

'India's renewable energy sector offers huge opportunities for market growth, demand'

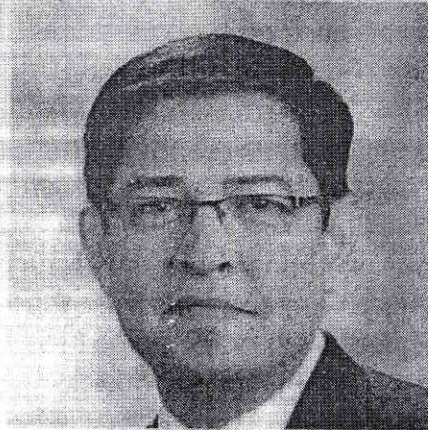
Rishi Ranjan Kala

New Delhi

The US-headquartered solar module manufacturer First Solar feels that India's renewable energy (RE) sector, which aims to deploy 500 gigawatts (GW) of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, offers huge opportunities in terms of market expansion and demand growth.

The solar power solutions provider, which has module manufacturing facilities in the US, Malaysia and Vietnam, expects its ₹5,600-crore 3.3-GW facility in Tamil Nadu to start making modules by October 2023 and hit full capacity about a year later.

"If you look at the trajectory today, we have to hit 500 GW by 2030. You have to do about 25 GW per annum of new in-



Sujoy Ghosh, VP and Managing Director (India), First Solar

now. That is a significant market opportunity. I'll put India at the third spot globally, in terms of the market, after China and the EU," said Sujoy Ghosh, VP and MD (India), First Solar.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi begins his official trip to the US, the endorsement by a US-based solar module manu-

push assumes importance as the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in the US threatens to adversely impact investments in emerging and developing economies. Sources said that investors will want to turn to the US as the subsidy scheme offers more incentives compared with India's Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

IMPACT OF IRA

Asked about the impact of IRA on India, Ghosh said that every country has its own ambitions to incentivise its domestic manufacturing in the clean energy space. He says in the last decade, from 2010 to 2020, there was an over-dependence on China and the flip side of that is, it has become a risky move.

"Having said that, I think

more corpus than PLI. However, the cost of production, labour, and doing business in the US is also a lot higher as compared to economies like India. At the end of the day, you are going to manufacture where you have demand," he explained. The IRA never impacted the company's goals and vision to create capacity and support the Indian government, Ghosh added.

"The question for First Solar as a global player is that you cannot rely on one country. You have got to distribute your risks. When you look at different countries, you look at incentives available in each country on a case-by-case basis and look at whether we have demand for our technology, whether it works or not, and will the incentives help us deliver a more competitive