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Renewable Energy Source - Solar Energy by Aksharadeoll

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Solar energy is the most readily available source of energy. It does not belong to anybody and is, therefore, free. It is also the most important of the non-conventional sources of energy because it is non-polluting and, therefore, helps in lessening the greenhouse effect.

Solar energy has been used since prehistoric times, but in a most primitive manner. Before 1970, some research and development was carried out in a few countries to exploit solar energy more efficiently, but most of this work remained mainly academic. After the dramatic rise in oil prices in the 1970s, several countries began to formulate extensive research and development programmes to exploit solar energy.

When we hang out our clothes to dry in the sun, we use the energy of the sun. In the same way, solar panels absorb the energy of the sun to provide heat for cooking and for heating water. Such systems are available in the market and are being used in homes and factories.

In the next few years it is expected that millions of households in the world will be using solar energy as the trends in USA and Japan show. In India too, the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency and the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources are formulating a programme to have solar energy in more than a million households in the next few years. However, the peopleâ€™s initiative is essential if the programme is to be successful.

India is one of the few countries with long days and plenty of sunshine, especially in the Thar desert region. This zone, having abundant solar energy available, is suitable for harnessing solar energy for a number of applications. In areas with similar intensity of solar radiation, solar energy could be easily harnessed. Solar thermal energy is being used in India for heating water for both industrial and domestic purposes. A 140 MW integrated solar power plant is to be set up in Jodhpur but the initial expense incurred is still very high.

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