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IIT design helps rural women in fabrication of beads

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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New apparatus has increased production and added innovative features for designing, polishing

Rural women engaged in the fabrication of tulsi mala beads in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district have received support from a technical design intervention by the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, which has helped improve their old machines. The new apparatus has increased production two-fold and added innovative features for designing and polishing.

Hundreds of women in Bharatpur district's Kaman, Deeg, Nadbai and Sesar tehsils have been earning their livelihood since long by making tulsi malas which are supplied to the temple towns such as Mathura, Vrindavan, Nandgaon and Barsana, situated nearby. Regular religious events also ensure a good demand and consumption of tulsi malas throughout the year.

IIT-Delhi's Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG) took up a project with the help of the Bharatpur-based Lupin Foundation in 2012 for improving old devices used by women and evolved a new machine. In its latest initiative, RuTAG has made major changes in the apparatus by enhancing its speed, added new features and helped in its operation with a comfortable sitting posture.

Lupin Foundation's executive director Sita Ram Gupta told *The Hindu* on Monday that the new machines have been designed with wooden boxes, in which other tools could also be kept, while a state-of-the-art technology had been used to add the utilities of designing and polishing. RuTAG has offered the machines to women of the region at a subsidised price of ₹5,500 each.





Trained in IIT

A woman entrepreneur, Omwati, from Bailara village of Nadbai tehsil, underwent training in IIT-Delhi in the use of new apparatus and passed on the skills to other women. RuTAG presented machines to Ms. Omwati and Lupin Foundation's in-charge of women's empowerment programmes, Salho Hembrom, at an event in New Delhi last month.

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