



Main Highlights of Visit of Shri Piyush Goyal to Austria

India Explores clean energy collaboration with Austria

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Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal and New & Renewable Energy and Mines is visiting Austria from May 10-11, 2017 to participate in the Vienna Energy Forum, which has been organized jointly by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

On May 10, 2017, Shri Goyal had an interactive session with leading Austrian energy related companies, especially in the renewable energy sector. Organized by the Embassy of India in Vienna, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and FICCI, the event was the first structured interaction between Austrian and Indian companies with a visiting Indian Minister in Vienna to brainstorm suggestions for rejuvenating the Austrian-India business partnership, especially in the renewables sector.

Shri Goyal spoke about the priorities of the Government of India and action taken to bring in a quantum leap in the share of renewable energy in India's energy mix. The important link between affordability and scaling up of operations, the role of new technology, the criticality of energy efficient practices, the emphasis on Make-in-India and ease of doing business in India and the potential for international collaboration as India aspires to its goal of energy for all by 2022 in a sustainable manner, were the highlights of Shri Goyal's address.

The Minister enumerated the milestones achieved by India, including, inter alia, an increase in LED bulbs sold, from 6,00,000 a year to 150 million bulbs a year, the 370% expansion witnessed in solar energy in the last three years, reduction in cost of solar energy from 12 cents per unit to 4 cents per unit in under 3 years, and the growth in fiber optics from 358 kms to 2,00,000 kms in the same period. He explained the focus of the Government of India on building a strong foundation that would give India development space for the coming decades.

Shri Goyal recalled Prime Minister Modi's emphasis on "Minimum government, Maximum governance" and the emphasis on policy to empower all segments in India through programmes such as Skill India, Clean India, Digital India and Make-in-India. Speaking of investments into India, Shri Goyal highlighted India's position as one of the most open economies in the world, poised to take a quantum jump in every sector. He spoke of GST, set to come into effect from July 1, 2017. He explained the financial inclusion initiatives of Jan Dhan, Aadhar and the Digital Payment Platform. In the context of free flow of capital and people, he pointed to India's large market, its economies of scale, its potential as a manufacturing hub for the rest of the world and asked Austrian companies to join the growth oriented process of evolution in India.

The well attended event included over 30 representatives of Austrian companies, the Vice President of WKO, Ms Ulrike Rabmer-Koller and the FICCI delegation including, inter alia, Shri Pankaj Patel, President FICCI and Chairman and Managing Director of Zydus Cadila. Representatives of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research & Economy also attended the event.

Austrian companies indicated keenness to collaborate with Indian partners and share new technologies and innovations. They emphasized the importance of finding right partners in India and Austria in the renewable sector and spoke about their areas of expertise and priority as also their experiences of doing business in India.

On May 11, 2017, Shri Piyush Goyal delivered the Key Note Address at the Opening Ceremony of the Vienna Energy Forum. He annotated, what the Organizer's introduced as "the largest energy transformation project in the world". He highlighted Government of India's priorities and commitments towards sustainable energy. He reminded that SDGs could only be fulfilled through a comprehensive approach which could lay emphasis on affordability, reliability and sustainability.

Recalling that the road from Paris had been somewhat difficult, he reiterated that India stood committed to what it had undertaken at Paris, irrespective of what happened in other parts of the world. This commitment was an article of faith for Prime Minister Modi.

He spoke of the rapid strides made by India in energy conservation and energy efficiency, the goal of 24x7 power for all by 2022, the year of India's 75th Anniversary of Independence and his personal commitment to make this happen even earlier by 2019. He asked the UN to look at fast-tracking goal and said that India is willing to play a role in this. On the issue of affordability of renewable solutions, Shri Goyal spoke of the reduction in tariff for solar energy from 12 cents to 4 cents in just three years, in wind energy from 9 cents to 5 cents in the same period and of the scheduled launch on May 12, 2017 of the Energy Efficiency Services Ltd. affordable lighting scheme - UJALA (UK Joins Affordable LEDs For All) in London. He urged that world leaders look at the link between low-cost technology, renewable energy and sustainable life styles.

The Vienna Energy Forum has been organized jointly by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs in Austria, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). It is a biennial, global and multi-stakeholder forum with a mandate of exploring 21st century developmental challenges from the perspective of sustainable energy and providing a platform for debate on practical solutions to these challenges. VEF 2017 is focusing on Sustainable energy for the implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

The Forum is being attended by Global leaders including, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management in Austria Mr. Andr  Ruppchter, Director General UNIDO Mr. Li Yong, Minister for Transport and Infrastructure of Morocco Aziz Rabbah, Prime Minister of Tuvalu Enele Sopoaga, Director-General, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Adnan Z. Amin.

On today evening Shri Goyal spoke at the Financial Times Event "2030 Development Agenda for Energy". Other speakers included Deputy Secretary General of UN, Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Ambassador for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency of Burkina Faso Princess Abze Djigma and Secretary General of the World Energy Council, Mr. Christoph Frei. The event was attended by companies in the field of renewable energy as also IRENA, IEA, ECRREE, IIASA, OFID, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Austria and other European countries and numerous institutions and NGOs with expertise and credentials in the field of renewable energy.

While in Vienna, Chief Executive Officer of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Ms. Rachel Kyte called on Minister Goyal. She was extremely appreciative of the leadership role by India and the achievements in the sector of renewable energy, especially the International Solar Alliance. DG UNIDO also called on the Minister.

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