



The International Solar Alliance Announces the Selection of its third Director General

4 November 2024 | New Delhi, India: The seventh session of the ISA Assembly in progress in New Delhi today selected Mr Ashish Khanna from the Republic of India as its third Director General. The other office candidates included Mr Wisdom Ahiataku —Togobo from Ghana and Mr Gosaye Mengistie Abayneh from Ethiopia.

The Director General of ISA plays a crucial role in supporting the Assembly in advancing the International Solar Alliance mandate. This includes supporting to Member Countries in addressing common challenges and engaging in coordinated action to scale up the deployment of solar energy globally.

The outgoing Director General, Dr Ajay Mathur, wishing his successor luck, said, "As I step down from my role, I want to take a moment to welcome Mr Ashish Khanna to this incredible journey ahead warmly. Serving in this position has been an honour, and I am confident you will bring unique energy, vision, and passion to this office and role. Your leadership will undoubtedly steer this Alliance to new heights, building on the progress achieved while carving your legacy. The challenges ahead are great, but so are the opportunities. My simple advice is to trust your intuition, lean on the support around you, and know that you have the skills to make a lasting impact. I wish you the very best as you begin this new chapter."

As part of the selection process, the three candidates presented to the ISA Member Country representatives, focusing on their vision for a solar energy-dominant world and the role of the Alliance.

Mr Ashish Khanna, Director General – Designate, ISA, expounding on his plans for expanding ISA's reach and impact, said the focus has to shift from 'what' to 'how' as most countries are aware of what needs to be done, but require assistance in reaching those goals. He added that the Alliance will benefit from participating in international fora, where the motivation should be twofold: to explore collaborations, work together, and learn from each other's experiences. Moving forward, he said he looks forward to building on what is working well and grooming existing partnerships, and he stressed purity of intent and passion for results."

Dr Ajay Mathur, who has led the Alliance since 2021, will conclude his tenure on 14 March 2025. Under his leadership, the Alliance has achieved significant milestones, including a monumental rise in Member & Signatory Countries tallying at 103 and 17, respectively, the completion and launch of demonstration projects, and the successful identification of 50 start-ups with potential to dynamise their countries' journey towards solar energy. His contributions have laid strong foundations to equal challenges that global solar deployment presents under the broad ambits of investments – via the Global Solar Facility, infrastructure through setting up of solar demonstration projects, and indigenisation – via the STAR-Centres and other ISA programme-related trainings.

Across the three priority areas of work: advocacy and analytics, capacity building, and programmatic support, drawing a spotlight on the Alliance's accomplishments under his leadership.

- He steered the aggregation of 9.5 GW of project proposals, including notable projects like a 360 MW solar PV bid in Cuba and a 400 MW approval in Ethiopia. Guided the preparation of feasibility studies for ground-mounted projects and solar rooftop DPRs in

Comoros, Sao Tome & Principe, and Bangladesh. Pilot projects are advancing in Ethiopia, and assessments are ongoing in nine countries. Mini-grid assessments in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Guinea, as well as solar water pumping studies, were completed in 10 countries.

- **The STAR-C initiative**, the stellar capacity-building ISA offering, has trained over 900 professionals through six centres, with 10 new centres planned. Regulatory workshops in eight countries have trained over 265 policymakers. ISA also drives knowledge management through its Knowledge Series, Solar Data Portals, and Green Hydrogen Innovation Centre. Flagship reports Easing of Doing Solar and World Solar Reports on Technology, Investment and Finance have been published annually since 2020 and 2022, respectively. The latest addition to this repertoire, 'Unleashing the Role of Solar: In Advancing Economic, Social, And Environmental Equity' report, focuses on exploring the global adoption of solar (and renewables) through the lens of socio-economic and developmental priorities for each archetype, utilising a diverse set of indicators across finance, technology, and policy enablers.
- Among the innovative financial tools, **ISA's Global Solar Facility**, launched at COP27, aims to unlock \$50M in commercial capital for underserved regions, with its first project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While the **SolarX Startup Challenge**, launched at COP27, mentors 50 scalable solar solutions from Africa and Asia-Pacific, supporting the creation of a project pipeline. ISA continues to lead global collaboration on solar energy through events at the Conference of Parties. Since COP27, ISA has been hosting a solar-focussed space, **The Solar Hub**, and took its advocacy efforts a notch up with the launch of the first **International Solar Festival** in September 2024, further cementing its role in the global solar transition.

Speaking of his legacy, Dr Mathur noted, "I would like to be remembered as the Director General who provided some degree of direction for the globalisation of solar energies while in office at the Alliance."

About the International Solar Alliance

The International Solar Alliance is an international organisation with 120 Member and Signatory countries. It works with governments to improve energy access and security worldwide and promote solar power as a sustainable transition to a carbon-neutral future. ISA's mission is to unlock US\$1 trillion of investments in solar by 2030 while reducing the cost of the technology and its financing. It promotes the use of solar energy in the agriculture, health, transport, and power generation sectors.

ISA Member Countries are driving change by enacting policies and regulations, sharing best practices, agreeing on common standards, and mobilising investments. Through this work, ISA has identified, designed and tested new business models for solar projects; supported governments to make their energy legislation and policies solar-friendly through Ease of Doing Solar analytics and advisory; pooled demand for solar technology from different countries; and drove down costs; improved access to finance by reducing the risks and making the sector more attractive to private investment; increased access to solar training, data and insights for solar engineers and energy policymakers. With advocacy for solar-powered solutions, ISA aims to transform lives, bring clean, reliable, and affordable energy to communities worldwide, fuel sustainable growth, and improve quality of life.

With the signing and ratification of the ISA Framework Agreement by 15 countries on 6 December 2017, ISA became the first international intergovernmental organisation to be headquartered in India. ISA is partnering with multilateral development banks (MDBs), development financial institutions (DFIs), private and public sector organisations, civil society, and other international institutions to deploy cost-effective and transformational solutions

through solar energy, especially in the least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

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