

Kozhikode jail lights the way



Prisoners (sitting) attend a training session on making LED lamps at the Kozhikode District Jail on Saturday. Photo: K. Ragesh

Remand prisoners in Kozhikode District Jail are planning to light up prisons all over Kerala at reduced cost. Twenty-one prisoners there recently completed a four-day training session in making LED lamps and have already made 40 such lamps.

The lamps will initially be used in the Kozhikode District Jail. To secure permission and funds for bulk production, the jail authorities will shortly approach higher-ups and submit a proposal.

Jail Superintendent P. Ajay Kumar says the prisoners will be able to make an LED lamp at Rs.200. The lamps could be supplied at the same rate to other jails. The main intention of the initiative is power-saving. "In the second phase, we will consider marketing the product outside for profit. The training will continue for newcomers too," he adds.

Repairs too

Mr. Ajay Kumar says the trainees are skilled in repairing LED lamps. At the training session organised with the support of the city-based Women Entrepreneurship Development Institute (WEDI), the prisoners were detailed on the chances of damage and the ways to rectify them.

K. Rajith, a native of Pottammal, who headed the training programme, says all his trainees are now confident of making even costly LED lanterns and emergency lights. The skill should help them find a good part-time job after the jail term. "LED products are priced very high. The new entrepreneurs will have plenty of chances outside," he says.

Rajith, who completed 100 LED-making classes for the public on Saturday, says government institutions and the public can play a crucial role in popularising LED bulbs, which will aid Kerala's power-saving attempts. He also promises free coaching classes for all interested.