

**PM gives green light to E-cars, green economy initiatives**

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam Friday said Prime Minister Imran Khan has given green signal for adopting electric cars and green economy initiatives.

The prime minister while chairing the first meeting of the Committee on Climate Change was presented a comprehensive and detailed briefing on researches made on environment friendly impacts and economic benefits of electric cars, he said while talking to media persons here.

The Prime Minister has directed to form a policy and mechanism for adopting electric-cars within 15 days, he added.

Amin said, "There has been a trend that around 60 per cent of the world countries started shifting automobiles to modern electric cars which release around 70 % less emissions. However, countries like China and India among others have set targets for 2030. Therefore, the prime minister has been apprised to devise a mechanism for setting up targets and policy making to adopt electric cars."

Pakistan, he said, would shift 30 per cent of its existing vehicles on electric cars till 2030 whereas the prime minister has directed to formulate a policy and mechanism for the process in implementing electric cars project.

"There are four major benefits of electric cars: the import of oil will be reduced and the country will be able to save US\$2 billion in terms of oil expenses, eco-friendly technology to reduce vehicular emissions to a reasonable level, opportunity to become electric car exporter like China which is a leader in this market, it can help generate green economy," the adviser said mentioning the benefits of the project.

Lithium Ion batteries are another potential component in green energy solution which is getting cheaper day by day and has become a useful technology applied in the electric cars.

"We are working to introduce Lithium Ion batteries in the market and will start manufacturing it where the existing battery producers could easily chip in this technology. The CNG stations will be transformed into E-car charging stations," he added.

The committee meeting was a high profile session where chief ministers of all the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan, Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, commerce, planning ministers and other stakeholders participated.

He said 'green rickshaw' scheme has been started where various banks have been taken on board to provide subsidized the scheme. "It is a zero noise and pollution rickshaw and a completely eco-friendly, cheap source of transport. It is a step towards twenty first century," he added.

The committee discussed smog issue erupted in Lahore where the World Bank's US\$ 300 million project is mulled over and decided to be put on ground in three months, he said, adding "Around

thirty new air quality monitoring stations will be set up across Lahore to have credible air quality data.”

He said in order to mitigate smog effects we had imposed ban on brick kilns and stubble burning where the ban would be maintained this year. However, some of the brick kilns were converted to eco-friendly zigzag technology and would be assisted to convert the rest. “Punjab biomass company has been set up which will buy stubble from farmers and sell it to paper manufacturing industries,” he told media persons.

Another significant issue, Amin said was brought under consideration as this year Gilgit Baltistan (GB) received 40 per cent more rains and snowfall than last year which had resulted in more floods risk owing to predicted extreme hot weather during the ongoing year.

“All the provinces through their chief ministers in the meeting have been timely sensitized about the impending floods risk and have been asked to make requisite precautionary measures,” the adviser said.

There is another lurking issue of the Shisper Glacier in GB which is a giant glacier surged up to 6km in 3 months where a huge glacial lake is also formed at its top. However, due to water discharge of the glacial lake the risk for glacial flooding has been mitigated, he added.

“Glacial Lake Outburst Flooding (GLOF-II) project is going to be announced after Eid which will help establish 30 new glacial monitoring stations to monitor 2500 glaciers of the country,” he said.

The ‘10 Billion Tree Tsunami’ project, he said, was also discussed in the committee meeting where all provinces agreed and signed up the programme with mass consensus. It is a unique plan which has improved the country’s identity around the globe all international institutes like the WWF and IUCN have appreciated this project.

Earlier, there is meeting with the Army Chief General Qamar Javaid Bajwa who extended his full support for the ‘10 Billion Tree Tsunami’, he added.

To a question, he said academia, corporate sector and policymakers in unison have done detailed research work where the LUMS scientists conducted two-year-long research for implementing electric cars.

Amin said that the ministry is working out a monitoring system for local governments to ensure success ‘clean green Pakistan’ programme whereas we are also looking for international financing for the project.—APP