

## **US Congress Delegation and FICCI explores US-India co-operation in improving coal usage efficiency**

**NEW DELHI, 20 October 2015:** FICCI hosted an interaction between its members and representatives of US Congress. Mr. David B. McKinley, Representative for West Virginia from Republican Party led the delegation. The US congress representatives comprised of Ms. Michelle L. Grisham ( Representative for New Mexico, Democratic Party) and Mr. Trent Kelly (Representative for Mississippi, Republican Party).

The delegation's primary interest was to explore US-India co-operation in improving the efficiency of coal usage. FICCI emphasized the pivotal role of Coal based power generation for electricity generation in India.

**Mr. Prabir Neogi**, Chair, FICCI Power Committee said "India is ramping up its domestic coal produce to both reduce the dependence on imports and support the planned growth in power generation capacity. While addressing the climate change concerns, the country will have an equally compelling need to provide affordable electricity to its population."

He added that availability of 24\*7 power is a stated government policy as a poverty alleviation measure. He also highlighted that while per capita electricity consumption in India is low at 1100 units, thereby implying the necessity of improving access, per capita emission is also low at 2.5 tonnes compared to the advanced economies.

Members from US Congress stated that coal still has a dominant role in U.S. power generation with a focus on improving the plant efficiencies to minimise environmental damages. They also shared their views on challenges being faced in rural electrification in United States and expressed their willingness to jointly work with the Indian industry for improving electricity access in rural areas.

Members from FICCI explained recent developments in coal based power generation in India with the introduction of super and ultra-critical technologies for improving plant parameters and fuel efficiency. It was observed that India has also achieved considerable progress in coal beneficiation, fuel gas control and fly ash disposal as environment-mitigating measures.

It was acknowledged that while an increase of renewable energy generation will contribute to a cleaner environment, coal-based power will be the mainstay to provide affordable, reliable and round-the-clock electricity to India's vast population of 1.2 billion. It was felt that significant scope for learning from U.S. experience exists in developing efficient rural delivery models across vast stretches of a country like India. Role of decentralized generation and off-grid renewable energy sources in U.S. as a means to extend coverage was also discussed.

Members of US Congress took cognizance of various developments in Indian power industry and observed that United States is also grappling with many similar challenges pertaining to use of clean coal and increase of renewable energy sources in their supply basket. Both sides expressed optimism at chalking out key areas of energy cooperation between both the countries.

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