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International Conference on Energy and Water for Sustainable Environment at Pondicherry University

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The International Conference on Energy and Water for Sustainable Environment (ICEWSE 2025) was successfully inaugurated at Pondicherry University, India. The session began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, setting an auspicious tone for the proceedings and symbolizing the pursuit of knowledge.

Prof. R. Arun Prasath, UNESCO Chair (RECSO) and Convenor of ICEWSE 2025, welcomed all dignitaries, delegates, and participants. He underscored the historic nature of this collaboration, notably the partnership between Pondicherry University, the Centre for South Asia Water Management at the University of Moratuwa, and the South Asia Foundation under the UNESCO Chair activity. Prof. Arun highlighted the conference's theme focused on sustainable synergies between energy and water, and called for urgent global shifts toward carbon-neutral technologies. He pointed out that it is unfortunate that leaders of rich developed nations continue to ignore overwhelming scientific evidence and the urgent need for collective action, choosing instead to prioritize

profits and business as usual. Prof. Arun Prasath reiterate the profound truth of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” —the world is one family. Mother Divine Earth has her own natural processes to restore balance and respond to climate change. The Divine forces do not differentiate between rich and poor, or between developed, developing, and underdeveloped nations. The impact will be felt universally, and severely, if humanity fails to honour international commitments made in the international platforms such as the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, Glasgow Pact, and Paris Agreement, -which aim to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He addressed the critical role of SAARC nations in renewable energy, reflecting on India’s and the region’s ambitious targets. He emphasized the university’s commitment to sustainability, notably releasing the roadmap for net-zero carbon emissions by 2035. Prof. Arun concluded his address by celebrating international cooperation, regional partnerships, and the vision of “the world is one family”—as guiding principles for the conference.

Dr. Benno Böer (UNESCO, New Delhi) and H.E. Mahishini Colonne (High Commissioner of Sri Lanka) greeted participants through video messages, affirming international support for the conference’s mission. Prof. B. M. Jaffar Ali (Dean, MSGET) delivered the felicitation address. In the inaugural session Prof. P. Prakash Babu, Vice Chancellor released ICEWSE-2025 Abstract Booklet and another booklet on University’s ambitious net-zero carbon target by 2035.

In the presidential address, Prof. P. Prakash Babu, highlighted the institution’s legacy in research and academia. He applauded the international and multidisciplinary nature of ICEWSE 2025, which brings together expertise from academia, government, and industry. The Vice Chancellor emphasized the collective responsibility to advance the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, especially clean water, affordable energy, and climate action. He called upon the delegates to actively participate, generate new ideas, and foster collaborations that will have lasting global impact.

Madam France Marquet of Principal Trustee of Madanjeet Singh Foundation reflected on the vision and legacy of the late Madanjeet Singh. She praised the collaborative spirit fostered by the South Asia Foundation in building educational and research linkages across the region. Madam France encouraged young researchers to play an active role, pointing out that their ideas and curiosity are key to sustainable future solutions. She appreciated Prof. R. Arun Prasath’s interest in organising the joint event/s between the institutes established by SAF under MSF. She warmly commended the organizing teams and wished for fruitful dialogue and successful outcomes at ICEWSE 2025.

Toine van Megen of Auroville Consulting brought insights on renewable energy progress and sustainable urban practices, recognizing long-standing collaborations with the Department of Green Energy Technology.

Prof. Lalith Rajapakse of the UNESCO Chair at the University of Moratuwa & convenor ICEWSE 2025 addressed the global relevance of the event, emphasizing the importance of transformative research partnerships and knowledge exchange in achieving sustainability goals. The formal session concluded with a vote of thanks from Prof. D. S. Sharada expressing gratitude to all dignitaries, participants, and organizing teams for their unwavering support and enthusiasm.

The inaugural event powerfully set the tone for ICEWSE 2025, with speakers reaffirming the need for international partnerships and research to realize sustainable energy and water solutions. The session showcased the conference's core mission: enabling innovation, dialogue, and commitment to a shared global future. With high-level engagement and meaningful dialogue, ICEWSE 2025 stands as a testament to the drive for collective responsibility in achieving a sustainable world for all.

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