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# Eye on clean energy, government aims to build small modular N-reactors

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NEW DELHI: Recognising the critical role of nuclear power in India's clean energy transition, the government on Sunday said the country is taking steps for development of small modular reactors (SMR) with up to 300 MW capacity that may not just be cost effective but also simpler and safer as compared to large nuclear plants.

Referring to the move, science and atomic energy minister Jitendra Singh called upon the private sector and startups to explore development of this critical technology within India.

Addressing a workshop on SMR, organised by government think tank Niti Aayog and department of atomic energy, Singh said as the country has already taken steps for clean energy transition with penetration of non-fossil based energy resources to achieve net-zero emission by 2070,

nuclear power in terms of base load power can play a big role in the de-carbonisation strategy.

Being mobile and agile technology, SMR can be factory-built, unlike the conventional nuclear reactors that are built on-site, and can significantly save construction time. It's a promising technology in industrial de-carbonisation, especially where there is a requirement of reliable and continuous supply of power.

On India's potential in the nuclear energy sector, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) director general Rafael Mariano Grossi recently in an interview told TOI that the country has all the technological capabilities. "I think India has what many others don't... It has a diversified fleet of reactors with different technologies... I believe that India has an advantage and I hope

it will come to fruition," said Grossi who is expected to be in India within the next few months to look into the country's nuclear energy programme.

Singh at the workshop noted that the exploration of new clean energy options is in tune with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadmap for clean energy transition through bold climate commitments which are reflected in the country's updated 'nationally determined contributions' (NDCs) - climate action targets - under the Paris Agreement.