

## CUTS PRESS RELEASE

**“Our dream is to be self-reliant in Clean Energy Resources in India”, said, Mr. Narayan Swaroop Nigam, Chairman & Managing Director, WBSEDCL**

**August, 29th, 2015, Kolkata, India**

“Tomorrow renewable energy has to replace the conventional power for betterment of society... Consumer education and awareness (campaign mode) will be crucial for this transformation” said Mr. **Narayan Swaroop Nigam**, Chairman & Managing Director, WBSEDCL in a seminar organised today by CUTS International and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, India. This was second in the series of a seminars to be organised on ‘Green Growth and Energy Security in India: Political Economy of Transformation and Challenges’, jointly by both the organisations.

Explaining the challenges in different segments of electricity supply industry, Mr Nigam pointed that the challenges are big but not unsurmountable in order to achieve our dream of being self-reliant on clean energy resources aiding towards energy security.

Initiating the event, **Pradeep S Mehta**, Secretary-General of CUTS International argued that India is faced with this unique challenge of bridging the demand-supply gaps by providing an appropriate power generation backbone and revolutionising the power generation bases with a major share of renewables, simultaneously. The governments recognise the need and opportunities and have prioritised clean energy development, he opined. Yet, the question remains, what are the implications of India’s growing energy demand? What are the political-economic challenges to achieving energy security in India? To what extent a green growth strategy can address these challenges? He stressed that there is a clear mandate provided by Government of India but the implementation has to be translated at the State level.

**Marc Saxer**, Resident Representative of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, India, speaking in the seminar claimed, “International debate on energy transformations is over, and the renewables have won.” He further added that “the debate about ‘if’ is over, now we are entering into a discussion of ‘how’ to achieve energy transformations.” Mr Saxer also pointed out three recent developments at global level that support the optimism. First is drop in price of clean energy. In recent years, in many countries, the renewable generation cost has come at parity, or even lower in some cases, compared with the conventional power. Second is development of household and industrial storage facility that provides a solution for intermittent nature of renewable generation. Finally, political will seem to coming up for energy transformations.

Among other speakers, Mr. **Umesh Narayan Panjir**, Chairman, Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission emphasised that given the aspirations and growth in India, the topic of today’s seminar is extremely valid for discussion and we need to discuss the political economy challenges of green growth and how to deal with the same, adding to his views, Mr. **Rabindranath Sen**, Chairman, West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission mentioned that the State Government is clear on their vision towards green growth and the Commission receives full support of the polity towards achieving the goal. Lastly, Mr. **Anindya Narayan Biswas**, Joint Secretary, Dept of Power and Non- Conventional Energy Sources, Govt. of West Bengal shared with the audience the initiatives taken to set up Solar rooftop and that the Government is also developing a Policy to provide clear policy directions to ensure effective implementation of the solar rooftop technology.

There were over 70-80 participants in this seminar, drawn from the government, academia, regulatory agency, business and civil society, media, etc.

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