



PRESS RELEASE

Energy experts urge guidelines for solar rooftop and mini-grids CEED organized a national conference to address access and energy security challenges in Bihar

Patna, 19 September 2018: The Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED), in partnership with the Bihar Industries Association (BIA) and Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, organized a national conference on renewable energy, 'Energising Bihar: Addressing Access and Energy Security Challenges' in the city with an intent to assess the progress in the implementation of the Bihar State Renewable Energy Policy notified in 2017. The conference explored the priority steps to be taken for the implementation guidelines of key thrust areas of the policy like solar rooftop and mini-grids to ensure accelerated and effective energy access and to address the energy supply challenges in the state.

The conference was inaugurated by Shri Bijendra Prasad Yadav, Hon'ble Energy Minister of Bihar in the gracious presence of Shri R. Lakshamanan, IAS, Director, Bihar Renewable Energy Development Agency (BREDA); Mr. K.P.S. Keshri, President, Bihar Industries Association (BIA) and other dignitaries.

While talking at the conference, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), CEED, said, "The government of Bihar has done incredible work in improving the availability of electricity in both rural and urban areas of the state in the last few years. The government also came up with a renewable energy policy last year which is one-of-its-kind. The policy was designed keeping in mind the growing energy needs of the state. The demand for electricity is growing exponentially and this aspiration needs to be met." "Key thrust areas have been identified under the policy that includes solar rooftop and mini-grids. There is a need for guidelines to ensure the policy's effective implementation. In the absence of these guidelines, not many projects are being realized on the ground. We urge the Bihar Government to speed up the process of framing implementation guidelines which can galvanize the rural economy as well as address the growing energy demand in urban areas", concluded Mr. Kumar.

During his keynote address, Shri Bijendra Yadav, Honorable Minister, Energy Department, Government of Bihar said, "We have come a long way in ensuring that all villages in the state are electrified and receive 18-20 hours of electricity which is a big achievement for our government. We realize that renewable energy has a major role to play in ensuring a sustainable supply of electricity to all. We are aiming for 24X7 power for all and believe that renewable energy sources like solar power can play a critical role in that. That is why our government came up with a renewable energy policy last year which is all-inclusive and covers all the major thrust areas related to renewable energy and its application." "The state government will announce the implementation guidelines for the mini-grid sector as well as solar rooftop sector as these are the key priority areas of the government. The concern departments are working towards framing guidelines, which will be announced for public feedback. We are confident that the effective implementation

of the policy will result in tremendous job and livelihood opportunities in the state.”

The conference also encouraged discussions on the opportunities that solar rooftop offers to financial sectors in terms of tapping new markets while providing key insight to the government for generating clean energy jobs and livelihood. It also helped inform the participants about the importance and innovation of mini and micro-grids in complementing the DISCOMs as well as the government in realizing the dream of 24X7 power for all, not only in cities but also in villages by the year 2022.

The Guest of Honour, Shri R. Lakshamanan, IAS, Director, BREDA said, "In order to reap the benefits of the policy, there is a need to put together effective guidelines for the timely achievement of the government's ambitious target. We need to address the impediments in the way of making Bihar an energy secure state. We have been supporting various initiatives to promote and safeguard the policy and are committed to establishing an atmosphere where decentralized, grid-connected, renewable energy projects can be easily set up. Also, we intend to bring about sizeable improvement in providing energy access through Decentralised Renewable Energy (DRE) systems in agricultural, industrial, commercial and domestic sectors.”

The day-long conference had two technical sessions: the first session focused on identifying the challenges and opportunities that come in the way of scaling up rooftop in the cities of Bihar. Notable speakers of the session were Mr. Sanjay Bhartiya, Vice-President, BIA; Shri K.A. Siddiqui, BAS, Deputy Director, BREDA; Shri S.K.P. Singh, Director (Projects), North Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited (NBPDC); Mr. Rakesh Pratap, Regional Manager, Energy Efficiency Service Limited (EESL); Mr. Vivek Mishra, Executive Director, Meghraj Capital Advisors Pvt. Ltd.; and Mr. Prodyut Mukherjee, Independent Energy Expert. The second technical session focused on discussions related to the role of mini-grids in the changing landscape of rural electrification. Notable speakers of the session were Mr. Upendra Bhatt, Managing Director, cKinetics; Col. Baljit Singh, Country Director, Husk Power; Mr. Samit Mitra, Head of Mini Grids, Smart Power India; Ms. Saloni Sachdeva, Project Officer, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation.

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