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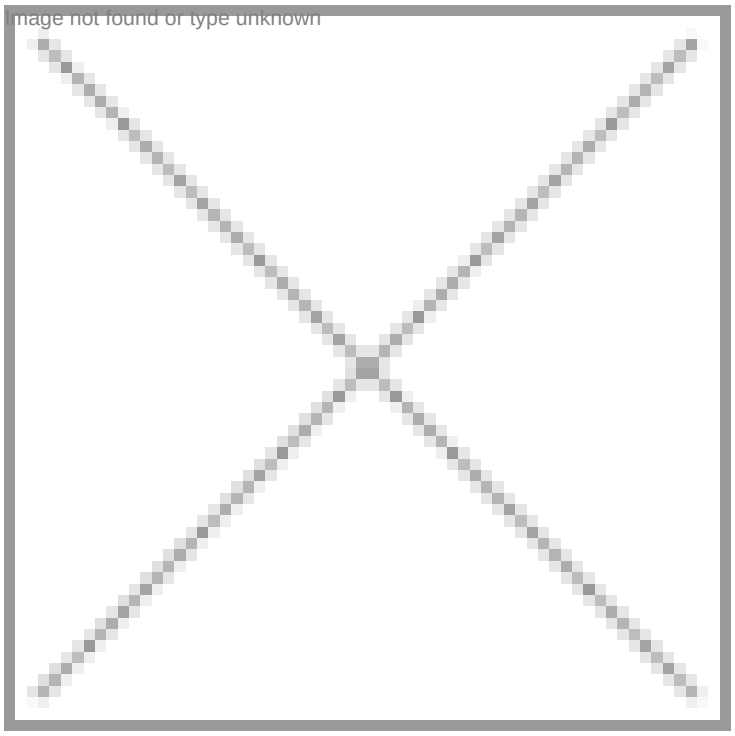

Solar vaccine fridge developed

India's President APJ Kalam has become the first customer for SolarChill, a new solar- powered, ozone-friendly vaccine refrigerator.

Scientists have developed a vaccine refrigerator powered by solar energy. Called the SolarChill, the vaccine cooler will play a crucial role in delivering effective vaccines and refrigeration to remote areas in developing countries without electricity or with irregular electrical supply.

Conceived and developed by an Indian scientist, Rajendra Shende, head of the UNEP's OzonAction unit, SolarChill boasts of an innovative and ozone-friendly technology. Realizing its merits and encouraging the adoption of this technology, the President, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam has bought the first two units of the SolarChill vaccine refrigerator. The units have been installed in the President's estate clinic.

Elaborating on the breakthrough technology used, Shende said, "SolarChill combines environmentally sound refrigeration with solar energy. Its unique feature is that the energy of the sun is stored in ice instead of in batteries. The key to the technology is the use of a Direct Current (DC) compressor instead of the standard Alternating Current (AC) compressor used in normal refrigerators, or in other solar coolers. In addition, SolarChill incorporates environmentally friendly hydrocarbon refrigerants instead of the CFCs (Chloro fluorocarbons) and HFCs (Hydrofluorocarbons)."

Significantly, the SolarChill technology is publicly owned. "Currently the SolarChill prototypes are being field tested in Senegal, Indonesia and Cuba. The WHO officials are happy with the incoming results. Once the field tests are completed and the technology is proven to be reliable and certified by the WHO, it will be freely available to entrepreneurs globally," Shende informed.

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam taking a look at SolarChill.

Rolly Dureha