



Addressing climate change and sustainable energy is crucial to meet India's energy shortage

New Delhi, 28 June 2014: "While India has made major progress in the supply of electricity and modern forms of energy, a large part of the population still lives in a state of energy deprivation," said Dr. R.K. Pachauri, Director-General, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Dr. Pachauri was delivering the third United Nations Public Lecture in New Delhi today. He said, "The challenge to provide energy access for all has to be seen in the context of the problem of human-induced climate change, the impacts of which would create very high vulnerability for India in a large variety of ways."

According to Dr. Pachauri, "India has the largest number of people lacking access to electricity and clean cooking fuels among all the countries in the world. Over 300 million people have no access to electricity, and a significant number receives limited and sporadic supply even if they have connections. Over two-thirds of the country's population depend on traditional biomass and animal waste for cooking, all of which leads to high levels of indoor air pollution. TERI estimated almost 20 years ago the level of mortality from air pollution in the country at about 2.5 million people, a large share of which was from indoor air pollution."

In Dr. Pachauri's view, "All stakeholders in Indian society need to tackle the interrelated challenge of climate change and sustainable energy for all with a sense of vision, determination based on enlightened policies that target the future."

As the latest IPCC report notes, India's high vulnerability and exposure to climate change will slow its economic growth, impact health and development, make poverty reduction more difficult and erode food security.

"Energy has to be accessible, available and affordable for all people, most importantly poor people. There also has to be accountability in the system so that people know their needs are being met and can do something about it if they're not. A key challenge for India is making sure that all four of these "A"s are present for all people," said Lise Grande, United Nations Resident Coordinator.

Ayumi Fujino, UNIDO Representative for India and Regional Director for South Asia added "Amongst all the 'A's, ensuring accountability of all stakeholders in planning, delivery and utilization of energy is the common, but the most critical element that runs through all other actions that can ensure all people are able to fulfill their energy needs."

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