



## Press Release

### **‘TN Leads in Renewable Energy, Time to Realise Solar Rooftop Potential’: Experts On Strategies to Increase Uptake of Solar Energy in Chennai**

**Chennai, May 15, 2025:** “Consumers can meet their energy needs right in their own homes with the adoption of solar rooftop. TNGECL is working on an online tool for Chennai city that will assess the solar rooftop energy potential for individual users based on their electricity service connection number,” said **Mr.Sundarrajan G, Member, Tamil Nadu Governing Council on Climate Change**, in his special address during a seminar to encourage adoption of solar rooftop in the city.

Journalists, policymakers, industry leaders, and community representatives came together for a seminar – **“Higher Uptake of Rooftop Solar Energy – Can Media Play a Role?”** – to catalyse the adoption of rooftop solar energy in Tamil Nadu. Jointly organised by Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG), Asar Social Impact Advisors (Asar), and Poovulagin Nanbargal, the event looks to encourage and address challenges in the adoption of solar energy.

“Tamil Nadu is a national leader in renewable energy, yet its rooftop solar uptake remains disproportionately low. In Chennai, which consumes nearly 25% of the state’s electricity but contributes just 6% to its rooftop solar capacity,” explained **Ms.Priya Pillai**, Director, State Climate Action, Asar.

“The most powerful part? Decentralised solar is disaster-resilient. When nuclear or thermal plants shut down during emergencies, hundreds of towns and villages suffer,” Sundarrajan added.

The first panel focused on pathways for rooftop solar growth in Tamil Nadu. **Mr.Vinodhan R.K.**, Former Director Technical, TNGECL, highlighted the importance of state support and technical handholding.

“The good news is, the system is now much more accessible. Earlier, installing rooftop solar meant dealing with multiple layers of approval from TANGEDCO, including site inspections and permissions. Today, that process has been simplified. For systems up to 10 kW, no prior permission is required. Consumers can simply apply and avail of the subsidy,” he added.

Challenges like high upfront costs, complex procedures, and lack of consumer trust were debated alongside solutions like bank financing, community solar models, and awareness campaigns.

“Most people are not aware that you can access solar loans without providing a guarantee. In one of the schemes, you can get loans of up to Rs.2 lakhs at an interest rate of around 6.5%. With rooftop solar, you get a government subsidy of Rs.78,000, and banks are offering a 10-year repayment period. But there’s very little consumer awareness about this,” **Mr.Shyju Abraham, Divisional Manager - Retail Loans, Canara Bank**, said.

“In Chennai, dealing with Resident Welfare Associations (RWA) is a challenge. They find it difficult to convince banks to provide loans without guarantees, as there is a question of who will handle the payments if the RWA president changes. Banks must consider making the process easier for RWAs to avail loan benefits,” said **Mr.Ashok Kumar, President, Tamil Nadu Solar Energy Developers Association (TNSEDA)**.

He also pointed out that the Tamil Nadu Solar Power Policy 2019 has not been updated since then.

“For effective implementation, there should be a framework on how this policy will be implemented and updated as per the current scenario.”

**Mr.Vinodhan R.K., Former Director Technical**, in response, said that the TNGECL is developing an integrated Renewable Energy Policy that includes solar, wind, hydro, and biogas solutions.

Senior journalists Ms. Kavitha Muralidharan, Jency Samuel, Mr. S. Guruvamikanathan, R. Srikanth, Vincent D'souza, and RJ Bhavithra Krishnaswamy were a part of the panel which discussed the need for greater collaboration between media, communities, government and institutions.

**Mr.Vishnu Mohan Rao**, Programme Lead, CAG, reaffirmed the call for continued engagement.

“This seminar is a starting point. One major challenge is the operational maintenance of rooftop solar systems, especially when it comes to shared rooftops. Journalists are not just messengers—they are enablers of transformation. We all need to work together to generate greater awareness about the subject and encourage people to opt for rooftop solar energy solutions.”

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## About Us



**Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG)** is a 39 -year-old non-profit, non-political, professional organisation that works towards protecting citizens' rights in consumer and environmental issues and promoting good governance processes including transparency, accountability and participatory decision-making.



**Poovulagin Nanbargal** is an environmental organisation working independently in Tamil Nadu for more than 30 years now. It deals with environmental issues, natural conservation, and developmental issues based on a scientifically constructive approach.



**Asar Social Impact Advisors** is a startup in the environment and social justice impact space with a commitment to building climate resilience and ambitious climate action. e identify challenges and opportunities, research them, verify ground truths, and understand local contexts, in order to build innovative strategies that are rooted in reality.