

# THE HINDU

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## Modified kilns protect potters from toxic fumes

New design also ensures consumption of lesser amount of fuel and higher production

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A technical intervention in the fabrication of pottery kilns has come to the aid of the 'Kumhar' (potter) community in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district by ensuring protection against toxic fumes, consumption of lesser amount of fuel and high production of earthen pots and utensils. The modified furnace has been installed in Unch village of Nad-bai tehsil.

Potters belonging to the Prajapat clan have traditionally been fabricating kilns of mud and clay



A modified kiln in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district. •

and using *tudi*, made of vestiges of mustard crop, as fuel for heating these furnaces. The round-shaped kilns produce smoke and

fumes in huge quantity as well as high flames caused by baking of earthen pots.

Bharatpur-based Lupin Foundation has taken an initiative for improvement in conventional kilns with the assistance of the Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG) at Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi. The RuTAG takes up modification of existing technology and redesigns gadgets for adoption by the users at the grassroots.

RuTAG's senior project assistant Davinder Pal Singh told *The Hindu* on Wednesday that the

masonry method of "rat trap construction" was used for fabrication of kilns, in which the bricks were placed in vertical position instead of the conventional horizontal order, creating hollow space within the wall.

### Similar initiative

"The insulation created in this manner traps heat in the furnace and reduces fuel consumption by 60%. The results are very encouraging... A similar initiative was earlier taken for modifying bangle kilns in Unch village," Mr. Singh said.