

CARING FOR THE EARTH

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

CHARTING A LONG PATH FOR RENEWABLE ADOPTION

India is undertaking a never-before transition towards a sustainable energy mix- with an aim to ensure equitable and affordable energy access for all to achieve its goal of net zero



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India's ongoing energy transformation is turning to be the model that many have their eyes set on. With a renewable energy push through the last decade, India is trying to drive availability of energy, widen the sources for renewable energy and building the infrastructure for new sources of energy. Policymakers have been at the forefront of driving the changes and shaking up the incumbents.



The countrywide spread of renewable power looks even more impressive since nearly two-third of India's power requirements have traditionally been met through fossil fuel, essentially coal. As India unlocks its power distribution with open access, its success should also be measured in making power accessible for all. The pillars of availability, affordability and access are the driving force. The momentum of change was built several years ago when, in the early 2010s, India removed subsidies for petrol and diesel. Incentives for electric vehicles manufacturing were introduced in 2019. Millions of households were provided with fuel gas for cooking and heating, replacing the need for traditional biomass like wood.

RECHARGING THE ENERGY SECTOR

India is in the middle of a major shift

Gujarat is taking a lead, for converting completely from non-renewables to renewables. We are in relevant times in history where we would move towards renewables and probably, do justice to mother nature by undoing a lot of wrong things done in the past.

Arun Mahesh Babu, IAS
Managing Director, Gujarat Power Corporation

Climate has changed and the change is accelerating. It is already beyond any government policy, projects or subsidies to correct climate change. Every individual is using energy and materials and contributing to climate change. For devising the right approach to mitigate climate change, it is important to understand 'what is climate change and why has it changed?', 'who has changed it', 'when and how to correct it'. Most importantly, 'what can an individual do'. While taking any climate corrective action, we must keep in mind that 'limiting consumption' and 'localising production' is fundamental to human sustainability. Following this, we need to adapt to energy swara and move towards 100% solar-powered life by following the AMG strategy wherein we 'avoid', then 'minimise', and as the only last option, we generate and fulfil our own energy needs locally.

Prof. Chetan Singh Solanki, IIT Bombay, Founder, Energy Swara Foundation

in its energy mix, with an ambitious focus on transitioning the country towards a renewable future. This renewal includes investing in solar, wind energy, and demand-side management, as well as energy efficiency. These efforts are backed by comprehensive policy roadmaps and initiatives that aim to drive clean energy transition across all sectors, from industry to agriculture.

Renewable batteries and green hydrogen, as well as other low-carbon technologies, are areas where Indian companies can become world leaders. Estimates say these industries could generate up to \$80 billion by 2030 in India. India's ambitions to achieve net zero face many challenges that

The issue of climate change is not new and now it has reached an alarming stage. When we first began discussing the issue of climate change, it was more for a select target group. Now climate change is being discussed by children, in families and has become a dinner time discussion.

Ajay Pandey
Partner & Co-Founder, Ithinkthrough Consulting



need solutions. Commodity prices are rising, making energy less affordable and creating risks to energy security. Renewable electricity supply could turn unreliable for many, since financially unstable electricity companies are an obstacle to transformation. India must tackle these challenges if its goal of net zero is to be achieved.

For the 11th edition of the Earth Care Awards, JSW and The Times of India Group are recognising exemplary climate stewardship amongst individuals, organisations, corporates, and policymakers.

As part of the outreach event, first in the series was held in Ahmedabad on the theme *Energyising Change: Pathways to Accelerate India's Transition towards a Renewable Future*. As the audience listened to the speakers' insights, ideas, and successful case studies, the urgent need for collaboration and collective action was the overarching idea. The speakers also spoke about the roadmap and strategies to boost renewable energy adoption, with a strong emphasis on consistency in policy changes, investments in technology, public-private partnerships, and community engagement.

There are several organisations, NCOs and community-based organisations who are working in the climate change space and most of their work goes unrecognised and unrewarded. A lot of them are working there without any recognition and it is important to recognise them, so a lot of others are motivated.

Rupa Dawane
Head-Water, Environment & Sanitation, JSW Foundation

We need 11 GW of power every year to meet the country's 5% CAGR for power demand. However, green power utilisation is only in the range of 25-30%. This means we need 35-40GW of power annually. Unfortunately, we have only managed to add 15GW of power in the last few years, leaving a large gap between the demand and what we are achieving.

Abhay Yagnik, Sr Vice President-Business Development, JSW Energy

Climate change is a top priority for world leaders as the stakes are much higher than before. India and China are two of the rapidly growing economy and are under scrutiny. India faces a situation where many of the billion population needs to be lifted out of poverty while also addressing the climate issue.

Dr Minal Pathak, Associate Professor, Global Centre for Environment & Energy, Ahmedabad University

India is driving the energy transition as a collective effort for the entire community, with emphasis on various options. Policymakers need to focus on driving the technology change so that the pace of change to renewable energy can be enhanced. As India's model for transition to renewable energy gets attention, the key need will be for blended finance to be made available so that the investments needed for the energy sources of the future can be ensured.

In the year 2007, we moved to renewable energy out of necessity. Our water supply was not sustainable with a huge gap between the expense and the income. To reduce the cost, we installed wind power plants for which we had to take legal support.

KH Khatwani
Additional City Engineer, Sassi Municipal Corporation