



## **Anil Kakodkar wants govt to follow France, China on nuclear power addition**

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**explore all possible options to achieve our energy targets," Kakodkar said.**



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Former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission [Anil Kakodkar](#) has called for emulating France and China to add [nuclear power](#) capacity so that we become self-sufficient in energy.

The noted nuclear scientist while appreciating the ongoing efforts to augment nuclear power capacity, said the pace in which it needs to go forward is lacking.

"We need to ramp up our nuclear power capacities the way France or even for that matter, China did many years back," Kakodkar told PTI in an interview on the sidelines of his book launch.

Stating that more energy consumption can improve the quality of life, he said this is needed more in rural areas. "But to achieve this it is necessary that cheaper power is made available. We need to explore all possible options to achieve our energy targets," Kakodkar said.

The Department of Atomic Energy has set a target of 63 gw of installed nuclear power capacity by the turn of 2032. But the 22

operational nuclear power plants currently produces only 6,780 mw. Of this, 18 reactors are PHWRs (pressurised heavy water reactors) which all have 95 percent value addition done indigenously.

On the slow progress of the three-stage nuclear programme, Kakodkar said, "when it was formulated by Dr Homi Bhabha in the 1950s, uranium availability was very low but thorium was in abundance. The rationale of the programme is still valid but we need to see how things have changed over the years."

Since most developed countries have nearly stopped adding nuclear capacities, uranium is available in abundance now, giving us an opportunity to explore to ramp up capacities faster by setting up more uranium-fuelled plants.

The first step of the three-stage programme involves building indigenously engineered PHWRs fueled by natural uranium. In the second stage, fast breeder reactors (FBRs) would use a mixed oxide fuel made from plutonium-239 which is recovered by reprocessing the spent fuel from the first stage and natural uranium, and the third stage includes an advanced nuclear power system involving a mix of thorium-232 and uranium-233-fuelled reactors.

It may be noted that the government has already approved a plan to develop 10 new indigenous PHWRs by the Nuclear [Power Corporation](#).

"We are moving in the right direction but then the willingness and the aggression has to be there. We cannot depend on fossil fuels or other renewable sources like solar, wind and hydro, to meet the huge energy demand. What we need is a mix of everything," the Padma Vibhushan awardee added.

The government has set a target of 175 gw from renewables by 2022, of which nearly 100 gw are expected to come from solar. As of end June, 80.46 gw of renewables has been installed.

Over the weekend, AEC chairman KN Vyas launched a book: 'Fire and Fury: Transforming India's Strategic Identity', penned by Kakodkar and Suresh Gangotra, the senior technical advisor to the AEC chairman. The book chronicles the many inflection points of the nation's nuclear programme through the eyes of the noted nuclear scientist.

