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(Energy Conservation : It Doesn't Cost. It saves)

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## **Time to build robust grid system, says TN energy secretary**

**Business Standard: December 11, 2018**

*Stating this during the eighth edition of TANEnergy Summit 2018 here, Nasimuddin said the recent cyclone had damaged 2.25 lakh electric posts, hence the need has arisen to build a robust grid system for traditional and renewable energy.*

Principal secretary to the Department of Energy Mohammed Nasimuddin Tuesday said it was high time the electric cable systems in Tamil Nadu were strengthened by way of redesigning and reinforcing the electricity posts.

Stating this during the eighth edition of TANEnergy Summit 2018 here, Nasimuddin said the recent cyclone had damaged 2.25 lakh electric posts, hence the need has arisen to build a robust grid system for traditional and renewable energy.

Speaking on the occasion, convenor (energy panel) of FICCI Tamil Nadu State Council and managing director of EDAC Engineering M Nandakumar said the renewable energy sector has a potential to create an economy of USD 12 trillion besides providing jobs to millions of people.

Chairman and managing director of Voltech Group M Umapathi said Tamil Nadu has already become a surplus energy state and that if renewable energy were harnessed properly, the state could sell the surplus energy to other states.

## **Tangedco rejigs PPA with private thermal power firms**

**Economic Times: December 6, 2018**

*Tangedco has re-jigged power purchase agreement with private thermal plants as the power tariff has been falling each year. In 2014, Tangedco signed a PPA for 25 years with Adani's solar power company at 7.01 per unit. Since then the tariff has fallen to 3 per unit.*

Tangedco has re-jigged power purchase agreement (PPA) with private thermal plants as the power tariff has been falling each year. In 2014, Tangedco signed a PPA for 25 years with Adani's solar power company at 7.01 per unit. Since then the tariff has fallen to 3 per unit.

As the renewable power tariff has been falling, Tangedco could not evacuate power generated by private thermal units as the tariff is higher. Following this, thermal companies as well as solar companies have given discounts to Tangedco from 1 to 1.5 a unit. Still the tariff is high and only if the demand is very high, power from these companies will be evacuated.

"We have received discounts from private thermal units like IL&FS and others so that the tariff will be with other power sources. They have agreed to provide power at around 4 per unit while their original tariff was above 5 per unit for 5 years," said a senior Tangedco official.

Tamil Nadu is not the first state to ask the private companies to cut tariffs. Earlier, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, UP and Jharkhand had asked the thermal as well as renewable (mostly



solar) power firms to lower their tariffs as the rate has been falling each year and touched 2.42 per unit in Rajasthan.

It is only from thermal units, Tangedco has been able to get a discount on its tariff but with renewable power it has failed due to the must-run status. "These renewable energy PPAs are having 'must run' status as per their agreements. If they declare availability, we have to buy their power at the contracted rate, even though high. To accommodate this power we sometimes have to scale down thermal power, including from our own units," said the official.

"Private companies are facing a problem as the discoms are seeking to lower the tariff. But the material cost as well as land costs are high and so, we need such tariff," said a solar company owner.

Discoms like Tangedco will have to evacuate power as per the merit rate order. "It is from the lowest rate we start evacuating power and if the demand is high as in summer, we will be evacuating power even at the higher rate," said the Tangedco official.

For private thermal units, it is the coal shortage which is a main problem. "We are importing coal and the payment is only in US dollar. Recently the rupee depreciated against dollar and our cost per unit was very high. But to make the discom evacuate power from us, we had to give a discount," said an official of private power company.

## **CM says 'no' to scrapping free power scheme**

The Hindu : December 5, 2018

### **The move was proposed as part of deficit-reduction measures**

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami is said to have shot down a suggestion by officials to withdraw a scheme providing 100 units of free electricity bi-monthly to domestic consumers in the State.

Ever since the AIADMK government retained power in the May 2016 Assembly elections, the concession of free power for the domestic category is being enjoyed by about 2.1 crore consumers, regardless of the level of consumption. Of a total tariff subsidy of Rs. 7,732 crore for the current year, the domestic category accounts for around Rs. 3,024 crore, of which the free power component is around Rs. 2,477 crore, according to an order issued by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) a few days ago.

### **Slab-wise break-up**

Of the component of Rs.2,477 crore for the domestic category, the slab-wise break-up of the tariff subsidy, as worked out by the TNERC, is as follows: Around Rs. 532 crore for 81.77 lakh consumers, who consume up to 100 units bimonthly; 934 crore for about 62.3 lakh who consume more than 100 units and up to 200 units; Rs. 889 crore for approximately 59.3 lakh who consume above 200 units and up to 500 units and Rs. 122 crore for 8.1 lakh who consume above 500 units.

As part of efforts to bring down the revenue deficit of the State government, several measures, including expenditure control, are being contemplated. As per budget estimates for the current year, the revenue deficit is about ₹17,500 crore.

It was against this backdrop that the withdrawal of the concession of free power of 100 units had been mooted by officials. In certain quarters, an alternative suggestion to exempt at least those consuming over 500 units bi-monthly from the concession was made. But the Chief Minister was reportedly not inclined to disturb the present scheme.



## **India to add 10,000 Mw of renewable energy generation capacity next fiscal**

**Economic Times: December 11, 2018**

*The capacity addition is expected to increase the share of renewable energy in overall generation to 10 per cent by 2019-20 and further to 13 per cent by 2021-22*

India is likely to commission renewable energy projects with a capacity of 9,000 Megawatt (Mw) in the current financial year (2018-19) and 10,000 Mw in the next fiscal ending March 2020, based on the trend of projects awarded over the past two calendar years.

"The projects awarded by the central nodal agencies and state distribution utilities in Calendar year 2017 and 2018 provide a reasonably healthy visibility for RE capacity addition in FY2019 and FY2020 with expected addition of about 9 GW in FY2019 and about 10 GW in FY2020," research and ratings agency ICRA said today.

The capacity addition is expected to increase the share of renewable energy in the country's overall generation to 10 per cent by 2019-20 and further to 13 per cent by 2021-22 based on the capacity addition forecasts.

The share of renewables in the overall generation mix has risen from 5.6 per cent in 2014-15 to 7.8 per cent last fiscal. This was mainly owing to the large-sized capacity addition in the wind and solar power segments during this period on the back of policy support from the government and the improved tariff competitiveness of wind and solar power against conventional power sources.

The renewable energy sector remains exposed to near-term challenges arising due to the cost impact of safeguard duty and rising interest rates, coupled with transmission network availability, ICRA said. The average bid tariffs discovered in the auctions for wind and solar projects in 2018 has so far remained at Rs 2.6-2.7 per unit, increasing slightly from the low of Rs 2.4 per unit.

"This uptrend in bid tariffs was partly driven by factors such as cost headwinds arising from rising interest rates, increase in capital costs due to imposition of taxes and duties, rupee depreciation against dollar for imported equipment; and rising equipment costs," the agency said.

Amid the imposition of safeguard duty, the recent order issued by the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) approving the GST claims raised by solar power developers is a positive development for the sector. ICRA, however, said a time lag in implementation of such pass-through of cost increases cannot be ruled out, given the resistance shown by the end off-takers in such cases in the past.

## **Haryana govt starts new scheme to recover pending power dues**

**Economic Times: December 11, 2018**

***Under the scheme DHBVN is giving relaxation to consumers falling under 20kW domestic (DS) and up to 5kW non-domestic categories***

The Haryanagovernment has started a new scheme for defaulters who have not cleared their pending electricity dues since 2005.

Under the scheme, which will end on December 31, the Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam(DHBVN) is giving relaxation to consumers falling under 20kW domestic (DS) and up to 5kW non-domestic categories. Pending bills prior to 2005 have been waived off in view of the provisions of the waiver scheme.



A spokesman of the DHBVN said the scheme would also be applicable for settlement of theft cases, provided the consumer deposits 50% of the assessed amount without surcharge and the compounding amount in full and withdraws the court case, if any.

The consumers whose cases are at present in any judicial forum on account of billing disputes will not be covered under this scheme. However, if the consumer withdraws the case, he will be eligible to take benefits of the scheme.

Applicant or consumer shall be required to submit KYC documents, to avail the benefits of the scheme

## **India's wind power potential declining due to global warming: Study**

**Economic Times: December 6, 2018**

***The majority of wind turbines are being built in southern and western India to best capture the winds of the summer Indian monsoon, the seasonal weather pattern then brings heavy rains and winds to the subcontinent***

The warming of the Indian Ocean due to global climate change may be causing a slow decline in India's wind power potential, according to a study.

India, the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases behind China and the US, is investing billions in wind power and has set the ambitious goal to double its capacity in the next five years, said researchers from the Harvard John A Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS).

The majority of wind turbines are being built in southern and western India to best capture the winds of the summer Indian monsoon, the seasonal weather pattern then brings heavy rains and winds to the subcontinent.

The study, published in the journal *Science Advances*, found that the Indian monsoon is weakening as a result of warming waters in the Indian Ocean, leading to a steady decline in wind-generated power.

"We found that although India is investing heavily in wind power to tackle climate change and air pollution issues, the benefits of these substantial investments are vulnerable to the changing climate," said Meng Gao, a postdoctoral fellow at SEAS and the Harvard China Project.

The research calculated the wind power potential in India over the past four decades and found that trends in wind power are tied to the strength of the Indian Summer Monsoon.

In fact, 63 per cent of the annual energy production from wind in India comes from the monsoon winds of spring and summer, researchers said.

Over the past 40 years, that energy potential has declined about 13 per cent, suggesting that as the monsoon weakened, wind power systems installed during this time became less productive, they said.

Western India, including the Rajasthan and Maharashtra states, where investment in wind power is the highest, has seen the steepest decline over that time period, researchers said.

However, other regions, particularly in eastern India, saw smaller or no decline, they said.

"Our findings can provide suggestions on where to build more wind turbines to minimise the influences of climate change," said Michael B McElroy, a professor at SEAS.

The researchers aim to explore what will happen to wind power potential in India in the future, using projections from climate models.



## **Air pollution killed 12.4 lakh people in India last year: Report**

Economic Times: December 6, 2018

***The average life expectancy in India would have been 1.7 years higher if the air pollution level was less than the minimal level causing health loss***

One in every eight deaths in India was due to air pollution in 2017, according to a recent report by medical journal Lancet

The report said that 12.4 lakh deaths in India in 2017 were due to air pollution, which included 6.7 lakh deaths due to outdoor particulate matter air pollution and 4.8 lakh deaths due to household air pollution.

"Over half of the deaths due to air pollution were in persons less than 70 years of age," it said.

The report added that with 18 per cent of the global population, India suffered 26 per cent of premature mortality and health loss attributable to air pollution, globally.

The average life expectancy in India would have been 1.7 years higher if the air pollution level was less than the minimal level causing health loss, with the highest increases in Rajasthan (2.5 years), Uttar Pradesh (2.2 years), and Haryana (2.1 years).

"In 2017, 77 per cent population of India was exposed to ambient particulate matter PM2.5 above 40  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , the recommended limit by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards," the report said.

According to the report, the mean ambient particulate matter PM2.5 annual exposure of 90  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in India in 2017 was one of the highest in the world. And the highest PM2.5 exposure level was in Delhi, followed by Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Haryana.

While the proportion of households using solid fuels has been improving in India, 56 per cent of the population still used solid fuels in 2017. "This proportion was higher in the less developed states with over two-thirds of the population in most Empowered Action Group states using solid fuels for cooking," the report said.

The disability-adjusted life year (DALY) rates, due to household air pollution, varied 145-fold among Indian states in 2017, and varied sixfold for outdoor particulate matter air pollution.

"The DALYs attributable to air pollution in India in 2017 for major non-communicable diseases, which included chronic obstructive lung disease, ischemic heart disease, stroke, diabetes and lung cancer, were at least as high as those attributable to tobacco use," the report added.

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