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President flags off solar powered passenger car

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President Pranab Mukharjee having a close look at the India's first Passenger Solar Electric Vehicle " ARKA-The Sun Car designed by Delhi Technological University Solaris Team at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on September 04, 2012. Photo: R.V. Moorthy

President Pranab Mukherjee flagged off a solar-powered passenger car developed by Delhi Technological University at Rashtrapati Bhavan here on Tuesday.

The car has been designed and developed by a team of interdisciplinary group of under-graduate students headed by Dhiraj Mishra of the Electronics and Communication Engineering Department of DTU.

The eco-friendly car with zero emission has a high speed of 120 km/hour. A sedan with a seating capacity for two, it has the option of adding three more seats, a DTU official said.

Sasol Solar Challenge

The car flagged off from Rashtrapati Bhavan will represent India at the Sasol Solar Challenge to be held in South Africa between September 15 and 29.

Solar cars from across the world will participate in the competition, which will cover 4,200 km along the coastline of South Africa.

The DTU solar car, code-named 'Solaris', is one of the most innovative projects of DTU, earlier called the Delhi College of Engineering.

According to DTU Vice-Chancellor Prof. P. B. Sharma, the body of the car is made of special grade matt fibre in order to keep the solar car light in weight and performance oriented.

Flexible modules of mono crystalline solar silicon cells of 21.4 per cent efficiency have been pasted all over the top of the body in order to entrap maximum solar energy. In all, 800 W is generated from the solar modules.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Sharma said the future of automobiles in India lies in solar power and hybrid vehicles. He stated that DTU is firmly committed to empower India's solar powered vehicles and solar power generation systems.

The innovations in the area of solar car began with the university team designing the first solar car of India to participate in the World Solar Challenge organised in Australia in 2011.