Islamabad energy transition

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Islamabad (Dec 30, 2021):Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam has said that the energy transition is a major component of Pakistan’s recent Energy Planning and thus, it has been given significant importance in revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and country’s interventions at Conference to Parties (COP26).

He was speaking at the official Launch of the ”Network for Clean Energy Transition (NCET)-Research and Advocacy,”by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). Mr Aslam on the occasion assured of his support to the network and cause of energy transition in Pakistan.

The Network for Clean Energy Transition for Research and Advocacy is a first-of-its-kind initiative in Pakistan, which aims to address the critical dimensions of the energy transition for achieving SDG-7.Dr Hina Aslam, Research Fellow, SDPI highlighting the objective of the network said that energy and climate change are the core challenges for Pakistan. She said further that media, academia, researchers, technical experts, civil society,financial institutes, corporate sector,INGO, parliamentarians, concerned ministries and relevant stakeholders would be part of the network.

Senator Faisal Javed, while sharing his views informed the participants that Pakistan has become the first country in the World to meet the International ‘Bonn Challenge’ by restoring over 350,000 hectares of land. He said that the Network is expected to play an important role to make a socio-economic case for energy transition in Pakistan.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, while welcoming all the members of the network, mentioned various recent initiatives of Pakistan to overcome the challenges in the energy sector as well as the challenges posed by climate change. Ms Syma Nadeem, MNA/Parliamentary Secretary for Interprovincial Coordination, emphasized on the need of indigenization of renewable energy technologies and manufacturing units of Solar power plants. She added further that the Higher Education Commission needs to play its role by engaging academia to come up with Technological innovations in the energy sector.

Mr Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director, Private Power, and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) was of view that the Government of Pakistan has shown a strong commitment towards increasing the share of renewable energy through ARE Policy 2019. He said the total share of clean and green energy by 2030 is expected to be over 60%. Dr Hassan Daud Butt, Chief Executive Officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BOIT) highlighted the importance of an effective stakeholder engagement process in the sector.

Mr Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director, Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), asserted that Pakistan needs to put a focus on power evacuation capacity. Mr Waqas ul Hassan, CEO, Karandaaz emphasized that we need to invest in energy efficiency, distribution systems, waste management, and mobilize the green investment deals.

Mr Fauz ul Azeem, DGM, Interloop Pvt. Ltd. said that there is a need to have datasets publicly available on emissions from demand sectors. Dr Fatima Khushnud, Head of Policy, Research & New Business, Engro Energy Ltd highlighted the recent initiatives of Engro Energy Ltd. in promoting clean energy. Mr Saad Latif, Director Net Zero, Pakistan Environment Trust said Green Financing initiatives for SMEs are missing from banking sector initiatives.

Dr Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, from IIUI, Ms Aisha Khan, from CSCCC, Mr Ahsan Javed, Dr Muhammad Farooq, from UET Lahore, Mr Tanveer Mirza, from United Energy Pakistan-Wind Division, Mr Hammad Bashir, Project Expert, UNIDO, Mr Hussain Talib, from Unilever, Mr Harris Chohan from Karandaaz, Dr Najeeb Ullah, from UET Peshawar, Mr Khurram Lalani, Principal-Resources Future, Dr Fahad Saeed-Climate Analytics, and Dr Mohsin Gul, Technical Advisor, Asian Development Bank shared their perspectives on energy sector of Pakistan.

Amidst the challenges of soaring energy prices, escalating impacts of climate change, and economic hurdles, Pakistan confronts a complex trilemma encapsulated by the three interlinked challenges of energy, environment, and economy. Presently, the country is grappling with inflated energy costs due to imported fuels, worsening local air pollution, economic instability, and challenges in delivering reliable electricity to a burgeoning population.

This complex interplay of issues calls for deep introspection into major loopholes in the current policy framework and the holistic development of sustainable policies to address the multifaceted crisis of energy, environment, and economy.

An imperative at this critical juncture is a paradigm shift towards a sustainable and indigenous solution through a transition to clean energy for sustainable progress. This pivotal step not only fosters economic growth but also enhances energy security and ensures environmental sustainability.

In the Green Future Index (2023) by MIT Technology Review, Pakistan is ranked 67th among 76 countries, dropping from its 55th position in 2022. The index evaluates the countries across five key pillars: carbon emission reduction, energy transition, green society, clean innovation, and climate policy.

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