

**“Global Solar Journey” Event  
as part of  
150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi Celebrations**

***Handing Over of Solar Energy Equipment***

**Kopong Kgotla  
Wednesday, 16 October 2019**

**Speech by High Commissioner**

Hon. Vice President of the Republic of Botswana – His Honour Mr.  
Slumber Tsogwane

Kgosi Kopong

Protocol observed

Members of Media

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted and I feel privileged and fortunate in joining with you all to celebrate the event titled “Global Solar Journey” on the occasion of 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi organized at Kopong Village. I would like to thank His Honour Vice President of Botswana, Kgosi of Kopong and other dignitaries for providing me this opportunity to organize this function at Kopong.

Today, the world is at the crossroads of a contradictory energy scenario wherein, on the one hand, energy access has to be provided to billions while, on the other hand, increasing demand and usage of energy is

causing catastrophic climate change. Mahatma Gandhi believed that “Nature can satisfy each one's need but not greed.”

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 calls for ensuring the access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. However, still, more than 1 billion people lack access to electricity while an estimated 2.8 billion people lack access to clean cooking fuels. While atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration has increased substantially due to the increased use of fossil fuels owing to energy demand pressures, which has made the world already hotter by nearly 1°C.

The 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report finds that “limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require “rapid and far-reaching” transitions in energy and there is need to adopt 100% Renewable Energy as early as 2050 in the purview of the climate. Today, renewable energy technology-based solutions, particularly solar, due to advancement in technologies and reduction in cost combined with super-efficient loads enables economic viability of solar electricity. This can be utilized to meet local energy needs through local generation alone.

PURPOSE OF GLOBAL SOLAR JOURNEY

Now, I would like to dwell upon the purpose of the Global Solar Journey or Yatra.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, the “Not mass production but production by masses is required”. In the context of energy, lack of energy access and climate change, the need of the hour is the production of energy by masses.

It is clear that only science and technology development will not be sufficient for sustainable existence on Earth. It is high time that we pay gratitude and adopt Gandhian ideologies while celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary Year of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Gandhi Global Solar Journey (*Yatra*) (GGSY) is planned to promote self-sufficiency in energy for sustainability, mainly for those who lack access, as it is possible today to provide complete, cost-effective, reliable and sustainable solar energy access while protecting the environment, creating livelihood and empowering locals. With the vision to promote localized energy self-sufficiency by creating awareness and sensitizing towards the viability of 24x7 decentralized solar solutions, GGSY aims to sensitize the key governmental and non-governmental officials towards solar energy.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SOLAR JOURNEY

The young minds need to be aware of the urgency to act for mitigating climate change and their role to become the ambassadors of renewable energy, particularly solar, given its potential to power human lives. To sensitize these young minds, hands-on training for more than 1 Million Students Solar Ambassadors (SSA) across the globe is ongoing in October 2019. The following are the additional objectives of the journey:

- Bring awareness on the severity of climate change and lack of energy access to billions
- Introduce localized energy self-sufficiency for sustainability and its linkages to Gandhian principles
- Establish viability of 24x7 decentralized off-grid solar solutions (experience sharing of SoULS)
- Spreading the message of Non-Violence towards Environment

Thank you for kind attention.

**P U L A**