

## **Speech by The President Of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee at The Presentation of The National Energy Conservation Awards on The Occasion of National Energy Conservation Day 2013**

Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi : 16.12.2013

It gives me great pleasure to be here this evening for the National Energy Conservation Awards function. These Awards have been instituted to recognize outstanding contributors from the industrial sector towards energy conservation. I congratulate all the winners of this year's Awards, who have set benchmarks of excellence for their peers.

As we celebrate the National Energy Conservation Day today, I applaud the Ministry of Power for its efforts aimed at creating a better appreciation and understanding of the need for energy conservation in the country. I am delighted to witness the colourful and inspirational paintings drawn by the children in the painting competition organized as part of the event. It is a good occasion to involve school children in promoting the cause of energy conservation. Mahatma Gandhi had once observed and I quote: "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed" (unquote). The spirit of conservation has to be instilled from a young age. Children have to be actively engaged in promoting conservation of resources to ensure a better tomorrow. I congratulate all the award winning and participating children.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Energy is increasingly recognized as a strategic commodity. Any supply constraint can adversely impact the economy of a country, more so of a developing country. India has embarked on a high growth strategy to achieve all-round development. Energy Intensity, which is a measure of energy efficiency of an economy, indicates that India uses more energy to produce one unit of GDP, than nations like UK, Germany, Japan and US. The high growth envisaged by us require greater amount of energy while the domestic sources of energy is increasingly subjected to more number of competing uses. In today's macro-economic context, we stare at an acute prospect of having to incur huge foreign exchange outgo to buy expensive energy from abroad. Energy security has indeed become synonymous with national security.

India is the fourth largest consumer of energy in the world, after US, China and Russia. Accelerated industrialization, growing urbanization and an emerging consumer society has led to a significant increase in energy demand. Meeting the energy needs of the population in a scenario of increasing supply limitations has posed a formidable challenge for sustainable economic growth. As an effective strategy to counter this growing difficulty, the growth in energy demand vis-à-vis the growth of GDP has to be contained through improved energy efficiency. Resource-use efficiency and conservation are critical for the agenda of inclusive growth and development. These elements deserve top priority in the way we utilize our scarce natural resources. Energy conservation also implies the substitution of costly imported energy by

cheap energy. This will help in reducing our foreign exchange outgo. Conservation of energy is a critical development imperative that has multiple positive spinoffs.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Active government intervention is crucial to achieve sustainability in the usage of energy resources. The Twelfth Five Year Plan recognizes the importance of evolving a low carbon strategy for inclusive and sustainable growth. A national target to increase energy use efficiency has been set. It will bring a twenty to twenty five percent reduction in the energy intensity of our GDP by 2020.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change recognizes the need to maintain a high growth rate for increasing the living standards of the vast majority of people while reducing their vulnerability to adverse impacts of climate change. A range of initiatives has already been identified as part of the climate strategy of India. It is important to ensure that the strategies are translated on the ground through comprehensive programmes.

The National Mission on Enhanced Energy Efficiency has put in place the mechanism of Perform, Achieve and Trade for industry to push the cause of energy efficiency. More such initiatives are necessary to include energy efficiency as a core performance parameter for our industry.

I am told that fuel efficiency standards envisaged for the automobile sector is expected to achieve a twenty percent reduction in average fuel consumption by 2022, compared to the level of 2009. Such efforts will go a long way in restricting the spiraling demand for energy by some of the most energy-intensive sectors of our economy.

I am happy to learn that the Ministry of Power has introduced the 'Super Energy Efficient Program', which is aimed at accelerating the adoption of energy efficient appliances in designated sectors. This initiative would require the development of appliances that are more efficient and affordable. It would also spur greater innovation in the manufacturing sector in India.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our progress in the future will be determined largely by the level of technology that will drive our economy. Innovation and technology provides the competitive edge that our industrial sector so desperately requires. There is need for domain knowledge, for developing capabilities and strengthening systems through innovation. There is need to ensure an environment conducive to innovation. It will help to make available a pipeline of technologies that addresses both climate change and energy efficient development needs at costs that users are able to pay.

A greater intensity of science and technology in the energy sector is required today. The US has turned itself from being a huge net energy importer to being self-sufficient through the discovery of shale gas. This has been possible because of a crucial technological breakthrough in efficient recovery of shale gas. Likewise, the parameters for developing future technologies in India have

to be defined. Our scientists and technologists have to engage themselves in the cause of making our country self-sufficient in energy. Policy making also has to be proactive to identify problems, highlight trends, develop scenarios, and recommend policy options, so as to avert any crisis.

I would like to conclude by saying that we have to be conscious of the need to conserve our resources through their utilization in a truly sustainable manner. Efficient use of resources has to begin from our homes. The educational systems have to be utilized extensively for integrating the concept of sustainability into the social systems. I extend my best wishes to the school children who have actively participated in the National Energy Painting Competition. I once again congratulate all the National Energy Conservation Award winners and wish all those concerned with the conduct of this event very good luck.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.