FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND SOLAR LIGHTING LABORATORY LAUNCHED IN SOUTH ASIA

TERI establishes a state-of- the-art solar lighting laboratory - a unique infrastructure created for testing, training and knowledge transfer

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TERI has established a Solar Lighting Laboratory, a first of its kind in South Asia, to provide a platform for quality testing of off grid lighting products, adhering to international standards.

The laboratory can test products in accordance with methods specified in the International Electrotechnical Commission's (IEC) framework for evaluating off-grid lighting products. IEC is the world's leading organization for the preparation and publication of International Standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies.

The laboratory is supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and International Financial Corporation (IFC).

Low-income people in need of off-grid lighting solutions are often dissatisfied with the performance of inferior products flooding the market. Realizing that a strong, quality assurance and testing program will go a long way in building consumer confidence in solar products, IFC's Lighting Asia/India Program is working with TERI towards this end. IFC partnered with TERI to upgrade the Institute's solar lighting laboratory into a state-of-the art testing facility using international standards. The Program has supported TERI in the upgrade and expansion of its solar lighting laboratory by: designing it in line with international best practices, equipping the lab with the latest technology and equipment, and increasing the number of testing benches and through training, and technical support.

These test methods were jointly developed by IFC and the World Bank prior to adoption by the International Electrotechnical Commission. The lab will emerge as a testing hub for the South Asia region and become one of the handful of labs worldwide designed to test products in line with the process laid down by the IEC.

Dr. R K Pachauri, **Director General, TERI**, said "*It is significant that TERI has come up with this initiative, as this will bring quality solar products not just to people in India, but to all parts of the world. Rural electrification has a huge impact on water and power access. Earlier, the focus of rural electrification was on agriculture. We need a transformation where poor people in inaccessible areas are able to light up their lives. And lighting has today become an important component in rural electrification*".

He added, "*Solar energy and systems have the potential to meet the needs of people not just in rural areas, but semi-urban and peri-urban areas too. We are committed to sustainable energy for all, and sustainable lighting is an important part of challenge to meet our unique energy needs. But for renewable energy to become popular, it is important that we have adequate quality and efficiency safeguards in place to promote solar energy products and systems. The setting up of the lab is an important step towards making renewable energy sustainable and of immense value to the sector*".

"*Quality is a key determinant in the success of off-grid lighting products and laboratory testing is the best way to reliably benchmark products*," said **Jeeva A. Perumalpillai-Essex, Manager, Sustainable Business Advisory, IFC.** "*Our partnership with TERI in upgrading and testing laboratory capacity will ensure the availability of reliable solar lighting products for those cut off from the power grid. The lab will emerge as a testing hub for the South Asia region and become one of the five facilities worldwide working on quality assurance. The other laboratories that World Bank Group has supported are in United States, Germany, and Kenya."*

The laboratory's facilities are available for testing and long-term performance assessment of various lighting systems (both for general lighting and solar-based lighting). The solar lighting laboratory will also carry out various training programmes for different target groups. As a way forward for the development and expansion of this laboratory, the lab will be linked with several other groups or programmes that require general lighting system testing. The supreme testing equipment and authority for high quality assurance can lead to the transformation of the laboratory into a nodal agency for general (solar) lighting system testing not only for India, but also for countries in Southeast Asia.

ABOUT TERI:

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is an independent, not-for-profit research organization deeply committed to every aspect of energy, environment, and sustainable development. From providing environment-friendly solutions to rural energy problems, to helping shape the development of the Indian oil and gas sector; from tackling global climate change issues across many continents to enhancing forest conservation efforts among local communities; from advancing solutions to growing urban transportation and air pollution problems to promoting energy efficiency in Indian industries, the emphasis has always been on finding innovative solutions to make the world a better place to live in. All activities at TERI move from formulating local and national–level strategies to suggesting global solutions tackling critical energy and environment related issues.

Headed by Dr. R.K. Pachauri, also the chairperson of the Nobel Peace Prize winning climate change body, IPCC, TERI has emerged as an institution of excellence for its path-breaking research, and is a global brand widely respected by political leaders, policy makers, corporate entities as well as the civil society at large.

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