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# Make use of solar rooftops for houses mandatory: CSE

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Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has called for installation of solar rooftops to be made mandatory for all upcoming residential societies and sought a ban on use of diesel generator sets in highly-polluted urban areas like the national capital.

The environmental watchdog has argued that decline in cost of solar panels means they are now a financially viable option and the cost of electricity generation through them, including the capital cost, is a third (Rs 10 per unit) of that generated through diesel generator (DG) sets (Rs 27- Rs 33 per unit).

The solar rooftop can also reduce monthly power bill of the consumers. The extra units generated through solar rooftop can be exported to the grid, something which cannot be done with DGs, according to CSE.

In a survey conducted in five residential societies across Delhi, Haryana, [Uttar Pradesh](#) and [Rajasthan](#) it was found that "size of the diesel generator was often not connected to outage" but was sometimes linked to the "status" of a particular society.

For instance, ICON, an upscale society in Gurugram, which experiences an outage of only 16 minutes per day on an average had "full backup" with DG size of 1,112 KW.

"DG back-up has become increasingly redundant because of reducing power outages in cities. We must realise that full back up was considered a basic need by upscale societies when the outages often lasted several hours a day," said Chandra Bhushan, director general, CSE during the launch of report 'Solar Rooftop: Replacing Diesel Generators in Residential Societies'.

"If power outage is less than an hour a day then the very definition of 'full back-up' needs to be changed. For tens of minutes of outage, even for the high-end societies 'partial load back-up' should be sufficient," Bhushan added.

As per CSE, this partial load can be easily met by solar rooftop for individual flats. DG sets though can be used to supplement additional power requirements for shared facilities in a residential society like elevators and for energy-intensive appliances such as ACs.

However, solar power providers, who develop, operate and maintain, solar power generation equipment for their customers have their set of concerns as well.

"My potential customers currently are those who have very high credit rating and have not defaulted. But individuals do not come with credit rating, same for MSMEs. So, there is a need to develop a credit strengthening framework which can give credit enhancement and credit security if there is a default by a customer," Ritu Lal, vice-president, business development, Amplus Solar, said at the launch of the report.

Other recommendations include financial support to discoms to compensate them for loss of revenue as consumers migrate to solar power. It has also been suggested that new constructions seeking approval should have a certain area free for execution of solar rooftop systems.

The need to spread awareness among house owners and RWAs about the economic viability as well reliability of solar units has also been highlighted in the report.

A solar calculator was also unveiled which has been designed for a domestic consumer to help them install a solar plant it provides information about electricity needs, viability of the plant as well as total project cost.