



# SHADOWS AND LIGHT

Companies, prices, technologies, investments and, now, policies...the pieces of a solar ecosystem are slowly coming together. Still, unless India acts with imagination and speed, it could miss the solar bus

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**T**WO POLICY MEASURES IN THE LAST MONTH, the first by the Centre, hesitant, yet calibrated, and the second by Gujarat, bold and ground-breaking, indicate that the tide is changing in the struggling power sector. The Centre's Integrated Energy Policy (IEP) is significant, for it seeks a gentle shift to a market system by freeing primary energy sources from the trap of administrative controls, subsidies and pricing. A regime

that pivots on optimal choice of fuels and technologies, based on sound economics, is expected to emerge. Those living below the poverty line have also been taken into account. The IEP seeks to cushion the rural poor from a possible tumult, by paying them a subsidy of Rs 130 through smart cards—Rs 30 for electricity and Rs 100 for fuel.

The policy initiative couldn't have come sooner. India is targeting a power-generation capacity of 800,000 MW by 2031-32, from the current 183,000 MW, to sustain its growth rate. The yearly addition is

**POWERFUL:** The solar park in Sanlucar La Mayor, near Seville in Spain, is a good example of how big solar can get