

Inauguration of women-led 30kWp solar mini-grid site



30 kWp solar mini-grid site in Sikhar, Mirzapur

A women-led 30 kWp solar mini-grid site in Sikhar, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh has been launched on 3rd April 2024, marking a significant milestone for women collective leading renewable energy project in the region. This decentralised renewable energy system, represents a transformative opportunity by providing clean and affordable energy solutions, particularly benefiting micro-entrepreneurs who currently rely on diesel generators.

The Urja Mandala - energy constellation model shows the potential of a Private-Public-Community partnership, with women at the forefront of decision-making and implementation. It not only provides a sustainable energy solution but also serves as a model for inclusivity, equity, and empowerment in the broader context of green energy transition.

Central to this initiative is the Nav Chetna Urja Mandala Mahila Samiti (NCUMMS), a special committee comprised of 10 women from Nav Chetna Agro Producer Company Limited. As owners, operators, and managers of the Sikhar Urja Mandala site, they will showcase how women-led cooperatives can drive impactful change at the grassroots level. The launch event provided NCUMMS a platform to articulate their vision and educate entrepreneurs on the advantages of solar energy.

Members of the Nav Chetna Urja Mandala Mahila Samiti also expressed their happiness at being connected with the initiative. They mentioned that “this will help them empower themselves, motivate others to be part of this initiative, and contribute to the local economy”. A woman entrepreneur, who is the first customer of the Urja Mandala in Sikhar, shared how solar energy will enable her to invest in a Milk Chiller unit, creating new business opportunities.

This initiative is part of the Energy Transition for Rural emPowerment programme, supported by The HongKong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), which aims to promote sustainable development by transitioning to cleaner energy sources.



Ribbon cutting of the solar site by the women collective



Samata Devi sharing her experience at the launch



snippet of the launch event



Members of the samiti inspecting the site