

Spike in clean energy jobs

Renewable energy sector will require three lakh more workers in the next five years

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India's ambitious aim to install 160 GW of renewable energy by 2022 will have a positive impact on the country's jobs market, a new study has predicted.

The study says that more than 3,00,000 full-time workers will be needed in these five years and there's potential to create around one million employment opportunities.

Of the many segments of the renewables sector, the labour-intensive rooftop solar component will employ as much as 70 per cent of the new workforce, creating seven times more jobs than large-scale projects such as solar farms, said the study titled "Greening India's Workforce: Gearing Up For Expansion of Solar and Wind Power in India".

The report, published this month by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), a New Delhi-based think-tank, and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a New York-based environmental advocacy group, said that the strong growth in the domestic solar manufacturing industry could provide full-time employment for an additional 45,000 people in India.

The study estimated that India's clean energy goals had the potential to put 34,583 people to work in wind power, 58,647 in utility-scale solar farms and 237,980 in rooftop solar energy jobs over the next five years. The solar energy jobs will be distributed across India, with Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh setting the pace. The wind sector jobs, like wind power capacity, are likely to be concentrated in a few states that have high wind potential.

"CEEW and NRDC's study captures a new dimension in accurately assessing manpower requirements in the solar and wind domains," Praveen Saxena, Chief Executive Officer of Skill Council of Green Jobs, said in a statement. "This study builds on earlier analyses on the subject considering national objectives to meet India's international clean energy



According to the study, India's clean energy goals have the potential to generate around 34,500 more jobs in the wind power industry. PHOTO USED FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY

commitments. It makes the path of Skill Council of Green Jobs more clear and visible in terms of capturing the opportunity of employability in India's solar and wind sector." NRDC and CEEW have annually surveyed India's solar and wind companies, developers and manufacturers over the past three years to collect market-based information on jobs created, workforce employed and the skills required to achieve India's renewable energy goals.

Key recommendations

Based on these observations, the June 2017 study has listed key recommendations for the federal and provincial governments. It has suggested a greater impetus and policy priority to rooftop solar to create renewable energy jobs, initiative to support development of training centres led by the private sector to source construction jobs locally since solar

jobs are distributed among states.

Focus on 'windy' States

It also suggests developing wind power training centres based on state-specific wind targets in eight windy states, and target a strong domestic solar manufacturing industry to provide employment to an additional 45,000 people in India.

India's solar and wind energy sectors employed more than 21,000 people in 2016-17. An additional 25,000 people will be employed over the coming year, the study predicted. India's clean energy workforce comprises solar installers, maintenance workers, engineers, technicians and performance data monitors.

"Clean energy expansion is generating thousands of new jobs while meeting India's climate and economic goals," said Nehmat Kaur, India Consultant at NRDC. "With this tremendous op-

portunity, India is stepping up as a global leader in demonstrating how a growing economy can scale up renewables, generate employment and provide access in the face of rising energy demands." Some 80 per cent of the new workforce is likely to be employed during the construction phase, according to Neeraj Kuldeep, Programme Associate at CEEW. "However, despite these being contractual jobs, the large pipeline of renewable energy projects creates enough opportunities for workers to stay employed," Kuldeep said.

Solar power

"Additionally, since most of these jobs are in the rooftop solar PV (photovoltaic) segment, central and state governments must provide greater policy support to the rooftop sector," he added.

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