

PM's green tips: Cycling, recycling

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New Delhi: Emphasizing that the threat of climate change can be countered by making lifestyle changes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday suggested some energy-saving practices such as switching off streetlights on full-moon nights and using bicycles at least once a week.

The PM suggested the option of switching off streetlights on moonlit nights could be explored after taking "people into confidence". He said steps like using bicycles once a week, like on Sundays, could go a long way in saving energy and the climate.

While suggesting the options at a conference of state

environment ministers, the PM took a dig at possible critics of his ideas, saying they would accuse him of being an "agent of cycle manufacturers".

He even told the audience that many people in 'English-influenced' urban societies would laugh at such suggestions and would "entertain you for another 48 hours (through TV debate or general discussions) as they are people of a different mindset".

While not discounting modern technological methods to reduce carbon emissions, Modi stressed the traditional means to save energy, including recycling.

Elaborating some tradi-

tional practices, the PM referred to the tradition in villages where grandmothers would teach children how to thread a needle on full-moon nights. He said the present generation remains cut off from these.

The PM urged urban bodies to revive such traditional practices. The thread-needle practice, he said, could be celebrated as "festival" on 'Purnima'.

"You can imagine how much energy can be saved by switching off streetlights on full-moon nights. If you present this idea in terms of cutting 'carbon emission', the so-called learned people would call it a new idea," Modi said.



Blaming lifestyle changes as the reason for environmental degradation, he said increasing consumerism was at the root of climate crisis. "I have said it many times that we are making all the rules to curb carbon emissions ... but we are not willing to change our lifestyle. In the root of the problem is that humanity kept increasing its consumption and nature is harmed most where consumption is maximum," he said.

He emphasized the recycling of waste water and other material, including old clothes, and said how the "culture of recycle and reuse" was not new for India.

The environment ministry on the occasion released a booklet on 'low-carbon lifestyles'.