

Coal India sets 20 GW solar power generation target in next 10 yrs

Government-owned miner Coal India Ltd is planning to generate about 20,000 megawatt (MW) in the next 10 years as part of its diversification plan, a senior company official has said.

India has set a target to generate 100 GW of solar power by 2022.

"For Coal India to be sustainable we must diversify. We have already defined our roadmap. We are going in a big way for solar and have set a target of generating 20,000 MW or 20 Gigawatt in next 10 years," Coal India Chairman and Managing Director Gopal Singh said.

However, the official did not elaborate on investment plans of the company. According to industry estimates, a sum of around Rs 5 crore is required to install 1 MW solar project.

"...if you look beyond 2050 the way renewable is coming as a citizen it should be our priority we must switch over to renewables because the global warning is somewhere or the other affecting each and everyone... We must be prepared for it," he said.

Today coal-based power is the cheapest. Renewable naturally will be costly. But the ways work is being done in renewable the day is bound to come when it will be affordable may be after two or three decades, he said.

The chairman also said that the plan will require 40,000 hectares of land and which is already available with the company.

"We don't have the land in single size, its of our various subsidiaries which we will use," he said. Coal India Limited (CIL), a maharatna, under the Ministry of Coal is the single largest coal producer in the world.

Operating through 82 mining areas, CIL is an apex body with seven wholly-owned coal producing subsidiaries and 1 mine planning and consultancy company spread over 8 provincial states of India. It also fully owns a mining company in Mozambique christened as 'Coal India Africana Limitada'.