

Udaipur girl bags prize for tech to keep food hot longer

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur: Bhawana Dangi (18), a Class XII student at a government school in Bhalo Ki Guda village in Udaipur, has won the first prize in the district level iStart Program promoting start-ups among school students. She has received a cash prize of Rs 50,000 and her project has qualified for the 'promising' category start-up.

Her project 'Wonder Bag' keeps food warm for 7-8 hours. That's not all. The steam created in the bag even turns half-cooked items into fully cooked food.

Her project was chosen from the hundreds of start-up ideas submitted by the students in the BootCamp program by the Department of Information Technology (DoIT). The Bhamashah Techno Hub in Jaipur is providing mentoring to Dangi by helping her prepare feasibility reports, market studies, technical assistance and inviting investments in the project.

Daughter of an Anganwadi worker, Dangi said that she would see her mother cooking food early in the morning but had



Class XII student Bhawana Dangi shows her project 'Wonder Bag' that keeps food warm for 7-8 hrs

to eat cold food in the afternoon. "This is a harsh reality for those who work in rural areas. They have to eat food which is cold and with low nutrient value if not served hot. It is a major problem. The hot pots which are available in the market cost Rs 300 onwards. Also, the food doesn't stay hot for more than for 2-3 hours," said Dangi, who started finding solution to the problem when in Class IX. She initially discussed the idea with her school

principal who suggested studying the concept of hot and cold in detail. The principal also involved their science teacher to carry out the research. "After several failures, I could succeed in making a bag which could keep the food hot for 6-7 hours and also ensure that the nutrient value doesn't degrade," said Dangi.

The bag is made up of three-layered cloth in the shape of a lotus flower. "Inside the flower, it has a layer of thermal balls along with an element which I cannot disclose. The layers work as an insulator and the food kept in an aluminum or steel pot remains hot. The model has been tested even by the iStart team and found to have great potential to provide hot food to the rural workforce. The cost comes around Rs 250-350 depending upon the availability of the raw material," said Purna Nausaliya, principal of the school. Tapan Kumar, joint director, DoIT, said that the project has been studied by the BTH team in great detail and has great potential to resolve a problem which our rural citizens are facing.