

PM: Intl solar alliance could replace Opec

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New Delhi: Pitching for clean sources of energy by reducing the use of polluting fossil fuels, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that the International Solar Alliance (group of solar-resource-rich nations) could replace Opec in the future as the principal supplier of energy.

“The ISA will have same role in future what is being currently played by Opec. The



role being played by oil wells now will be played in future by the rays of the sun,” Modi said, referring to the cartel of 15 nations which currently meets about half of the world’s energy needs.

He was inaugurating the first assembly of ISA, which was launched as a joint initiative of India and France in 2015. Incidentally, 10 of the 15 Opec countries are on the list of ISA’s potential members.

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India proposes to expand ISA membership to all UN states

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Opec countries in the list of ISA potential members include UAE, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Libya, Nigeria and Algeria, among others. India also proposed that ISA membership be thrown open to all UN members apart from the 121 who are fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn as initially envisaged by ISA.

ISA, an inter-governmental treaty-based organisation, was formed by solar-resource-rich nations to undertake joint efforts to reduce cost of finance and technology and mobilise more than \$1 trillion investment needed by 2030 for the deployment of at least 1,000

GW of solar energy worldwide.

India's proposal to expand membership will be welcomed by many countries and Pakistan could also potentially come within ISA. The proposal is, in fact, in sync with what Modi envisioned when he gave the call of "one world, one sun, one grid" while addressing representatives of 40 countries during the ISA assembly.

Foreign minister Sushma Swaraj told the gathering about the move to expand ISA membership to all UN member countries. She said 70 countries had signed the framework agreement on the alliance and of these, 44 had ratified it.

The first assembly of ISA will lay the foundation for a

global solar agenda. The assembly, as the supreme decision-making body of ISA, will steer the process to significantly harness solar energy for achieving universal energy access at affordable rates.

The occasion also saw the inauguration of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) renewable energy ministerial meeting and the second Global Renewable Energy Investment summit. IORA was set up with the objective of strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region with 21 member countries and seven dialogue partners. Its first meeting was held in Abu Dhabi in January 2014.