

India's Energy Initiatives in Sri Lanka

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India plans to build a solar power park in Sri Lanka as part of a strategy to project its presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) amid Chinese attempts to lure nations into its 'Belt and Road' initiative. India's largest power generation utility NTPC Ltd plans to set up this project in the island nation under the **auspices of International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.

Solar Power Park in Sri Lanka

The move comes amid a growing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean Region, which India considers its sphere of influence. State-run Ceylon Electricity Board has an installed power generation capacity of around 35.8 gigawatts (GW). India has already been working on **improving the energy infrastructure** in Sri Lanka.

Petronet LNG Ltd had earlier announced its plans of setting up a **liquefied natural gas terminal in Sri Lanka**. India is also exploring laying an **overhead electricity link with Sri Lanka as part of efforts to create a new-energy ecosystem** in the South Asian neighbourhood. China is already one of the biggest investors in infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka.

The solar park is NTPC's second foray after Colombo scrapped a proposal to set up a \$500 million coal-fuelled power project in Trincomalee over environmental concerns in 2016. With an installed capacity of 62.91 GW, NTPC's Sri Lanka solar project is one of several such contracts being pursued to **help build 10 GW solar capacity in ISA member countries**.

Green energy projects now account for more than a fifth of India's installed power generation capacity of 370 GW. Sri Lanka has also received a **\$100 million (~₹7.56 billion) loan**

from the Government of India for installing solar rooftop systems on government buildings. These funds will also be used to provide solar power systems to select low-income households in the districts of Trincomalee, Monaragala, Anuradhapura, and Hambantota.