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Solar power focus in Pratichi training

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Kolkata: Pratichi India Trust has launched a pilot project which focuses on the decentralisation of solar energy. Pratichi, in collaboration with Deeniyat Muallima College in Howrah, is providing hands-on training to 19 youths from minority communities on use of solar panels, batteries, LED bulbs, SMD-LED lights, BLDC fans and C-spectrum UV LEDs for solar water purification. The project aims to promote "barefoot solar entrepreneurship" so that a livelihood opportunity is generated as well as make them self-sufficient in their daily activities also.

"The primary focus is to train them for production of off-grid solar electricity utilising rooftops in suburban and rural areas, and also make them aware about the daily-use applications of solar power to use fans, mobile chargers, water purifiers and for cooking. It will help them become self-reliant and, in the long run, can generate many livelihood options," said Urba Chaudhuri, coordinator, special project, at Pratichi India Trust.

Physics professor Parthasarathi Majumdar, one of the instructors of the pilot project, said the training involves use of basic electronic tools like multimeters, soldering irons and devices like diodes and transistors. Solar electronics specialist Sekhar Banerjee and Atanu Mallick, an ITI-trained electronic expert are helping him.

"The training programme will culminate in setting up of solar panels and associated equipment at an Anganwadi, and a primary healthcare sub-centre so that these places get free power. The trainees can also think of start-up solar power firms in remote areas," said Majumdar.

Sonia Khatoon, geography honours student, said: "I would like to start a small business after learning this and also make and use solar devices in my home because it is environment-friendly as well as saves a lot of money." Secretary of the college, Sk Hyder Ali, siad it would make the youth self-reliant and help us fight the climate crisis.