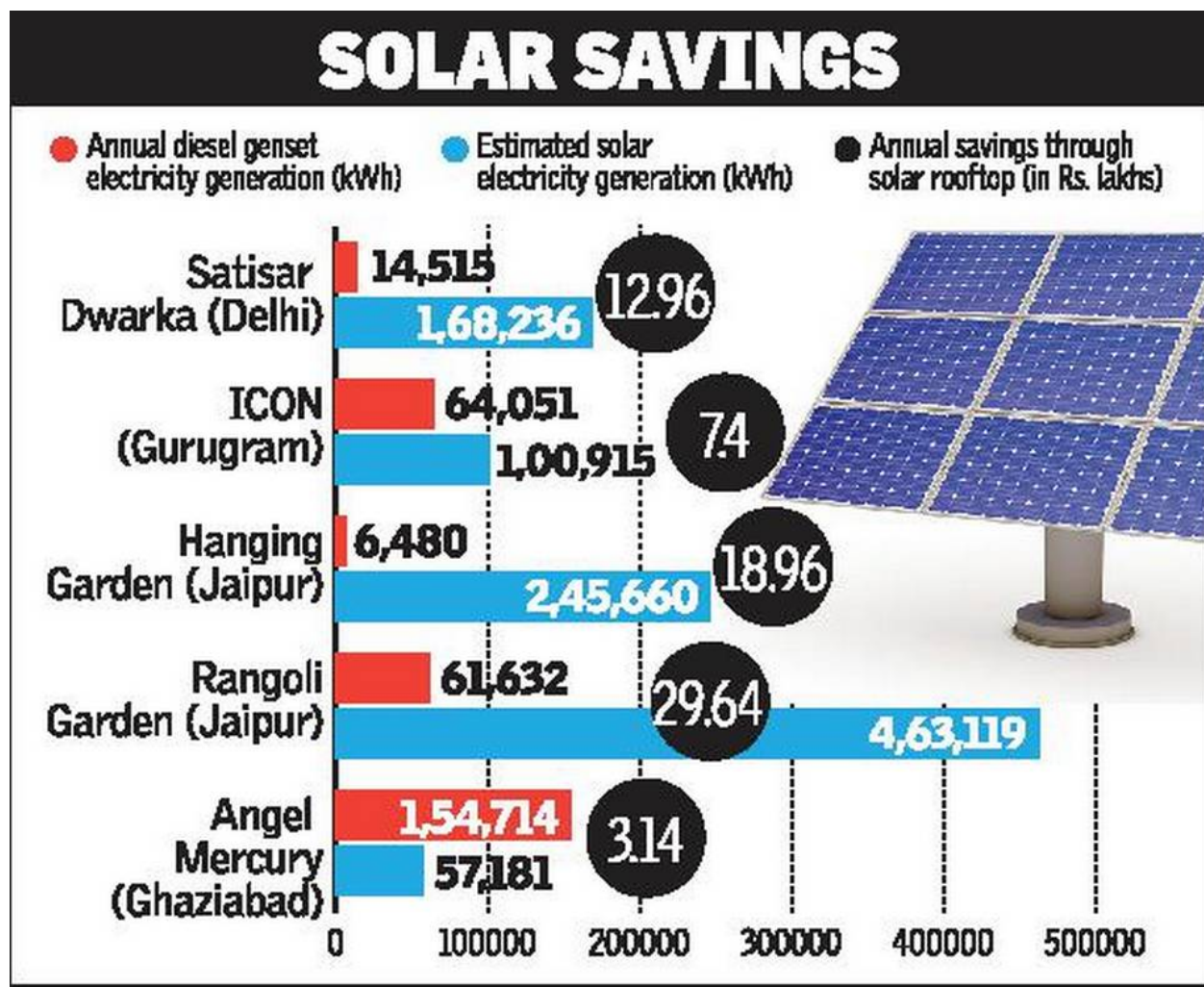


Make solar rooftops mandatory: CSE



Source: 'Solar Rooftop: Replacing diesel generators in residential societies', Centre for Science and Environment

Solar panels on rooftops should be made mandatory for new residential societies, recommended the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in a policy brief published here on Tuesday.

After studying the electricity consumption of five residential societies in Delhi, Jaipur and Ghaziabad, the CSE found that by switching from diesel generator (DG) sets to solar power for backup, the facilities would be saving lakhs of rupees every year.

In the policy brief, titled 'Solar Rooftop: replacing diesel generators in residential societies', Priyavrat Bhati and Rajan Kalsotra explored the different options for residential societies to switch to solar energy.

'Consider ban on DG sets'

The CSE recommended that solar rooftops should become a part of the applications for construction approvals, with the builders keeping a certain portion of the plinth area “shadow-free” to aid solar panels.

A total ban on DG sets in new multi-storied houses should be considered. This would not apply to the essential common areas.

While the Centre for Science and Environment found discoms aiding rooftop solar systems to meet the obligations for renewable energy, it said that most of these were being installed on institutional and commercial buildings.

“Our analysis shows that solar rooftop can cut discoms revenue since their most profitable customers may partly or fully migrate to solar. Therefore, it is vital that discoms be financially supported to encourage them to push solar rooftop,” said the policy document.

‘Give more incentives’

The CSE also said that though there is a capital subsidy of 30 per cent for solar rooftop systems that are connected to the grid, there is a need to give incentives for switching from DG sets to solar systems with battery backup.

The survey also found that there was a need for greater awareness of solar power options among RWAs.

The CSE said that RWAs did not appear to be interested in investing in the solar infrastructure despite potential savings.

It recommended that fiscal incentives, including rebate on building tax, could be considered in order to encourage the switch to solar power.