



Highlights of Shri Piyush Goyal's visit to Berlin, Leipzig and Munich

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Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines, Shri Piyush Goyal visited Berlin, Leipzig and Munich from May 29 to June 1, 2017. The Minister participated in a number of bilateral and business meetings.

The visit started with the Minister meeting Dr. Christoph Beier, Vice Chairman of German Development agency GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). The agency complements the German development bank KfW through technical advisory and capability development.

Shri Goyal highlighted how India has increased its green power capacity to more than 100 GW, including Hydro and nuclear and increased its solar capacity to nearly five times of the capacity in 2014. The Minister informed the German side how India's tremendous success in auctions to ensure affordable renewable energy can also be adopted in Germany which is moving away from Feed In Tariffs (FITs).

Given the global presence of GIZ in over 130 countries, Shri Goyal proposed a partnership with EESL, which can help India leapfrog and distribute energy efficiency products across the globe. The Minister also explored areas like potential availability of good technical assets in stressed solar companies in Germany, long term funding, grid balancing, electric vehicles development, off grid systems, green energy corridors and long term funding.

In line with Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India Mittelstand (MIIM)', Shri Goyal met a few German companies engaged in or exploring Make in India. During the meetings held in Berlin and Munich, the Minister highlighted how innovative companies from Germany can leverage scale and low manufacturing cost in India to Make in India and Make for the World. These companies included innovative firms in areas like Bio fuels (resolving pollution related issues from rice husk burning), building material from Sulphur capture at power plants (significant potential to reduce imports and fund pollution control equipment), battery storage, affordable off shore wind power and increasing flexibility in thermal plants to support rapid demand fluctuation and renewable energy addition.

In order to facilitate better interaction between German and Indian companies, Shri Goyal recommended that International Solar Alliance (ISA) Secretariat start holding monthly matchmaking meetings in collaboration with Industry Associations like CII, FICCI etc. These meetings would include German and Indian companies including financing firms. Gradually, ISA can take such a model to all its member countries.

In a detailed meeting with Dr. Barbara Hendricks, German Federal Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation, Building & Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and her officials, Shri Goyal reiterated how India under Shri Modi's leadership has taken up renewable energy as an article of faith and is steadfast on its Paris commitments, irrespective of what others do.

In the above meeting, Shri Goyal told Dr. Hendricks that India led the focus on Sustainable lifestyles in Paris agreement. Both Ministers agreed that affordable renewable energy has made achieving a greener planet a case of opportunity sharing rather than burden sharing. Shri Goyal also invited the German side to partner with India for RE-Invest 2017, to which they indicated their preference for visiting the country during September before the German elections.

To discuss long term affordable financing for renewable industry in India, Shri Goyal met Mr Roland Siller, DG Europe and Asia, KfW. In order to develop the rooftop market, the Minister suggested that SECI or NTPC can take long term funding from KfW and set up rooftops on government buildings as an aggregator. The tariffs can be escalating which ensures affordable prices from day one. Innovative structures like first loss fund creation through a surcharge on solar power were also discussed. In order to support rapid roll out of Smart meters, it was suggested that REC and PFC can explore long term funding through KfW. Additional areas for potential collaboration include underground cabling (replicating the success in Varanasi across India), global expansion of EESL through pay as you go model.

In Leipzig, Shri Goyal studied Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure which included public fast chargers, normal chargers at homes as well as multi-functional street pole chargers with CCTV and Wi-Fi infrastructure. The city utility in Leipzig provides free electricity to EV owners in order to incentivise consumption. This is a model being used by Tesla motors too and can also be explored in power surplus India. Innovative business models in EVs have resulted in a cultural shift so that in big cities, youngsters consider owning a car a taboo and prefer using an app based service to unlock and use the nearest EV which are available across large cities.

Further, the Minister interacted with the senior management of Fraunhofer Institute, Europe's largest applied R&D organisation as well as the CEO of Leipzig's utility. A number of their innovations in areas like Electric Mobility (storage and retrofitting buses), Industrial Data Space etc. are prospective areas that can be explored for further collaboration. Shri Goyal invited them to setup a centre for EV research in collaboration with IIT BHU, Mumbai or Chennai and help in mass production of charging stations.

Shri Goyal also visited the BMW's Electric Vehicle manufacturing facility near Leipzig which produces their i3 and i8 series of EVs. With a capacity of 30,000 EVs per year, the simple construction of EVs whose life (body shell) and drive (battery and motor) are literally glued together. With the setup of supporting infrastructure and advances in better technology, many Indian OEMs can explore EV manufacturing.

The Minister also participated in Intersolar, one of the World's largest exhibitions for the solar industry. Addressing the gathering, he reiterated India's resolve to take up the leadership of saving the planet from climate change while others abrogate their leadership. Shri Goyal highlighted how under Shri Modi's visionary leadership, India has started the ISA which is well on its way towards ratification. He also highlighted how in future, with renewable revolution, electricity may become free and may only be given as an added incentive along with other services.

Finally, noting Munich's aim to become 100% renewable energy powered city by 2025, Shri Goyal threw a challenge to make Varanasi 100% renewable energy powered before 2025 and beat Munich. In this way, the World's oldest city can also become the first major city to be powered fully by clean energy. The Minister instructed officials to start working on this including the storage and distribution infrastructure required for the same.

