

MNRE AND TERI DISCUSS ROAD AHEAD FOR GRID-CONNECTED ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER IN INDIA APRIL 16, 2015

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Report by India Education bureau, New Delhi: TERI and MNRE held a day-long conference today at the India Habitat Centre to deliberate upon the challenges and strategies for the successful implementation of the MNRE scheme for grid-connected rooftop solar power in India.

In the Keynote address Shri Tarun Kapoor, Joint Secretary, MNRE said, "Grid-connected rooftop solar power is the most important single sector as far as renewables are concerned. This 40,000 MW project requires an investment of upto 4 lakh crores. This is a big opportunity for all business." He also encouraged start-up businesses to come forward and invest as "to create and sustain such a big market where everyone has to put in the effort required". So far 20 state regulators have issued connections and 17 states have issues policies in this regard, the joint secretary mentioned.

Talking about MNRE withdrawing subsidy, he said the Ministry will "continue to work on options that get the consumers cheap loans", while looking at "multilateral and bilateral funding" that attracts money in the country at a cheap rate".

Dr Leena Srivastava, Acting Director General, TERI, said in her welcome address, "It will be interesting to see how we can make India a global leader in this sector, without impacting climate change. Taking a systemic approach towards implementing this large and ambitious programme, ensuring it is a win-win for all stakeholders, is critically important and underlies every action we do." Focussing on the fact that 'sharing the pie' is crucial, she said that private sector is only going to engage in this initiative if they see "adequate" returns in this".

Talking about World Bank's partnership with MNRE, Ms Mohua Mukherjee, Senior Energy Specialist, World Bank, said that "it is interested in developing various business models in India." "The World Bank wants to catalyse private funding through partnership with commercial banks". The goal, she said, is to make this form of energy source "a consumer commodity that nobody wants to be without."

The conference was organized by MNRE and TERI with a special focus on grid-connected rooftop solar power, which is a flagship initiative of the government to push this sector. It forms a huge 40 GW component of the rooftop solar power out of India's ambitious 100 GW solar power target by 2022. In this context, this conference is designed to serve as a platform for deliberation on the challenges to the implementation of grid-connected solar power as well as possible interventions and formulation of success strategies.

Various industry stakeholders who participated in the panel discussions included Mr. Pawan Agrawal, President, Corporate Finance, Yes Bank; Mr. Pranav Mehta, Chairman, National Solar Energy Federation of India; Mr. Ashish Khanna, CEO & Executive Director, Tata Power Solar; Mr. Rajesh Kumar Jain, Addl. General Manager (Solar), Solar Energy Corporation of India; Ms. Mohua Mukherjee, Senior Energy Specialist, World Bank, Mr. Shirish Garud, Associate Director, TERI and Dr. Ujjwal Bhattacharjee, Senior Fellow, TERI.