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Remote Rajasthan village gets lit by solar power

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NEW DELHI: Around 500 residents of a Rajasthan village now have lighting from solar power, thanks to an initiative by international renewable energy major Conergy, in partnership with the Masonic Trust here.

All 98 homes, two temples and a school in Dewri Gowda village in Rajasthan's Alwar district now have solar powered lighting, a total of 940 watts, a Conergy spokesperson said here on Tuesday.

The project is a part of Conergy Renewable Energy Village initiative, supported by India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. Funding for the project was raised through a charity golf tournament last November.

Conergy India managing director Rajesh Bhat said: "Through our subsidiary SunTechnics, we have already installed several hundred renewable energy systems for environmentally-friendly solar power and thus improved the living standards of more than 100,000 people in 250 Indian villages.

"Till now, more than 13 per cent of the 600,000 remote villages in India lack electricity. Like Dewri Gowda, most are located in remote territory, which proves expensive and technologically-challenging for power supplied through a public grid. Off-grid renewable energy products such as solar-powered home and street lighting systems thus serve as affordable and efficient alternatives, while also being environment-friendly."

Venkittu Sundaram, chairman of the Lodge Elysium Masonic Trust and managing director of EPURON India, said: "India's potential for renewable energy projects far exceeds the current installed capacity. Of the current 144,913 megawatts of energy produced in India, only 8.4 per cent comes from renewable sources."

The initiative's advocate, former India cricket captain Kapil Dev, said: "Businesses and non-governmental organisations can play a key role in sustainable development. This act of commitment, dedication and compassion is both inspiring and also a role model for environmental leadership. We need to do more and I ask more organisations and businesses to follow this example."

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