



HUGE SAVINGS OF LPG FOR SAIBABA SANSTHAN

Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy, Dr. Farooq Abdullah inaugurated the world's largest solar steam system installed at Sri Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi today. The solar system has been designed for cooking food for devotees visiting the sansthan.

The total cost of the solar steam system is estimated at Rs. 133.00 lakhs for which a subsidy of Rs. 58.40 lakhs has been provided by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). The system installed & completed at Shirdi is the World's largest solar steam system for cooking food for pilgrims visiting Shri Sai Baba Sansthan. The solar system enables the sansthan to cook food for 20,000 people a day, resulting in a **huge annual savings of one lakh kg. of LPG translating to nearly Rs.20,00,000 per year.** The system has been installed within a record time of 10 months.

Steam cooking has been found to be very clean, efficient and hygienic way of cooking, especially when food is cooked for large number of people. The Shirdi system generates about 3500 kg of steam every day, which is sufficient to cook food for about 20,000 people. The system has been designed in such a way that it will generate steam for cooking even in the absence of electricity to run the feed water pump for circulating water in the system.

To promote such systems in the country, a scheme is in promotion through Ministry of New and Renewable Energy which provides support upto 50% of the cost of systems to non-profit making bodies and up to 35% to profit making bodies availing depreciation benefits. Over 40 systems covering a dish area of about 12,000 sq. m have been supported by the Ministry so far for various applications, though the major application is cooking only. Other applications include process heat in industries & laundry, sterilization, air conditioning etc.

Some of the large solar steam cooking systems installed include systems at Mount Abu in Rajasthan for 10,000 people/ day, at Tirupathi in Andhra Pradesh & Satyabhama university in Chennai each for 15,000 people/ day and the recent one at Shri Sai baba Sansthan, Trust, Shirdi for 20,000 people per day.

India is full of sunshine during most part of the year. Solar radiation available during the daytime can be harnessed for generation of steam using automatically tracked solar concentrators. The concentrators focus the sunlight on receivers which convert water into steam flowing through them for use in the kitchen. The system comprising such concentrators is hooked up with existing boilers so as to take care of cloudy days/ non-sunshine hours. The system can help in saving 70 to 80% of the fuel being used for cooking or other steam applications. These installations can help religious places/ ashrams, schools, students' hostels, canteens of various establishments etc.