photovoltaics installed on rooftops out of the total 2,900 MW of solar installations."

Harinarayana said rooftop solar systems were more attractive as they utilize the already existing roof space

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rather than using dedicated land.

"Energy is generated at the point of use, thus eliminating the typical transmission and distribution losses, and empowers an ordinary consumer to be self-sufficient in terms of energy."

GERMI has managed a 5 MW of solar rooftop in Gandhinagar city and is going ahead with the rooftop programme in five more cities including Vadodara.

According to official sources, if the Gujarat model is replicated in Delhi, it has the potential to deliver 50-100 MW.

A report by Greenpeace India on Delhi's solar rooftop potential estimates that the capital can potentially generate 2,557 MW of electricity by putting solar panels on less than five percent of the 700 sq km available roof space.

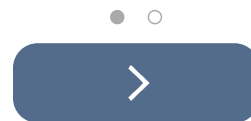
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Harinarayana said GERMI had undertaken professional and vocational training for solar technicians throughout the country in the past, and now is aiming to empower other institutions in India to scale up the training.

At the Vibrant Gujarat 2015 meeting last week, GERMI signed memorandums of understanding with eight state nodal agencies and 20 leading solar companies of India besides the Solar Energy Society of India, the National Solar Energy Federation of India and Acharya Nagarjuna University to promote the training programme.

(Killugudi Jayaram can be contacted at killugudi@hotmail.com)

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