



A clean energy transition plan for India

Energy security warrants the uninterrupted supply of energy at affordable prices. India faces the twin challenges of meeting the aspirations of its 1.3 billion population even as it safeguards its energy security and contributes to global efforts to mitigate climate change.

Thermal plants are the core

- Coal is the only fuel that India has in abundance and the geopolitics of India's neighbourhoods do not permit ready access to piped natural gas. TPPs contributed 55% of the total installed generation capacity of 382 GW (as of March 2021).
- Coal, therefore, plays a vital role in India's ongoing efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7, which is "to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all".

Renewable energy

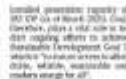
- While variable renewable energy (VRE) sources (primarily, wind and solar) account for 24.7% of the total installed generation capacity, as of March 2021, they contributed 10.7% of the electricity generated by utilities during FY 2020-21.
- However, the ramp-up of VRE generation capacity without commensurate growth in electricity demand has resulted in lower utilisation of TPPs whose fixed costs must be paid by the distribution companies (DISCOMs) and passed through to the final consumer.
- The rapid growth of VRE sources in India has been largely aided by policy measures as well as financial incentives whose cost is borne by the consumer.
- Therefore, India must implement a plan to increase energy efficiency and reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and airborne pollutants from TPPs without making power unaffordable to industries that need low-cost 24x7 power to compete in the global market.

A clean energy transition plan for India

It also demonstrates a commitment to climate change mitigation by optimising resources with a judicious technology



N. Chandrababu Naidu



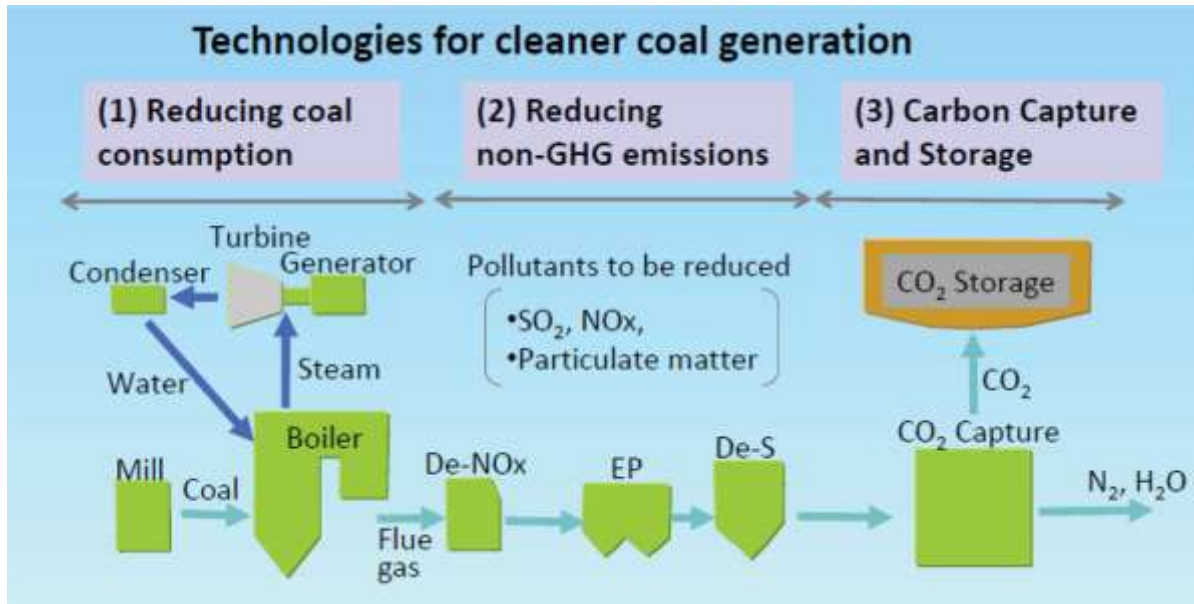
P. Venkatesh



Power plant

India's energy security warrants the uninterrupted supply of energy at affordable prices. India faces the twin challenges of meeting the aspirations of its 1.3 billion population even as it safeguards its energy security and contributes to global efforts to mitigate climate change. This energy security is essential for the country's economic growth and social stability. The government has a responsibility to ensure that the energy needs of the country are met in a sustainable and affordable manner. The energy transition plan for India is a key component of this strategy. It aims to ensure that the country has access to a reliable and sustainable energy supply that meets the needs of the economy and the environment. The plan also includes measures to reduce the country's carbon footprint and to promote the use of renewable energy sources. The government has a commitment to ensuring that the energy transition is a just and equitable one for all. This means that the costs of the transition should be borne by the government and not by the consumers. The plan also includes measures to ensure that the energy needs of the most vulnerable sections of the population are met. The energy transition plan for India is a key component of the country's sustainable development strategy. It is essential for the country to achieve its goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047. The plan also includes measures to ensure that the energy transition is a just and equitable one for all. This means that the costs of the transition should be borne by the government and not by the consumers. The plan also includes measures to ensure that the energy needs of the most vulnerable sections of the population are met.

Technologies for Cleaner Power generation from Coal:



De-NO_x == removal of Nitrogen oxides

EP == Electrostatic Precipitator (EP) to remove Particulate matter

De-S == Desulphurization process to remove sulphur

USE High-Efficiency-Low-Emission (HELE) Thermal Power Plants (TPPs):

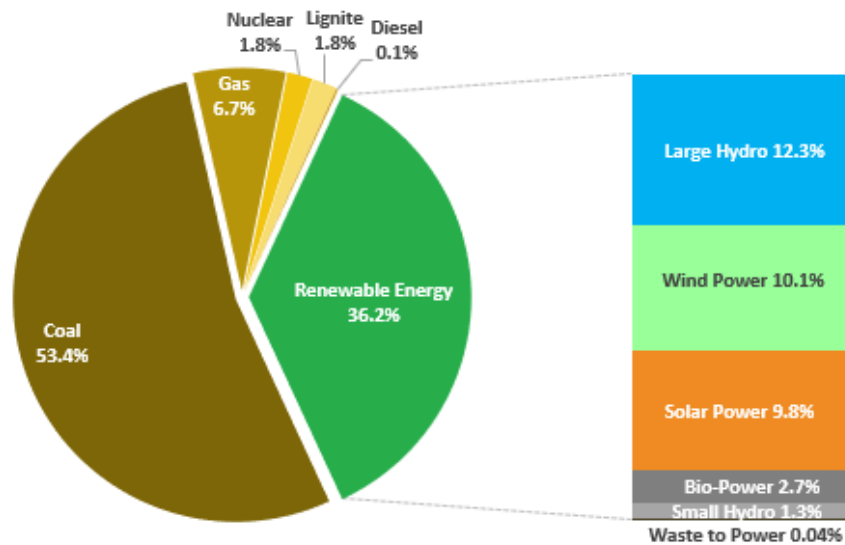
1. High-Efficiency-Low-Emission (HELE) TPPs minimise emissions of particulate matter (PM), SO₂, and NO₂ besides savings in specific coal consumption and water requirement leading to reductions in electricity tariffs and PM pollution.
2. This plan prioritises the installation of high-efficiency electrostatic precipitators that can remove 99.97% of the PM pollution without extensive shutdowns or hiking tariffs unlike expensive, imported FGDs.
3. The implementation of this plan will enable India to safeguard its energy security and ensure efficient grid operations with lower water consumption, PM pollution, and CO₂ emissions.
4. Ultimately, this plan demonstrates India's commitment to climate change mitigation by optimising the use of our land, coal, water, and financial resources with indigenous technology.



India - Cumulative Installed Power Capacity Mix (%)

MERCOM INDIA

Renewables (including Large Hydro) comprise ~36.2% of India's total installed capacity, with solar accounting for ~9.8%. Among renewables, solar accounts for ~27.2% of the installed capacity



Data from CEA, MNRE, Mercom India Solar Project Tracker (Installed Capacity as on 31 Mar 2020)

Source: Mercom India Research

Is there a good way for a political party to achieve internal democracy?

The case for internal democracy in political parties does not need to be made afresh. It is obvious that institutional intermediaries in a representative democracy must themselves be democratic. However, beyond the rhetoric, internal democracy in a political party is less straightforward.



HOW TO DEMOCRATISE THE PARTY

RUCHI GUPTA



Internal democracy

1. The most common suggestion to achieve internal democracy is through internal elections for leadership positions within the party.

2. The logic is two-fold: Elected representatives will not just be grounded themselves but will also hold the leadership accountable for its shortcomings. This suggestion has merit but some issues bear discussion.

3. First, proponents underestimate the ability of existing repositories of power to subvert internal institutional processes to consolidate power and maintain the status quo.

4. Second, the assumption that the lower levels would be independent and hold the higher levels of leadership to account glosses over the many ways power asserts itself.

5. Third, the outcome of internal elections is contingent on the independence and quality of the electorate. In indirect elections (through delegates), the electorate would likely mirror the existing balance of power.

It is evident that internal elections may factionalise power but cannot establish normative accountability, which extends to all members of the party along three interconnected axes of ideology, organisation and competence.

There is lack of democracy within the political parties due to the following reasons :

(i) There is a tendency in political parties towards the concentration of power in one or a few leaders at the top.

(ii) Parties do not hold organisational meetings and do not conduct internal elections regularly.

(iii) Parties do not have the means or the connections needed to influence the decisions.

(iv) Parties do not keep membership register.

All these features can be found in India's parties like Indian National Congress, BJP, BSP, SP, etc.



What are the challenges to Political Parties ?

Lack of Internal Democracy

- Concentration of power in one or few leaders
- No membership register, no meetings, no internal elections and insufficient information for ordinary members
- They do not have scope to influence decisions



Dynasty Succession

- Leaders have unfair advantage to favour people close to them
- Do not practice open and transparent procedure for functioning
- Top positions always controlled by family members

What are the challenges to Political Parties ?

Money & Muscle Power

- They focus on elections
- Use short cut methods to win
- Moneyed candidates come to power
- Rich tend to influence
- Criminals are supported in order to win elections



Offering of Meaningful Choice

- Decline in ideological differences
- Agreement on fundamental aspects
- Narrowing down of differences on economic policies
- No choice of leadership





Anti-defection law

1. Instead of looking at internal party processes, one way to decentralise power is by getting rid of the anti-defection law.
2. The need to canvass votes in the legislature will create room for negotiation in the party organisation too.
3. Moreover, the electoral process will be independent of the party machinery and internal coalitions will evolve in a more measured manner than in one-time organisational elections.
4. Most importantly, this reform will impose a similar burden on all political parties and may create space to change the overall political culture.

However, this is an imperfect solution: The party organisation is more expansive than elected representatives alone; second, the candidate often has marginal electoral value over the party platform and this may lead to a selection of rubber stamp candidates, and this amendment may further undermine Opposition in the face of a heavy-handed executive.

How can we reform Political Parties?

- Elected MLA'S & MP'S should not defect
- Reduction of influence of money
- Parties to hold their organisational elections & file income tax returns
- Regulation of internal affairs of political parties
- Mandatory for political parties to give minimum number of tickets
- State funding of elections
- People can petition political parties
- Political parties can improve if those who want improvement, join parties

