

 **Ladakh Renewable Energy Initiative**

The Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure has approved a project to promote use of renewable energy in the Ladakh region at a total cost of Rs. 473 crore.

The Ladakh Region has extreme environment conditions and faces enormous energy adversities throughout the year. It becomes even more acute during the winter months. The urban areas and all defence establishments use diesel and kerosene extensively. The population in the remote areas faces acute problem of fuel for cooking and space heating.

Considering that the region has good potential of solar and hydro resources, much of it yet to be realized and can be effectively used for minimizing use of diesel, kerosene and fuel-wood. Detailed studies were undertaken in Leh and Kargil districts of the region and after consultations with all the stakeholders namely defence officials, Ladakh councils in Leh and Kargil, districts officials, NGOs etc, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has prepared a Plan for large scale use of Renewable Energy with a total financial requirement of Rs 473 crore.

The plan envisages of 30 small / micro hydel projects aggregating to 23.5 MW capacity, setting up of about 300 SPV power plants of 5-100 KW capacity, 2000 SPV home lighting systems and about 40,000 solar thermal systems such as water heating, solar cookers, solar passive buildings, solar green house etc. The solar greenhouses proposed to be set up in the region would help in increasing the production of green vegetables in winters for the region, which are other wise procured from far off places. The implementation of the Plan will start from June, 2010 and will be completed by December, 2013. The renewable energy projects are expected to result in a saving of about 200 lakh liters of diesel per year.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy, along with senior officials from his Ministry, will be visiting Jammu & Kashmir next month to hold discussions with the Chief Minister for a speedy implementation of the plan.