


Policy Forum - Electric Chaiwallas

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Recommended Citation

Lalloobhoy Battiwala, "Policy Forum - Electric Chaiwallas", NAPSNet Policy Forum, May 21, 2014, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/policy-forum-electric-chaiwallas/>

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1 April 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

Kirk R. Smith wrote in an e-mail on his trip in Odisha, 'Another unforeseen revelation occurred on the trip, however. On the 3-hour drive back to the airport in the evening, the car driver pointed out to us that all the "chaiwallahs" (tea sellers) along the highway now used ICs (Induction Cook stoves). We stopped at the first one and sure enough, he used his IC as much as he could. Cheaper and faster he said. He was using an LPG stove at the moment, however, which he said was because the voltage had dropped. Indeed, the lights brightened and he shifted back the IC while we chatted. LPG is his backup, IC is his main (such commercial users do not get subsidized LPG). I asked him what his wife used at home -- he bought her an IC he said, which is her primary stove now. And what did she use before -- biomass. Clearly, in this case, familiarity at work helped make it become more comfortable at home to take on such a different technology. (See photo below of the chaiwallah making IC tea at his roadside stand....."'



II. Indian contribution to paris 2015

From lakri to induction cooking. Just what I had expected and hoped to hear.

I had an idea tailor-made (no, chaiwalla-made) for Narendra Modi: distribute 5 million induction cookstoves (IC) free to chaiwallas in India where grid electricity is available at chai time.

5 million chai stoves will serve some 500 million customers, the entire adult population of India in reach of grid electricity (at tea time at least).

I will write a serious policy proposal with arguments and cost-benefit estimates. (Half page, 10-pt font.)

Even claim GHG avoidance worth roughly 200 million tCO₂e. (Average 40 kg of open fire air-dry wood replaced, and gross emissions of 200 kgCO₂e at 20-year GWP avoided, per day, 300 days per year, or 60 tCO₂e per chaiwalla. Adjustment for charcoal, kerosene and LPG substitution and GHG emissions from power generation at the marginal fuel-mix). Some PhDs can do leakage debates. My friend Eric Martinot is championing 'No Rooftop Left Behind' for PV installations. Mr Modi could direct NTPC to lease 1 kWp PV rooftops to every chaiwalla with an IC stove. Competitive with the grid for peak use, of course with LPG or kerosene, and gives shelter for chaiwallas and their customers. We know Mr Modi's solar achievements in Gujarat. This would be a crowning goal, another Convenient Action in the face of Inconvenient Truth. And 5 GW grid-interactive plus off-grid PV will deliver more peak capacity, within a year or two, than all the new nukes in the next decade.

Himalayan glacier loss stopped, Pachauri will dutifully claim, standing next to Modi.

Sure, some expert arms will have to be twisted to modify the Kyoto calculus on carbon (20-year GWP, black carbon, non-renewable biomass), but that's what experts are for. At a carbon price of even 12 Euros or 1,000 INR per tCO₂e, this scheme will bring some 200 billion INR per year, enough to start putting 1 kWp PV systems for farm irrigation. Any Gujarati has to love that.

III. REFERENCE

[The Observer Research Foundation: Energy New Monitor, "From a Corner Light", Vol. x Issue. 42](#)

IV. NAUTILUS INVITES YOUR RESPONSES

The Nautilus Peace and Security Network invites your responses to this report. Please leave a comment below or send your response to: nautilus@nautilus.org. Comments will only be posted if they include the author's name and affiliation.

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