

Tata Power: Sustainable is attainable

Tata Power has taken enormous strides in the pursuit of a greener and cleaner energy for a sustainable nation

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India's commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2070 is poised to lead the nation on a path to clean, green and sustainable economic development. Achieving this clean energy transition will need commitment from corporates and citizens alike.

In that light, the News 18 Network has launched a special initiative Tata Power: Sustainable is Attainable to raise awareness and build conversations into how businesses, governments and the people can create a sustainable and low-carbon future.

The power sector holds a rather critical responsibility to help us achieve the massive goal. Tata Power, one of India's biggest integrated power companies and a leader in clean energy generation with 32% of its total renewables-portfolio will play its part in the pursuit for a sustainable future. With a battery of new technologies including solar roofs, EV charges, solar pumps and energy

management solutions, Tata Power plays a pioneering role in India's energy transition.

Dr Praveer Sinha joined News 18 Network to talk about why indeed "sustainable is attainable". From his perspective such a goal is about providing "energy security, equity and sustainability". India is among the fastest-growing big economies and "will witness the largest increase in energy demands worldwide", said Dr Sinha. "In the coming decades, clean and green energy will play a major role in meeting this increased demand."

He stressed the need for both accessibility and affordability of power. Tata Power aspires to help businesses and consumers to make small, yet significant changes for attaining a sustainable lifestyle. In addition to driving the country's growth, said Dr Sinha, "our foremost responsibility is also to lead the way in which we can reverse climate change".

This transition is not an option but a "commitment to support the people of this country". While reiterating the need to "walk the talk", Dr Sinha said that from the present 32% of the green energy portfolio, Tata Power proposes to raise that figure to 70% by 2030 and 100% by 2045, making it the first company in India with that stiff target.

The transition roadmap will be an eventful one. Dr Sinha reckoned that with new technologies and harnessing innovation, clean energy solutions will become commercially viable and also economical for the consumers. For instance, Tata Power runs one of the biggest micro-grid initiatives in the world. Energy management services, too, are in the works for small and medium industries. The objective now will be to fast-track adoption of clean energy solutions and achieve scale.

Globally Dr Sinha sees three big changes, the first one being decarbonisation, where clean and green energy is increasingly becoming a norm. Second is the decentralisation of energy in both cities and rural areas that will need models with hybrid solutions. For instance solar energy may fuel the needs in the day and wind energy at nights.

Such initiatives will need partnering with young entrepreneurs who dedicate their lives to green projects. In that regard, the Clean Energy International Incubation Centre set up by Tata Power in Delhi offers "lab to market incubation support for many startups that are working in the clean energy space." These startups are primed to make "a big social and environmental impact". The core focus areas will be universal energy access, energy efficiency and breakthrough clean technologies. Convergence of all these, according to Dr Sinha, "will transform the way the world will produce and consume energy".

Much on the same lines, electric mobility, too, will be transformed in the near future, said Dr Sinha. Indeed EV charging infrastructure is a big concern among buyers. Tata Power has the largest EV charging network of over 2,300 chargers across the country to address “range anxiety” faced by consumers. Additionally, it has equipped consumers with some 20,000 home chargers. It continues to work closely with the government and automobile Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to meet the country’s ever-growing demands.

Third is Digitisation. It will be key to ensure that last-mile connectivity is established. As new technologies are introduced across the value chain, generation, transmission and distribution will be seamlessly connected in the interest of the final consumer. Harnessing Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning will offer opportunities for data collection and analytics. Such efforts will democratise energy efficiencies as both businesses and end consumers get better at engaging with the energy system than ever before.

Indeed there will be challenges galore which will need a fair share of support from the government to move towards clean and green energy. “The recent announcement of reaching a 47% target for renewable purchase obligation for utilities and enterprise and industry is a welcome step and that should help us to reach our objective of 500GW of clean energy by 2030”, said Dr Sinha. There must be incentives and penalties if utilities do not comply with these obligations.

He added that most state discoms are in financial stress. It’s crucial to make them commercially viable so that they can buy more renewable power. Decentralisation of energy will be important to enable customers to generate electricity themselves. In rural areas solar pumps are promoted actively whereby the farmer can not only use energy for themselves but also sell water as an additional source of revenue.

Overall it will be down to collaboration between consumers and corporate across various industries to make this happen. The use of technology and innovative solutions will pave the way for a greener and cleaner future. Through such small steps, sustainable will indeed be attainable, said Dr Sinha while signing off.

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