

US N-power firms already eyeing Indian market

As India and the US negotiate a bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreement, American nuclear power companies are already in the country exploring the Indian nuclear power market.

'We know India's need for nuclear power,' Tim Richards, director (International Energy Policy), General Electric, said at the second annual conference on 'Indo-US Economic Cooperation: Developing a Strategy for Closer Partnership' organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the US-India Business Council (USIBC) here Tuesday.

Richards is here as part of the 38-company business delegation from the US, including American nuclear firms, led by the USIBC on the occasion of the first anniversary of President George W. Bush's visit to India.

Stating that the civilian nuclear deal is broader than just the nuclear sector, he said, 'We support India's fast movement into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and India signing the International Atomic Energy Agreement.'

He said there are huge opportunities in the civilian nuclear cooperation between India and the US and added, 'We have high-end technology to offer. We have set up the most advanced nuclear reactors in Japan and Taiwan.'

Member of the Indian Planning Commission Kirit Parikh said that if India is to grow at 8-9 percent per year, in 30 years it would need 1,800-2,000 million tonnes of oil to meet its energy needs.

'Today we produce 30 million tonnes and that too is stagnating,' he said.

Parikh said that energy requirement in India would be around 800,000 to one million tonnes by the year 2030-31.

'Our current capacity is only 160,000 MW.'

Talking about alternative sources of power like biodiesel, sewage, ethanol and fuel wood, he said that for all these land is needed and India is very short of land.

'In the end, we are left with only solar and nuclear power,' Parikh said, adding that the cost of solar power generation is 10 times more than any ultra mega power project.

'The scope for India-US collaboration in nuclear power is enormous,' he said. 'We would like to improve our nuclear plants and technology.'

Stressing on India's urgent need for nuclear power, president of Carrier Aircon India Zubin Irani pointed at the refrigeration and air-conditioning industry as an example.

He said that ACFC, the refrigerating agent that is so critical for the industry, is an ozone-depleting agent contributing to global warming.

'Europe has banned ACFC and the US too is in the process of banning it,' he said, justifying the

need for nuclear power in the industry.

Earlier, speaking at a luncheon session of the conference, Philip Zelikow, senior policy advisor at the US Department of State said that around \$20 trillion would be needed to meet global energy demand by 2040.

The US Commercial Nuclear Executive Mission, the group of representatives of US nuclear power firms, and high technology contractors will peel off from the 230-member USIBC delegation and head for [Mumbai](#) Wednesday to meet with the Nuclear Power Corporation of India and the Indian private sector to discuss collaborations and opportunities in India's nuclear power industry.

The rest of the mission will travel to [Kolkata](#) to meet the West Bengal government and UPA coalition leadership. This visit will mark USIBC's first foray into West Bengal in 10 years.

CII will organise a conference in Kolkata, highlighting the 'View from the East: Opportunities and Promise'.

The mission will also travel to [Chennai](#) to meet Tamil Nadu government leaders and captains of south Indian industry to learn more about opportunities in India's infrastructure and manufacturing sector.

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