



Dr. Farooq Abdullah calls for co-operation amongst countries to achieve technological advancement and cost reduction in renewable energy

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy participated in the discussions at the Energy Minister's Round Table during the plenary session of the 3rd World Future Energy Summit at Abu Dhabi, UAE. In his remarks, he highlighted India's energy strategy aiming at efficiency and security, and the achievement of an optimum, environmentally friendly mix of primary resources for energy generation.

Following is the text of the Minister's remarks:

"We are working for development of renewable energy sources using the latest technological developments for around three decades now to meet our energy requirements from these energy sources as much as possible. Compared to many other countries our progress is good. Millions of decentralized energy systems, solar lighting systems, irrigation pumps, aero-generators, biogas plants, solar cookers, biomass gasifiers, improved cook stoves are now being used in the country. India today stands among the top five countries in terms of renewable energy capacity, with an installed base of over 15 GW, which is around 10% of India's total power generation capacity and contributes over 3% in the electricity mix. The contribution in grid connected power right now is mainly from wind, around 11000 MW. We have already identified a potential of near about 100, 000 MW from wind, biomass and small hydro sources in the country.

The Government of India has recently approved a new policy on development of solar energy in the country by launching of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission. This is a historic and transformational initiative. It has a twin objective- to contribute to India's long term energy security as well as its ecological security. Rapid development and deployment of various renewable energy sources is imperative and in view of high solar radiation availability in our country, it is only logical to harness this unlimited energy source.

The Solar Mission aims to "leapfrog" and thus place India in a leadership position globally in development, manufacturing and deployment of solar energy technologies. A goal of 20,000 MW of grid interactive solar power is envisaged in a three stage plan by the end of the thirteenth Five Year Plan in 2022.

The implementation of our National Solar Mission will proceed on the basis of the technology advancements and cost reductions. The Mission has already planned to establish an investor-friendly mechanism that reduces risk and at the same time, provides an attractive, predictable and sufficiently extended tariff for the purchase of solar power.

There is an enormous scope of cooperation amongst the countries to achieve technological advancement in this area. Research undertaken so far has already shown that cost of solar electricity can be brought down by several means, it is possible to harness lower wind speeds, the energy of tides and waves can be channelized to produce electricity, alternate transport fuels can make our journeys less carbon intensive, hydrogen can be an ideal energy storage and carrier. It is possible to have a trans-continental grid with lowest losses of electricity. Only we need to translate the research results to realities, to products that can benefit all of us. If all of us try together, we will succeed at a much less time period. And sooner the better, because we all want to leave a beautiful world behind us for our children. India is open to any research collaboration to achieve this objective with any of you. Our talented pool of manpower, our diversity of climate, our tradition of pursuit of wisdom and our firm commitment to achieve a sustainable energy future would make any collaboration fruitful. We extend our hands of cooperation to all of you.

Biomass, which is a Carbon neutral fuel source for production of electricity, holds considerable promise for India. Our estimates indicate that, with the present utilization pattern of crop residues, surplus biomass materials, is about 150 million tonnes, which could generate about 16,000 MW of power. Apart from providing a much needed relief from power shortages, power projects based on biomass would generate employment in our rural areas. These also help stabilization of electricity grid at the tail end. In India, hydro projects up to 25 MW capacities are termed as small hydro and it has a potential of over 15,000 MW. At present, a capacity addition of about 250 MW per year is being achieved from SHP projects and about 70% is coming through private sector. So far over 2500 MW hydropower projects have been set up in the country and about 900 MW are in various stages of implementation. The aim is to double the current growth rate and take it to a capacity addition of 500 MW per year in next 2-3 years."