

LEDs supply lighting to remote village in India

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Solar-powered LED lighting could provide a solution for many thousands of villages in India - and elsewhere - that do not have access to electricity lines.

India's President, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, recently inaugurated the 24th India International Trade Fair, and discussed LED lighting in his keynote address. Dr Kalam discussed the situation in the Nalgonda District of Andhra Pradesh, where LED lighting using solar power has been implemented in a remote village inhabited by Lambada tribespeople.

The village has a population 142 people residing in thirty houses. The one time cost of providing LED lighting for all the houses including wiring and solar charging system for the battery was around 65,000 rupees (about US\$1400).

On an average, the cost of providing electricity per house works out to 2200 rupees, said Dr Kalam. "This is definitely much cheaper than the cost of providing electricity to the village through a power line traveling across many kilometers and costing many hundreds of thousands of rupees."

The installed LED power systems are self-contained, and the solar energy used to charge the batteries is virtually free.

Particularly in remote areas and hilly regions, electricity lines cannot be installed due to the high initial cost of installation. "Presently I am told electric lines have not reached over one hundred thousand villages in our country," said Dr Kalam.

The President recommended that the industrial community should study this project for converting it as a business proposition, which can be taken by rural enterprises for implementation in different sectors.

"Once successful, this technology can find utility in many parts of the world where similar situation exists," said Dr Kalam. This has tremendous business potential."