

 **At least 1000 mw expected from Small Hydro Projects in Himachal Pradesh in Next Five Years: Dr. Farooq Abdullah**

SHIMLA AND HAMIRPUR TO BE DEVELOPED AS SOLAR CITIES

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy has said that his Ministry is targeting a capacity addition of at least 1000 MW from Himachal Pradesh in next five years. In a meeting with the Chief Minister, Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal, in Shimla today, Dr. Farooq Abdullah pointed out that the State has a huge potential to generate energy through Small Hydro Projects, a resource which should not be left untapped when the country is facing acute power shortage.

While the State has the potential of about 2268 MW, only 10% of it has been installed so far. Currently there are about 80 small hydro projects adding capacity up to 236 MW. Projects worth 204 MW are under implementation.

Projects of additional 1400MW have been allotted to Independent Power Producers. This includes about 1050 MW from projects up to 5 MW and 356 MW from projects between 5-25 MW.

Observing that Himachal Pradesh imports power during winter and exports during summer though it is a power surplus state, Dr Farooq Abdullah said that when 1000 MW capacity is added, it would not only avoid import of power by the State but also generate additional revenue even if 25% of it is exported.

The Minister suggested several steps to speed up progress of small hydro projects. These are as follows:

- Special attention is required to minimize time taken in hydrological studies and DPR preparation. Latest techniques of modeling and hydrology studies should be employed for minimizing time required for these activities.
- The state should launch a programme of gauging basin wise streams•
- The implementation schedule of all the projects should be closely monitored and the time frame compressed.
- Projects under construction should be completed in next 3 years.
- The projects allotted and not yet started actual implementation to be monitored and facilitated for speedy clearance. These to be completed in a maximum of 4 years.
- The projects recently allotted should be targeted for completion in 5 years.
- Strong action may be necessary against the developers who are unable to implement the projects in a fixed time frame.
- A strong monitoring mechanism should be put in place.
- The process of allotting new sites to be initiated.
- State need to evolve a process by which the developers can acquire land in a reasonable time and cost.

The meeting also discussed Solar thermal technologies such as Solar water heating systems, Solar cooking, Solar greenhouses, Solar passive architecture and Solar drying etc, that can be deployed in Himachal Pradesh for a variety of energy requirements in domestic, institutional and commercial sectors.

Interacting with the media on the sidelines of the meeting, Dr. Farooq Abdullah said that he has asked the state Government to explore the potential of developing Wind Energy. He also informed that the demand of the State Government to develop solar cities in Shimla and Hamirpur and set up Solar Parks at NIT Hamirpur and Noni University, Solan has been approved in principle.

The Centre gives financial assistance to develop Solar Cities as per following:

- Up to Rs. 50 lakh per city for a period of 5 years for:
- Up to Rs. 10 lakh for Preparation of a Master Plan.
- Up to Rs. 10 lakh for setting-up institutional arrangements.
- Up to Rs 20 lakh for awareness generation, capacity building and other promotional activities.
- up to Rs. 10 lakh for oversight of implementation during five years