

No Great Wall, yet home no less

DIM SUM IN TANDOOR Not the ones to miss out on home, 130 Chinese experts at the thermal project in Punjab have created a little world all their own



Work is in full swing to complete the first phase of the thermal power plant in Barwala village.

Wangwei Rudhawa

BARWALA (PUNJAB) There's a little China in Punjab's southern most district. Armed 130 Chinese nationals, employees of the Shandong Electric Power Construction Corporation (SAPCC), are working hard to complete the first phase of the \$1,000 crore thermal power plant at Barwala village in Mansa district.

The first batch of 80 experts from

China landed in Punjab in December 2002. It was not long to adjust to an alien culture initially. "But gradually we settled down and decided to set up our own mini-China here to tackle homeickness," said SAPCC overseas project manager Wang Hong.

"We grow our own vegetables and have brought our own chefs from China," he said. "We also get 80 Chinese out of 100 to take their families to keep us going."

"To get their daily dose of home vegetation food, an integral part of Chinese

diet, they prefer outsourcing pork, fish and lamb from India.

The Violante group, which signed an Agreement with the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) to build the 2,040 MW power project in five phases, has engaged SAPCC.

The first 600 MW phase will get commissioned in November 2012. The subsequent phases are expected to be completed after a gap of three months each.

A member official of Violante was all praise for the work attitude of the

POWER POINTS

- 2,113**
The area in acres the plant occupies
- ₹13,000**
The cost in crores of the project
- 58**
The power in million units per day the plant will generate after all four phases are complete
- ₹2.86**
The cost at which power per unit will be sold to PSPCL for 25 years
- 700**
The number of Chinese workers who might eventually work here



(Top to bottom): Chinese employees of Shandong Electric Power Construction Corporation using their laptops in Barwala village in Punjab's Mansa district; residents putting clothes out to dry in the winter sun; and spending up for food prepared by chefs specially brought from China.



Chinese. "We need to learn a lot from them," he said.

The SAPCC site office has all signs, marks and indicators in Chinese. For the benefit of their Indian counterparts, five interpreters translate all paper work from Chinese to English.

One of the interpreters, Liu Shuang, said that in Barwala communication among Chinese construction had kept English dictionaries. "Now the Indians call me him, which is easy for them," he said with a smile.

BY ROY KATRAL/PTI