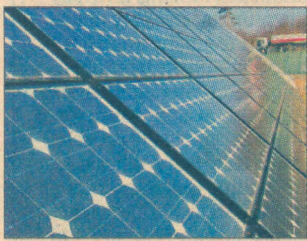


Vikram Solar plans wafer unit at Falta SEZ



Our Bureau

KOLKATA

LITTLE-KNOWN Vikram Solar Ltd, which is part of the city-based Rs 250-crore Vikram Group, plans to set up a Rs 500 crore wafer and photovoltaic cell manufacturing facility at the Falta SEZ in West Bengal.

The company, which has just commissioned a Rs 100-crore solar panel assembling unit in Falta, will have an annual capacity to produce panels capable of generating 25 mw of solar power. This capacity will be enhanced in the next three to four months by another 25 mw at an additional investment of Rs 50 crore.

Vikram Solar expects a Rs 150 crore turnover in the first year of operation from the Falta unit.

West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, while inaugurating the plant, said: "As much as 95% of the state's power requirements are met through thermal generation modes. Only about 5% is met through green modes, including hydel, wind and solar. With pressure on environment rising and India promising to reduce pollution levels by 25%, West Bengal's dependence on renewable power generation sources need to rise."

Interestingly, Vikram Solar has also set up a 100% subsidiary in Germany — Vikram Solar GmbH — which has just set up a 1.5 mw solar generating plant at an investment of Rs 18 crore.

"We intend to sell this plant off to investors in Germany, since we are not experts at running such plants. The government there has also shown us land where we can set up additional generating capacities and sell them off to prospective investors there. Additionally, we are also in talks with a few parties in France and Bulgaria and the US for setting up similar solar power plants," said Vikram Group of Industries chairman HK Chaudhary.