

# Newsletter

August 2022

• Volume 8

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## Spotlight | ISA President's visit to Headquarters



Hon'ble Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, Government of India, Shri Raj Kumar Singh, President of ISA Assembly, visited the ISA Headquarters in Gurugram on 23 August 2022.

The President was briefed in detail about the ongoing activities and key initiatives, including the Blended Finance Facility, Global Solar Reports, Regional Committee Meetings and the upcoming fifth ISA Assembly. The President shared feedback and several inputs for future course of action. In his address to the ISA staff, the President underlined the mission the Alliance had committed to and is working towards, referring to the goal of 'global solarisation' as the noblest mission that positively impacts and improves lives by facilitating access and delivery of clean energy.

The President was accompanied by Shri Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi, Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India; Shri Alok Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India; Shri Ghanshyam Prasad, Chairperson, Central Electricity Authority; and Shri Dinesh Dayanand Jagdale, Joint Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India, amongst others.







## Snapshot | 2022 Governance Meetings

### Guyana hosted ISA’s Fourth Regional Committee Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean Region

In a historic first, Guyana hosted the fourth Regional Committee Meeting of the International Solar Alliance for Latin America & Caribbean at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre from August 3 to 5, 2022, in Georgetown, Guyana. Over a hundred delegates from 20 countries in the Region, including Ministers of Energy and senior government officials interested in issues of clean energy, sustainable environment,

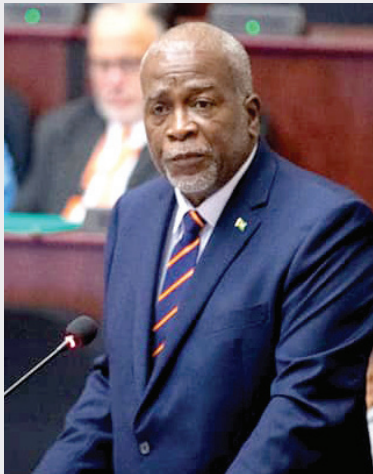
public transport, and climate change, participated in the proceedings. Hon’ble Mr Deodat Indar, Guyana’s Junior Minister of Public Works, responsible for energy distribution, presided over the Meeting.

The opening ceremony was graced and addressed by H.E. Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana; Hon’ble Prime Minister of Guyana, Brigadier (ret’d) Mark Phillips.



**H.E. President Mohamed Irfaan Ali** delivered the keynote address at the Meeting. He said: “Today’s meeting is on the backdrop of transitions. Transition does not mean the end of anything; it means there is a gap that needs to be filled. Transition is not a cheap process. We have not mastered the technology or financial and business models. This forum of the International Solar Alliance is to advance discussions on the challenges we will face with energy transitions and how we may find long-term solutions for them. We have to find answers but let those answers be based on realities we face.”

Speaking on the occasion, **Honourable Prime Minister of Guyana Brigadier (ret’d) Mark Phillips** said, “We are all aware of the value of solar in increasing access to energy, in advancing energy security, and driving the transition to clean and modern energy. The substantial contribution of the ISA continues to reveal the importance of such partnerships in the region. The existence of ISA reminds us just how vital strategic alliances are in the increased deployment of solar energy technologies towards the shared goal of sustainability. The government of Guyana has benefitted from ISA in technical cooperation and grant assistance and looks forward to opportunities for greater collaboration as our country embarks on tremendous transformation in the energy sector.”







Glimpses of the Meeting proceedings

The **Private Sector Roundtable** hosted on the last day of the proceeding was a success and featured Hon'ble Dr Ashni Singh, Minister of Finance, Guyana, speaking of attracting private sector investment. The proceedings featured presentations by Mr Remesh Kumar, Chief of P&PIC, ISA and NTPC Limited – ISA's endorsed Project Management Consultant who highlighted ISA & NTPC's efforts to develop solar parks in the region, including the upcoming 1150 MW solar park in Cuba.

Senor Antonio, AGM Energia Fotovoltaica, spoke about the challenges and opportunities of working in Latin America. Senor Alfonso Blanco, Executive Director, OLADE presented about the potential for solar in the Region. Excellency Rosell Guerra Campaña, Director Renewable Energy, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Cuba discussed the [1150 MW solar tender](#) - part of Cuba's plan to implement 2100 MW of solar projects, reducing the reliance on expensive and polluting diesel generators and increasing its green energy

**Dr Ajay Mathur, DG ISA:** "The Latin America and the Caribbean region is uniquely important to the ISA and to the global solar energy ecosystem. The Region is home to countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile and El Salvador that have been prioritising solar in their energy mix and are among the Achievers in the ISA's Ease of Doing Solar index. It is also home to countries like Barbados, Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Peru that have been rising rapidly towards the Achiever status."





portfolio. The Meeting was attended by Mr Deodat Indar, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works of Guyana; Mr Stuart R Young, Hon'ble Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, Trinidad & Tobago; Dr William F Duguid, Senior Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister Barbados; Mr Jean Fanfan Jourdain, Director of Coastal and Maritime Coasts (Vice Minister), Haiti; Ms Tania Masea, Vice Minister, Ministry of Electric Power, Venezuela and delegates from 19 LAC countries.

Post the Meeting, **Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, also participated in the commissioning launch of a \$472 million one megawatt solar farm at Lethem (Region Nine, Guyana).** This solar park will reduce the monthly electricity expense for over 1,400 households while facilitating access to reliable and clean energy.

Around 10,000 litres of diesel or some 63 drums of fuels were saved since the solar power plant started testing on 26 July 2022. The solar farm is set to save approximately \$136 million annually at the current fuel cost. The project was developed by Lethem Power Company and Guyana Energy Agency and financed under a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with a payback period for the project to be only three and a half years. The launch was attended by Mr Deodat Indar, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works; Dr William Duguid, Senior Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados; Dr Mahender Sharma, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Guyana Energy Agency and Roger King, Chairman of the Lethem Power Company Board, among others.







The 4th Meeting of the Regional Committee of the Asia Pacific Region was hosted virtually on 17 August 2022. Twenty-four countries participated in the deliberations, bringing essential ideas and solutions. The regional governance meetings help collate inputs from Members Countries to help address specific challenges and build on unique opportunities.

## Opinion | Unlocking Solar for a Secure Energy Future

We focus on the Commonwealth of Australia in this edition



Two recent developments in Australia affirm its transformative climate leadership. First, is its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The government has committed to cut emissions by 43% below 2005 levels by 2030, which is a 15% increase on Australia's previous 2030 target. Second, it is \$45 million funding to the Australian Centre for Advanced Photovoltaics (ACAP), which will encourage cutting-edge solar photovoltaic (PV) research and develop over-the-horizon PV technology for increased efficiency and reduction of costs.

Already, renewables are the cheapest form of energy generation in Australia. With 2.68 million rooftop solar

power systems having been installed — that is, one in four homes have solar on their roof, renewables provide more than a quarter of the power in Australia's largest grid, five times more power than gas. While Australia has a natural advantage, as it receives the highest solar radiation per square meter of any continent, it is because of the government's resolve that it leads the world in PV capacity on a per capita basis, at 591 watts per person, which is almost eight times the worldwide average.

Across the world, increasing economies of scale, more competitive supply chains, and further technological improvements have reduced the cost of solar by over



80% since 2010. Global installed capacity has expanded in response to the cost reduction and policy support and reached around 900GW by the end of 2021 from only 44GW in 2010. This has meant that in many countries, solar electricity is now the cheapest electricity. However, we still do not have cost-effective round-the-clock solar electricity, and therefore fossil fuel is still being used to meet our energy demands. Towards a transition to a renewable future, renewables plus storage are a clear solution. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for renewable energy technologies and storage to be treated as essential and freely available global public goods. A “Global Battery Coalition” has also been proposed to country leaders to fast-track innovation and deployment. Global efforts can help remove the barrier of storing renewable power through batteries, pumps & hydro systems, which will in turn create a global demand, strengthen supply chains (developers and manufacturing community), and provide cost-effective, thereby achieving round-the-clock solar electricity.

Despite Covid, the solar sector saw nearly 191 GW of new capacity additions, driven by better policies, and incentives that encourage investments in the sector. Yet, the deployment of solar technologies across the world has not been uniform. Countries and regions with high technical potential for the adoption of renewable energy have not led in the race of renewable adoption. This is evident from Africa, which installed 0.90 GW only of solar in 2021, representing a mere 0.5% of the new global installed capacity of 191 GW of solar. For an equitable deployment of solar, public and private funding will need to be enhanced. Sustainability-oriented innovation systems can only be erected by pooling of resources, co-owned and shared intellectual property, and local adaptation. In addition, private finance, businesses, manufacturers, and innovators will need to be encouraged to invest. It will need scale, supportive regulation, balance, and risk mitigation for emerging markets to access finances. Creating multi-risk, multi-country hedging platforms can lower the cost of capital and crowd in more private and institutional investment into developing countries and emerging economies.

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is working towards making solar power a political priority for nations and leaders across the world. Since its establishment in 2015, ISA is scaling up efforts to implement its existing pipeline for solar projects, share knowledge, and build capacity across the solar value chain. These efforts are especially focused on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) so that they can act as a trigger for technology advancement and policy change, and help in the creation of financial and human capacity. The Australian experience in solar, in formulating programmes and policy frameworks can

lead LDCs and SIDS in embracing the opportunities presented by the transition to net zero.

Australian businesses and the public sector have been working towards driving innovation and improving competitiveness. In 2021, SunDrive, a solar technology start-up based in South Sydney achieved 25.5 percent photovoltaic efficiency, at the time a world record for commercial-scale solar cells. The solar cell uses copper instead of silver, which is cheaper and less energy-intensive to produce. The Solar 30/30/30 plan of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency targets improving solar efficiency to 30 percent and reducing the cost of solar modules to 30 cents per watt by 2030. There are lessons for the world and opportunities for Australia to help secure, scale up and diversify the supply of critical components and raw materials for renewable energy technologies. With a multilateral approach and creation of linkages supply chains for renewable energy technologies and raw materials can flourish and be made resilient to external shocks while cutting risks. This will take concerted international coordination, incentives, capacity building, research, and innovation.

With the changing geopolitical scenario affecting the climate conversation, the impact on solar capacity addition needs to be safeguarded. In addition to the existing challenges of inadequate grid capacity, lack of creditworthy power off-takers, time-consuming permits and approvals, and difficulty in accessing low-cost funds, the new vulnerabilities may exacerbate the climate change challenges. Concerted and renewed efforts will be needed along with investments in the deployment of solar power projects to achieve energy security and decarbonization.

As a founding member of the ISA, there is enormous potential for Australia to play a significant role in the Indian and Pacific oceans, especially in combating climate change. India and Australia are strongly committed to the practical global cooperation to address major challenges in line with India's increasing engagement in the Indo-Pacific region through her Indo-Pacific vision and Australia's Indo-Pacific approach and its Pacific Step-Up for the South Pacific. India and Australia are also progressing in their cooperation in areas such as pumped hydro storage, cost-effective battery technologies, hydrogen, adoption of clean energy technology, and solar forecasting and scheduling. Through the ISA, both countries are committed to continuing to collaborate on climate change, and energy security and have announced matching funds of AUD 10 million for Pacific Island Countries under ISA.

Solar is a shared solution that simultaneously addresses climate, energy, and economic priorities across geographies, and through such efforts, ISA with members like Australia is facilitating Energy Transition at a global level, and Energy Security at national levels, while also ensuring Energy Access at the local level.



## ISA's Interventions



DG ISA met Hon'ble Tania Masea, Deputy Minister, Ministerio de Energía Eléctrica, Venezuela to discuss accelerating solar power deployment in Venezuela.



DG ISA met Hon. Deodat Indar, Minister within the Ministry of Public Works of Guyana & discussed strengthening the grid and other opportunities in Guyana towards Climate Action.



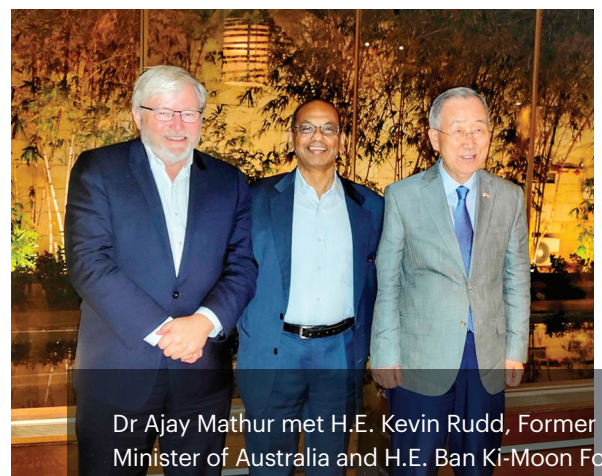
Lithuanian delegation visited ISA Secretariat to discuss opportunities in solar, interconnected grids, strengthening storage solutions and partnerships for a sustainable future.



DG ISA met Deputy Head of Mission of Brazil Mr Paulo Vassily Chuc and discussed learnings from Brazil's solarisation that can have an impact on the Region.



DG ISA met Barbara Buchner, Global Managing Director, Climate Policy Initiative to discuss initiatives towards accelerating investments for solarisation.



Dr Ajay Mathur met H.E. Kevin Rudd, Former Prime Minister of Australia and H.E. Ban Ki-Moon Former Secretary General, United Nations to discuss ideas & solutions to advance global solarisation.





## Roundup | Country Mission to the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The ISA Secretariat undertook a country mission to the People's Republic of Bangladesh from August 16-18, 2022 to identify and develop synergies between the priorities of the Government of Bangladesh and ISA's programmatic offerings.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh, a committed proponent of clean energy sources, particularly for sustainable development and climate action, has achieved significant success in promoting solar energy applications, particularly on rooftops. Bangladesh was among the earliest supporters of the Alliance, having joined as a Member Country in 2016.

The mission engaged in bilateral fact-finding meetings with relevant ministries, government agencies, and utilities to understand the needs, priorities, and challenges of the Government of Bangladesh and various agencies for scaling up solar

energy applications across different sectors. The mission also consulted with various private sector stakeholders, including associations, to assess private sector perspectives on investment opportunities, challenges, and bottlenecks to scaling up solar. The mission concluded with a stakeholder consultation workshop with representation from relevant ministries, renewable energy development agencies, power sector development agencies, financing institutions, and private sector representatives, including associations. The workshop featured a brief overview of the ISA offerings across various pillars such as programmatic support, resources, ecosystem readiness, and focused group discussions on three key areas of potential ISA interventions – opportunities for solar PV deployment & scale-up, challenges to solar PV in Bangladesh, Policy & Regulatory bottlenecks, and investment requirements.







The mission identified thematic areas for programmatic collaboration between the ISA and the Government of Bangladesh and gained insights on potential ready-to-investment opportunities. Further, the mission also generated awareness about ISA programmatic support and ISA's value addition to the ongoing effort toward deploying solar energy in Bangladesh. The

mission also gained valuable insights into policy and regulatory bottlenecks that will set the foundation for further engagement with the Government of Bangladesh. The mission ended on a cordial and optimistic note for increased momentum for scaling solar energy in Bangladesh and productive long-term collaboration with the ISA.







A summary of discussion with various stakeholders as well as agreed areas of cooperation was finalised in the concluding meeting on 18 August 2022, chaired by the Hon’ble National Focal Point (NFP) for ISA, H.E. Mr Nirod C. Mondal, Joint Secretary, Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources. As a next step, ISA and Honourable NFP will jointly work together, liaising with other government agencies in developing concrete steps in solar project identification and pilot development for implementation. The ISA delegation met with the Ministries of Agriculture; Railways; Environment, Forest, and Climate Change; Water

Resources; Housing and Public Works; Livestock and Fisheries, and the Power Division of the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources.

Consulted with Agencies of Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA); Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB); IPP Cell; Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited; NorthWest Power Generation Company Limited. They interacted with stakeholders from the following Associations and the Private Sector: Bangladesh Solar and Renewable Energy Association (BSREA); Joules Power Private Limited.

## Initiative | Enhancing Access to Climate Change Funds

**Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub and ISA collectively launched a new capacity-building initiative to help raise international climate capital for climate actions.**

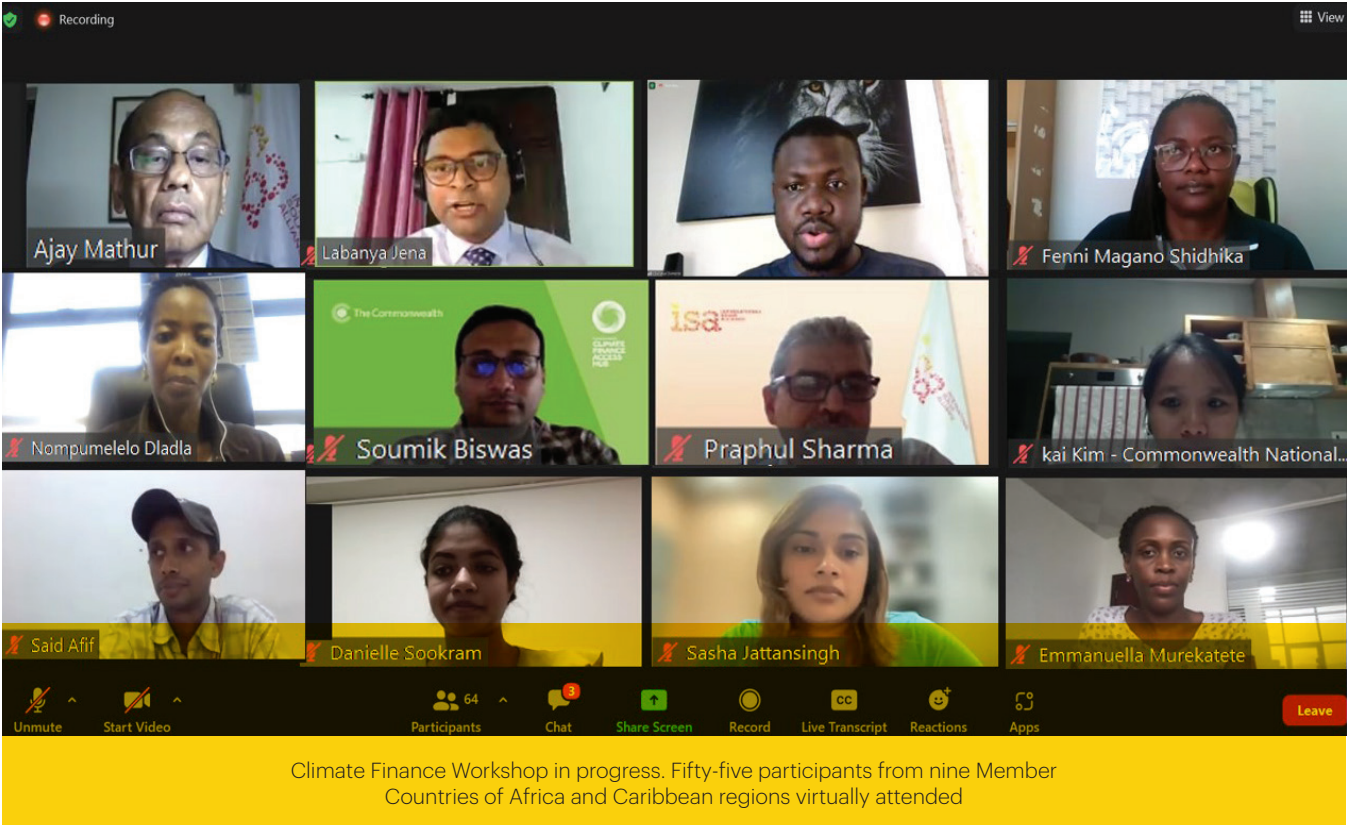
International Solar Alliance (ISA) is working towards large-scale solar deployment with a particular focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). We know that for successful deployment at desired speed and scale, the sector requires increased institutional capacity and skilled human resources.

Capacity building is among the key priorities of ISA. A recent initiative in collaboration with the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) led to the curation of a specialised training module

for personnel working across ministries of economy, finance, and climate change and senior officials in the public and private sector and financial institutions. This collective offering aims to create a cadre of professionals with the requisite knowledge and skills to develop winning proposals and instruments to raise capital from international and domestic sources, primarily from international public financial institutions. This training programme will significantly enable the LDCs and SIDS Member Countries to raise the much-needed capital to bridge their financing gaps. These countries are most vulnerable to the exigencies of climate change and have played little or no role in creating conditions for the current climate crisis. Domestic markets in these countries find it challenging to mobilise capital to fund positive climate action.

The programme focused on enhancing the learners’ understanding of the phenomenon of climate change and the climate finance landscape. As part of the training, in addition to identifying and assessing climate





change problems and designing solutions to address them, participants were also made familiar with the public and private capital sources and equipped to better comprehend requirements for accessing climate finance, including access modalities and critical processes. Insights on investment criteria, innovative climate finance instruments and mechanisms were among the other shared nuances.

This skill and knowledge enhancement drive will help Member Countries to mobilise capital, marking the transition into a low-carbon economy and boosting the reduction of the economy’s carbon intensity. Fifty-five participants from nine Member Countries of Africa and Caribbean regions virtually attended the Climate Finance Workshop hosted on 17-18 August 2022. Future

editions of the workshop are being proposed for 2023.

The Commonwealth and the International Solar Alliance are partnering to promote the development and scaling-up of solar power within Member Countries common to both organisations. The partnership is working to address the challenges associated with adopting rooftop solar: areas of intervention include institutional development, project design, and pipeline development across the solar sector, including solar rooftops, mini-grid, solar water pumps, utility solar, and solar homes. To review the progress of collaborative initiatives and determine the future course of action, Hon’ble Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, met Dr Ajay Mathur, DG, ISA, at the ISA headquarters earlier this month.



Dr Ajay Mathur, DG, ISA welcomes and interacts with Hon’ble Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth



# New Development

The Republic of Panama became the 108<sup>th</sup> country to sign the Framework Agreement of the ISA



H.E. Ms Yasiel Alines Burillo Rivera, Ambassador of Panama signed the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance in the presence of Mr Md. Noor Rahman Sheikh, Joint Secretary (ED), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India & Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, ISA



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 7th Standing Committee Meeting, New Delhi, India | 13 September
- 26th WAIPA World Investment Conference, Geneva, Switzerland | 13-14 September
- ISA Solar E-Mobility Webinar Series: Charging for Change| Webinar #2- Vehicle Integrated PV Sector: Technical and Regulatory Aspects | 20 September
- Launch of ISA Corporate Advisory Group, Pittsburgh, USA | 22 September 2022
- Solar Road Mapping: Transition to Action at 8th World Conference on Photovoltaic Energy Conversion (WCPEC), Milan, Italy | 28 September (Hybrid)



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