

MCCI East India Energy Forum
Eastern India Power Sector : Creating a Vision for the Future
Friday, 8th June 2018, Lalit Great Eastern, Kolkata

PRESS RELEASE

Merchants' Chamber of Commerce & Industry organized MCCI East India Energy Forum 2018 today at Hotel Lalit Great Eastern, Kolkata.

Shri Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, Hon'ble Minister for Power & Non Conventional Energy Sources, Government of West Bengal addressed the Forum as the Chief Guest. The Forum was also addressed by **Shri R N Sen**, Chairperson, West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission, **Shri Rohit Dhar**, Director Sales, Vikram Solar Limited, **Shri Arun Palit**, President, Adhunik Power & Natural Resources Ltd., **Shri Devendra Goel**, Managing Director, Lumino Industries

The Forum focused on Opportunities and Challenges in Power Distribution, coal production, coal linkages, scaling up of mining & exploration of coal, Energy Audit, Energy Efficiency Improvement, steps towards energy efficiency and increasing the renewable energy mix, Storage & Transmission of Renewables, Steps towards energy efficiency and increasing the renewable energy mix.

It aimed at bringing together eminent policy makers, economists & industry Captains to lay down the future roadmap for Energy sector in Eastern India in the coming decades. The topics of the Forum were :

- **Inaugural Session : Creating a Vision for the Future**
- **Session II : Coal – The Mainstay of India's Energy & Energy Security Mix**
- **Session III : A leap towards sustainable power in Eastern India**
- **Session IV : Renewables: Enabler for Sustainable Growth**

Dwelling on the Inaugural Theme of "Creating a Vision for the Future", **Shri Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay** said that West Bengal had been a power surplus state selling power to Bangladesh and other states in India. The "state is ready" to take a plunge in the power sector, he pointed out. The Budget allocation for power had increased from Rs. 494 cr. In 2011 to Rs. 2818 cr. in 2017-18. Consumer base had increased from 85 lakhs in 2011 to 1 cr. 81 laks in 2017 and 99.98% of domestic connection had been completed. Giving a vision for the future, he mentioned that stress had been given quality of power, fault detection and segregation of connection given to domestic, industrial and agricultural sector. He spoke about curbing ATC and Transmission losses and installation of AB cables to track power theft. The Hon'ble Minister said that although the state had been debt trap, subsidies to the tune of Rs. 886 cr. were provided to the needy. He informed the House that power connection had been given to the consumers consuming less than 300 units at a highly subsidized rate of Rs. 279. Shri Chattopadhyay informed the House that the Governemnt of West Bengal had received 5 coal mines from the Government of Indi and the Coal Mine in Birbhum is the 2nd biggest mine in the country. He attributed the rising price of power to the rising prices of inputs. He mentioned that from 2011 to 2017, there had been 16.20% rise in coal prices, 7.17% rise in oil prices along with around 18% rise in railway freight.

Shri R N Sen spoke about changing consumption pattern, which had led to increased demand. However, there had not been adequate supply of coal to generate power for the Government as also for other IBPs. He felt that end consumers should be given a choice to select service provider to supply power. He said that stress had been given on reducing losses on transmission (13.79%) and distribution losses (13.59%), fixed cost recovery and energy audit. He also spoke about the pre paid system to be brought in, which would reduce commercial losses.

The Welcome Address was delivered by **Shri Vishal Jhajharia**, Senior Vice President of the Chamber.
