

India turns to Africa and West Asia for solar exports

The move comes as demand from Europe stagnates and the US turns more protectionist

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NEW DELHI

As India ramps up efforts to establish itself as a global renewable energy powerhouse, the government is pursuing direct government-to-government (G2G) engagements with African and West Asian nations to open new markets for Indian green energy firms and solar equipment manufacturers, according to two people aware of the developments.

The move comes as demand from Europe stagnates and the US turns increasingly protectionist. Meanwhile, China continues to dominate the global solar supply chain, particularly in Africa, where its low-cost products have given it an outsized presence.

Indian companies have a strong domestic market, “but beyond this they will have to go for newer markets. And in that, Africa and Middle East present significant scope. Nigeria is one of the countries being looked at,” said one of the people cited above, requesting anonymity.

“The Indian government’s strategic push into Africa and the Middle East marks a significant step for our solar industry,” said Sundeep Gupta, vice chairman of Jakson Group, a maker of solar modules.

“These regions are not just potential



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markets—they are key allies in the global shift towards clean energy. For manufacturers like us, this initiative opens up immense growth opportunities,” Gupta said. “We’ve seen the impact of exports to the US, and now, diversifying our reach will strengthen India’s position as a renewable energy powerhouse.”

Queries sent to the ministry of new and renewable energy and ministry of external affairs remained unanswered till press time.

Chinese manufacturers control 80% of the global solar module supply and 55% of Africa’s solar market, where India

is now looking to expand. Beijing’s dominance is driven by large-scale investments, concessional financing, and tightly integrated supply chains, making its solar products highly competitive.

India, which has 67GW of solar module manufacturing capacity and aims to reach 100GW by 2030, has been working to reduce its reliance on China amid ongoing diplomatic tensions.

The Indian government has rolled out a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to boost domestic solar manufacturing, particularly for critical components like cells, wafers, and poly-

silicon.

Despite these efforts, Indian firms remain vulnerable to external risks. The US is currently India’s top export destination for solar modules, but shifting trade policies under a second Trump presidency and evolving global demand dynamics have made it imperative for companies to explore new markets.

Recognizing the risks and regulatory complexities of expanding into new regions, the Indian government has tasked its embassies in Africa and West Asia with conducting market assessments to help firms navigate regulatory landscapes, assess demand, and identify potential partnerships.

“Indian embassies have been asked to study the market and try to figure out how those markets can be opened up for domestic players,” said the other official, adding that since countries in Africa and West Asia have growing renewable energy needs, they represent promising expansion targets.

Major Indian companies in the sector—Waaree Energies, Adani Solar, Tata Power Solar, and Vikram Solar—have already begun exploring export opportunities beyond the US market.

In FY24, India exported \$1.96 billion worth of solar modules, with \$1.93 billion—nearly its entire export volume—going to the US. By contrast, shipments to Africa and West Asia made up only a fraction of India’s exports.

