

Plan for Rs 1500-cr solar hub in Falta

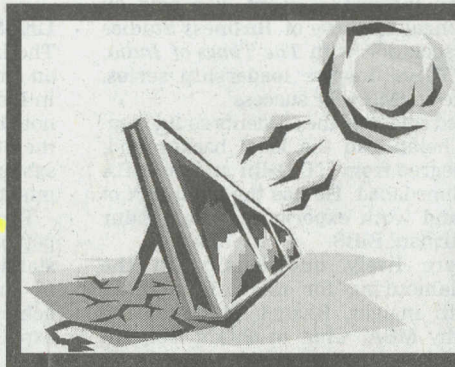
CM To Inaugurate First Of Five Solar Module Manufacturing Factories On Wednesday

Suman Chakraborti | TNN

Kolkata: Falta in South 24-Parganas could well become Bengal's solar hub if proposed investments — exceeding Rs 1,500 crore — in renewable energy projects actually pour into the area.

The first of five solar module manufacturing factories lined up for the area will be inaugurated by chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on Wednesday. Built by Bikram Solar, which invested Rs 50 crore for the project, the unit will manufacture solar modules that will generate 25 MW daily.

Four more companies are in the league to invest in solar module manufacturing factories, said West Bengal Green Energy Development Corporation (WBGEDC) managing director S P Gon Chaudhuri. "Investments in this renewable energy business should cross the Rs 1,500-crore mark in Falta alone. More will follow elsewhere to help the state meet its target contribution to the national solar mission. A key investor in solar energy modules



will be a reputed group that has plans to pour in Rs 1,000 crore alone in the business," Gon Chaudhuri said.

Others in the queue are companies like Videocon, Webel, Reliance, Moser Baer, Synergy Solar Private Limited and Astonfield, which will set up such units in other places of

The national solar mission has set a target of generating 20,000 MW solar power nationwide by the end of 2022 and West Bengal has been asked to meet 10% (2,000 MW) of that goal. The WBGEDC has a target to generate about 300 MW of solar energy from Falta. The solar hub apart, WBGEDC and the state IT department jointly plan to develop solar inverters

the state. "We have a target to generate about 300 MW of solar energy from Falta," added Gon Chaudhuri.

Another feather in the state's solar energy cap is the solar valley which Bengal Aerotropolis Projects Limited (BAPL) — promoters of the airport city in Burdwan — plans to

build over a 100-acre area.

The solar hub in Falta apart, WBGEDC and the state IT department jointly plan to develop solar inverters. "Right now, only one company in the state manufactures inverters. We and the state IT department can work on developing solar powered inverters," said Gon Chaudhuri, who has discussed the plan with state IT minister Debesh Das.

The national solar mission has set a target of generating 20,000 MW solar power nationwide by the end of 2022 and West Bengal has been asked to meet 10% (2,000 MW) of that goal.

The state government expects to generate 115 MW solar power by March 2013. To coax and cajole realtors to build solar-powered buildings, WBGEDC and the state pollution control board are working on framing mandatory norms for developers of highrise buildings to install solar panels. To increase a solar panel's power generating capacity by 5%, WBGEDC is trying to introduce a special coating on them with foreign expertise.