India can function on only renewable energy in 20-25 years, according to the Energy Transition Committee. The committee, which examined India’s transition to renewable energy last year, said its transition to renewable energy is “coal-centric”. “We are arguing that if you are building a new energy system, it can be fully renewable in 20-25 years,” ETC Chairman Adair Turner said.

The ETC is a diverse international group with members across the energy landscape. It was created to make the case for change in the energy system to ensure a better growth and climate. Turner said the ETC will introduce an India chapter this year. It has collaborated with the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) to publish a report on de-carbonisation of core manufacturing sectors, such as steel, thermal power, manufacturing and automobiles. Playing a role will also become economically unavoidable, said Ajay Mathur, director-general, TERI. In the Paris Climate Change commitment, India had set a target that 40 per cent of energy consumption and 30 per cent from non-fossil fuel sources. The government, however, has maintained that coal would remain the primary source and base load for power generation.

ETC report observes India has a 10-year window of opportunity to overcome the challenges in the large scale and economically-competitive-advantage of renewable energy. The prime consideration for utilisation of renewable energy, Thatcher, would be the price of ‘despatchable renewable energy’ renewable and balancing — reaches 55 per cent of the total electricity and PLFs (plant load factors) are down to below 70 per cent. The challenges is that a pull factor, the de-carbonisation of international technological cooperation and financial support, will enable its realisation. This, the ETC said, could provide a paradigm shift in the future of the Indian energy sector.

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