

International Solar Alliance hosts 13 African countries in New Delhi to share best practices in solar deployment

- Shri R K Singh, Hon'ble Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy & President of ISA Assembly, interacts with delegates from West Africa
- Sixty participants from thirteen African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo are in the Indian capital to learn of India's success in planning & implementation of solar energy generation facilities.

14 February 2023 | New Delhi, India: International Solar Alliance (ISA), in collaboration with Grid Controller of India Ltd (Grid-India) and West African Power Pool (WAPP), is hosting delegates from the West African Region in New Delhi, India, from 14th to 18th February. Sixty participants from thirteen WAPP countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo will participate in a knowledge sharing and study tour highlighting aspects of solar energy implementation.

Shri R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy & President of ISA Assembly, appreciating the importance of knowledge sharing and capacity building, said, "Our journey in energy has been comprehensive, satisfying and thrown up experiences that are very useful for the growth of energy ecosystems in the world.

Our next challenge is to enable access to 800 million people in the world to be able to give them a better standard of living. Of primary importance is energy access. We have prioritised universal access in India by adding generation capacity. We have connected the whole country on one grid. We have also been successful in energy transition. Renewable energy's advantage is that it is cheaper and can be distributed for off the grid areas. In developing countries, renewables plus storage is the route to take. "

Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, ISA, highlighted the need to encourage capacity building and disseminating of best practices to increase solar deployment globally. He noted, "ISA is working towards making solar power a priority for nations across the world. Since its establishment, ISA is scaling up efforts to implement its existing pipeline for solar projects, share knowledge, and build capacity across the solar value chain. Theoretical learning combined with practical knowledge through personal experience leads to a deeper understanding, and ISA has provided tailored capacity-building support adapted to the local context. In collaboration with Grid-India and WAPP, this programme will set standards and help strengthen the solar ecosystems in all ISA Member Countries. It will also trigger policy change and help in the creation of financial and human capacity. Unhindered exchange of knowledge and information between countries can vastly benefit ISA member countries and the fight against climate change"

The Knowledge Sharing session also witnessed the presence of missions from WAPP countries. Also present on occasion were Shri S.R. Narasimhan, Chairperson & Managing Director, Grid Controller of India Limited and Mr Mamadou Alpha SYLLA of WAPP.

Mr Narasimhan, CMD, Grid India, said, "India-West Africa partnership is both unique & defining. Both are considered the cradle of human culture and civilisation. Both are on an upward trajectory with renewed confidence. India began its journey on the integration of grids way back in the 1960s, and the national synchronous grid provided the perfect ecosystem for integration. Policy thrusts,

technical standards, Grid Codes, regulatory framework and market mechanisms followed soon thereafter. Today we have 60 GW solar capacity (out of which 7 GW is rooftop) and 42 GW wind capacity, and we have already reached 32% instantaneous MW penetration of wind and solar. This knowledge exchange and study tour is the first step towards creating a long-lasting partnership and collaboration between WAPP and India. I am confident that the participants would find it useful listening to our journey, and it would also be great to learn about the WAPP journey in grid interconnections and Renewable Energy integration."

Mr Mamadou Alpha SYLLA of WAPP said, "Africa will account for one-fourth of the world population by 2040. There is fast increasing electricity demand, but the industrialisation rate is low. In the WAPP countries, the challenge is to promote integrated economic development and provide energy for all. In addition, we need to secure financing for the realisation of utility-scale renewable energy projects in West Africa, integrate variable renewable energy into the WAPP power grid and bridge the green skills gap in the electricity sector. With this ISA-led knowledge-sharing opportunity, we also intend to pick up the essentials of regulatory functions in securing a secure electricity market."

The programme participants include officials from ministries, statutory, regulatory bodies, and utility companies from participating African nations. The tour highlights include classroom sessions and interactions in New Delhi and Bengaluru, visits to Pavagada Solar Park, Southern Regional Load Despatch Centre, and Southern Regional Renewable Energy Management Centre. The programme agenda will help participants with insights into global and Indian solar energy scenarios, policies, guidelines, and regulations overview for renewable energy in India from a solar energy perspective. The study tour will be conducted in three batches over February and March 2023.

About the International Solar Alliance

The International Solar Alliance is an international organisation with 114 Member and Signatory countries. It works with governments to improve energy access and security worldwide and promote solar power as a sustainable transition to a carbon-neutral future. ISA's mission is to unlock US\$ 1 trillion of investments in solar by 2030 while reducing the cost of the technology and its financing. It promotes the use of solar energy in the Agriculture, Health, Transport and Power Generation sectors. ISA member countries are driving change by enacting policies and regulations, sharing best practices, agreeing on common standards, and mobilising investments. Through this work, ISA has identified and designed and tested new business models for solar projects; supported governments to make their energy legislation and policies solar-friendly through Ease of Doing Solar analytics and advisory; pooled demand for solar technology from different countries; and drove down costs; improved access to finance by reducing the risks and making the sector more attractive to private investment; increased access to solar training, data and insights for solar engineers and energy policymakers. With the signing and ratification of the ISA Framework Agreement by 15 countries on 6 December 2017, ISA became the first international intergovernmental organisation to be headquartered in India. ISA is partnering with multilateral development banks (MDBs), development financial institutions (DFIs), private and public sector organisations, civil society, and other international institutions to deploy cost-effective and transformational solutions through solar energy, especially in the least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

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