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## **ின் செய்திக**ள்

### **ROOFTOP SOLAR CONUNDRUM (PART - 3)**

Over time, rooftop solar installations have started challenging the traditional utility business model by altering the relationship of household and utility—and not just by reducing electricity sales. First, technological breakthroughs have increased uptake of rooftop solar, leading to more consumers moving away from the grid and minimising their dependence on the utility. Second, the sale of power (the traditional method of revenue generation) is increasingly under threat. Third, is the fear of stranded assets. (It is a contextual situation where if everyone moves away from the grid and become electricity self-sufficient, so to speak, then the existing assets will become redundant or become liabilities).

This has resulted in utilities not only in India but <u>all over the world</u>, to "fight back" rooftop solar. They are influencing regulators to dis-incentivise rooftop solar by aiming at consumers' economic and behavioural motives such as gross metering - forcing prosumers to become purely producers rather than consumers, paying a very low feed-in tariff for exported power etc. At the administrative level, slowing down of net metering installations by utilities, necessary to record export/import of power, backing down of power from RE sources by the system operator (despite the must run status) are becoming common. Consumers are delighted to be clean/green and adopt RE - but only if it is easy to implement and easy on the purse.

The above situations have occurred because regulators and utilities, in their focus, to make the latter commercially viable depend on sale of power as the main source of revenue (profit) - the most prominent entry in the tariff petition. As a result, utilities, and unfortunately regulators, have started viewing rooftop solar as threat to the traditional revenue regulation model.

What has emerged from the on-going struggle is a fundamentally flawed business model faced with technology disruption. There needs to be a debate and especially in the context of clean and renewable energy, whether the price of the product is more important than the service it provides. For example, there is no incentive (pricing) system to reward for utility performance e.g. improvement in energy efficiency nor is there a reward for promoting customer-service quality e.g. fixing of power outages quickly. Can these help utilities shift away from sales and embrace other forms of revenue generation? This is at the heart of the decoupling debate. As per the <u>Regulatory Assistance Project</u>, decoupling is "used primarily to eliminate incentives that utilities have to increase profits by increasing sales, and the corresponding disincentives that they have to avoid reductions in sales". By doing so, it allows the regulator to provide more incentives (pricing) on aspects such as energy efficiency measures by the utility, or promotion of energy conservation among its customers and less on revenue from energy sales. For example, the cost recovery through sales can be capped at say 80% while the lost revenue can be recouped if it achieved set energy conservation or improving production efficiency of inefficient power plants - foregoing setting up of more plants. This also provides the necessary teeth to the electricity regulator to dictate environmental targets in the light of advocating for "environmentally benign policies" as per the Electricity Act 2003. Also needs to be debated is, whether, in the long run, the utility will be a provider of power generation, or merely a facilitator of electricity by purely concentrating on the wires business. Consumers would do well to keep themselves abreast and participate actively in this debate.

Shifting to the Electricity Act 2003, its makers would not have imagined that the twin complementary mandates of commercial viability and promoting renewable energy would clash to threaten both the objectives from being achieved. (*CONCLUDED*)

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- Fuse Off Call Centre: Tamil Nadu and Chennai
- RTI-TANGEDCO
- TNERC & Ombudsman: 044-28411376, 28411378, 28411379
- CGRF: <u>Addresses</u>
- Pay online: TNEBNET

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# Tamil Nadu News

## Tamil Nadu signs MOUs with 4 solar power firms

The Tamil Nadu government signed memorandums of understanding with four solar power companies, which won contracts for 1500 MW. A total of 16 companies, awarded contracts, will invest Rs 9,000 crore in the coming year at the rate of Rs 6 crore per MW of solar power.

Symbolically, four solar power companies, including the lowest bidder Rasi Green, which quoted Rs 3.47 per unit, now the base price for other companies, signed the MoUs in the presence of chief minister K Palaniswami, chief secretary Girija Vadiyanathan, TNEB chairman M Saikumar and other officials at the secretariat.

These companies had bid for various capacities of solar power for the year 2017-18 and won bids after they agreed to the lowest tariff of Rs 3.47 per unit. The 16 companies, led by Raasi Green, which won the bid at Rs 3.47 per unit, will set up 100MW solar power plant in Ramanathapuram district. NLC will provide 709MW unit and six companies will sell 100MW each. Other companies have been allocated 1 to 54MW.

Rassi Green headed by G Narasimhan will be setting up the solar project with bid for 100MW at Paramakudi in Ramanthapuram district which need at least 400 acres to set up. "Many companies had bid for anywhere between Rs 3.47 and Rs 3.97 per unit. We asked other solar power companies to manage the lowest tariff and on Thursday, 15 companies, besides Raasi Green, accepted the tariff at Rs 3.47 per unit," said a senior Tangedco official.

NLC alone bid for the entire capacity for the year 2017-18 at Rs 3.97 per unit but agreed to lower it to Rs 3.47 per unit. The same day that the Tamil Nadu government signed MoUs for solar power at the rate of Rs 3.47 per unit, the tariff fell to Rs 2. 65 per unit at a solar power auction held in Gujarat. "In Tamil Nadu too from next year, the base tariff will be Rs 3 per unit for solar power as per a latest Central direction," said the official. Source: <u>The Times of India</u>, September 27, 2017 (*edited*).

## India News

## Government launches Saubhagya scheme for household electrification

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a Rs 16,320-crore scheme to supply electricity to all households by December 2018, providing free connections to the poor and at very low cost to others. Saubhagya scheme aims to improve the environment, public health, education and connectivity with the help of last-mile power connections across India.

After connecting each house with electricity, the government's next target would be to end load shedding and provide 24x7 power, said RK Singh, minister for power and renewable energy. Officials said the scheme would inject Rs 16,000 crore into the economy, create assets and generate employment. Importantly, electricity would be billed without any subsidy. Singh said states that complete the scheme by December next year would be given an additional 15% grant by the Centre as incentive. The scheme is being funded to the extent of 60% by central grants, 30% by bank loans and 10% by states.

Remote hamlets will be powered with solar panels along with five LED lamps, a DC fan, and a plug point along with repair and maintenance for five years, the government said. Under the Saubhagya scheme, electricity connections will be given free to people identified by the Socio Economic and Caste Census of 2011while others will get it for Rs 500, payable in 10 instalments in the bill, a government statement said. The scheme promises on-the-spot registration of applications, which should include an identity proof.

The scheme primarily benefits rural areas, which have the vast majority of households without power connections. Of the total outlay of Rs 16,320 crore, rural areas will get Rs 14,025 crore. The government said Rural Electrification Corp will be the nodal agency for the scheme throughout the country while public institutions and panchayats will be authorised to collect applications forms, distribute bills and collect payments in consultation with panchayati raj institutions and urban local bodies.

The scheme follows the government's mission to take electricity lines to each and every village in the country, including solar power stations in remote hamlets, which was rigorously implemented by coal and railways minister Piyush Goyal, who was earlier the minister for power, renewable energy, coal and mines.



#### FACTS

The Appellant, availed a single phase service connection for his residence. During 5/2016 assessment period, the consumer was charged for 520 units. As the consumption was high, the consumer filed a petition before the CGRF for refund of the excess amount collected. The CGRF of Chennai EDC/North dismissed the petition. Aggrieved over the order of the CGRF, the Appellant filed this appeal petition before the Electricity Ombudsman.

#### **CONTESTATIONS**

**Appellant:** As per the layman's calculation, the real current charges for the period as mentioned in the table was supposed to be Rs.1139 but the department has mentioned mistakenly as Rs.2262.

**Respondent:** During November and December 2015, heavy rain and flood occurred in Chennai Area, due to which several meters became defective. The meter was replaced and the next assessment was made as 10 units. The difference in amount of Rs.731 will be adjusted in the future CC charges. Necessary Disciplinary Proceeding have been initiated against the assessor.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND JUDGMENT**

In view of the findings, the Respondent was directed to refund the excess amount of Rs. 968 with interest as applicable to security deposit within 30 days from the date of receipt of the order. The interest was to be calculated up to the date of refund. As the Respondent had agreed to refund the excess amount and had stated that Disciplinary Proceedings had been initiated against the assessor, the Appellant informed that his petition may be closed.

## **ECC Voice**

#### மின் கணக்கீட்டில் காலத்தாமதம் – மின் வாரியத்தின் அலட்சிய போக்கு

மின்வாரியத்தின் கவனக்குறைவால் நடுத்தர மின் நுகா்வோா்கள் பாதிக்கப்படுகிறாா்கள். சுமாா் 400 முதல் 500 வரை யூனிட் பயன்படுத்தும் மின் நுகா்வோா் மின் கணக்கீட்டாளரின் காலதாமதத்தால் சுமாா் ரூ.800 அதிகமாக மின் கட்டணம் செலுத்த வேண்டிய துா்பாக்கிய நிலைக்கு தள்ளப்படுகிறாா்கள்.

உதாரணமாக, ஒரு நடுத்தர மின் நுகா்வோா் ஒரு மாதத்திற்கு 250 யூனிட் பயன்படுத்துவோா், சராசரியாக ஒரு தினத்திற்கு 8 யூனிட் உபயோகப்படுத்துவாா்கள். 2 மாதத்திற்கு ஒரு முறை மின்னளவு எடுக்கப்படும் இந்த காலத்தில், ஒரு நடுத்தர மின் நுகா்வோா் 500 யூனிட் பயன்படுத்துகிறாா்கள். மின் கணக்கீட்டாளா் சரியாக 60 நாள் முடிந்து 61வது நாள் மின்னளவு எடுக்கும்போது ஒரு நடுத்தர மின் நுகா்வோா் (60\*8) 480 யூனிட் பயன்படுத்துவாா். ஆனால், மின் கணக்கீட்டாளா் 3 நாட்கள் தாமதமாக வந்து மின்னளவு எடுத்தால் (480 + 24) 504 யூனிட், 4வது மின் கட்டணப்பிரிவிற்கு தள்ளப்படுகிறது.

இதனால், மின் நுகாவோா் கட்ட வேண்டிய மின் கட்டணம், ஒரு நாளுக்கு 8 யூனிட் வீதம் 63 நாட்களுக்கு, 63\*8=504 யூனிட்.

யூனிட் 1–100=0; யூனிட் 101–200–100\*3.50=ரூ.350; யூனிட் 200–500–300\*ரு.4.60=ரூ.1380; யூனிட் 501–504–4\*ரு.6.60=ரூ.26.40; நிர்ணயிக்கப்பட்ட கட்டணம் <mark>ரூ.50.00 (மொத்தம்=ரூ.1806.40 – சராசரி 1 யூனிட் ரூ.3.58</mark>)

இதே மின் நுகா்வோா் 60 நாட்களில் மின் கணக்கிட்டாளா் குறிப்பிட்ட நாட்களில் மின் அளவு எடுத்தால் நடுத்தர மின் நுகா்வோா் மின் கட்டணம் கட்ட வேண்டிய தொகை அதாவது ஒரு நபருக்கு 8 யூனிட் வீதம் 60 நாட்களுக்கு மின்னளவு 480 யூனிட் அதாவது ரூ.1070 ஆகிறது.

யூனிட் 1–100=0; யூனிட் 101–200–100\*2..00=ரூ.200; யூனிட் 201–480–2.80\*ரு.3.00=ரூ.840; நிர்ணயிக்கப்பட்ட கட்டணம் ரூ.30.00 (மொத்தம்=ரூ.1070 – சராசரி 1 யூனிட் ரூ.2.23).

மின்கணக்கீட்டாளர் காலத்தாமதமாக மின்னளவு எடுப்பதினால், ஒரு நடுத்தர மின் நுகர்வோர் 2 மாதத்திற்கு ஒரு முறை ரூ.1070/-மின் கட்டணம் செலுத்த வேண்டியதற்கு பதிலாக ரூ.1806/- செலுத்த வேண்டிய துர்பாக்கிய நிலைக்கு தள்ளப்படுகிறார். மின்வாரியம், நுகர்வோர் நலனை கருத்தில் கொண்டு, இந்த பிரச்சினைக்கு உரிய நடவடிக்கையினை எடுக்க வேண்டும். இவ்வாறு, அதிகமாக மின் கட்டணம் செலுத்த வேண்டிய சூழ்நிலைக்கு தள்ளப்படும் மின் நுகர்வோர்கள், அவர்களது பகுதியிலுள்ள மின் நுகர்வோர் குறைதீர் மன்றத்தினை (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum - CGRF) அணுக வேண்டும்.

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#### Initiative of



Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) is a non-profit, non-political and professional organization that works towardsprotecting citizen's rights in consumer and environmental issues and governance promoting good including processes transparency, accountability and participatory decisionmaking.



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## World News China's Solar PV Market Passes 100 GW Milestone

The National Energy Administration of China of the 13th Five-Year Plan for Renewable recently released the data that as of June the Energy Development, specifying that the country had a PV power generation country aims to add 54.5 GW in new PV powinstallation capacity of 102 GW. The coun- er generation installations by the end of try added 24.4 GW in new capacity during 2020. According to the Guideline, Gansu, the first half of this year, a year-over-year Ningxia and Xinjiang, which are suffering increase of 9 percent. After several years of from excess solar curtailment, the country is development, the country's PV power gener- expected to add 86.5 GW in new PV power ation sector finally passed the 100 GW mile- generation installations as well as 128 GW in stone, the same milestone passed earlier by new planned on-grid capacity by 2020. the hydropower and wind power sectors.

Encouraged by a series of supportive policies issued at the national level, including the poverty alleviation policy for the PV sector, the country continued to experience People's Republic of China jointly issued a rapid growth in distributed PV installations. notice on raising the technological require-The country boasts 84.4 GW in utility-scale ments on major PV products and enhancing solar and has added 17.3 GW in new installations during the first half of this year, down 2018, the market entrance barrier for the 16 percent from a year earlier.

Last December, the National Energy Admin- be raised to 16 percent, while that for the istration issued the Year Plan for Solar Development, pointing to 16.8 percent. According to the data, Chiout that the country is on track to achieve na's PV industry generated 51.8 billion kWh PV power generation installations of more of electricity during the first half of this than 105 GW by the end of 2020. As of the year. first half of this year, the target had been 97 percent achieved. This July, the administra- Source: Renewable Energy World, September tion issued the Guideline on Implementation 28, 2017 (edited).

Current WNews

Recently, the National Energy Administration, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the Certification and Accreditation Administration of the supervision, stipulating that from Jan. 1, photoelectric transformation efficiency of polysilicon silicon battery components will 13th Five- monocrystalline components will be upped

# **Publications/Regulations**

- Key World Energy Statistics, September 2017, Click here
- Boosting solar PV markets: The role of quality infrastructure, September 2017, Click here

# **Changes in Global Energy Intensity**





## குறைதீர்க்கும் மன்றத்தின் தலைவரிடம் ஒவ்வொரு குறையையும் எழுத்துப்பூர்வமாக சமர்ப்பிக்க வேண்டும்

## நடைமுறை

- ♦ ஒவ்வொரு வருடமும் முறையீட்டாளரிடமிருந்துப் பெறப்படும் குறையினை பதிவுசெய்து வரிசையாக எண்ணிட வேண்டும்
- ♦ குறைகளைப் பெற்ற ஏழு நாட்களுக்குள் முறையீட்டாளருக்கு ஒப்புகைக் கடித்தினை அனுப்ப வேண்டும்
- ♦ குறைதீர் மன்றத்திற்கு புகாரினை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதற்கோ அல்லது நிராகரிப்பதற்கோ உரிமை இருக்கிறது. புகாரை நிராகரிக்கும்பட்சத்தில் அதனை எழுத்துப்பூர்வமாகத் தெரிவிக்க வேண்டும்
- புகாரினை பெற்ற 10 நாட்களுக்குள் அதனை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதுபற்றி முடிவு செய்துவிட வேண்டும்
- உரிமதாரர் குறைதீர்ப்பு மன்றத்திடமிருந்து கடிதம் பெற்ற 15 நாட்களுக்குள் பத்தி வாரியாக குறைகளுக்கு விளக்கம் தர வேண்டும்
- ♦ முறையீட்டாளர் தாமாகவோ அல்லது அவர் தேர்வு செய்த பிரதிநிதிமூலமாகவோ முறையிடலாம்
- ♦ நுகர்வோர் குறைதீர் மன்றமானது, புகார் பெற்று அதிகபட்சம் 50 நாட்களுக்குள் விசாரணையை முடித்து ஆணை வழங்க வேண்டும்
- ♦ நுகர்வோர் குறைதீர் மன்றமானது முறையீட்டாளரின் நலன் கருதி மின்சார துண்டிப்பினை தடுக்கும் பொருட்டு 10 நாட்களுக்குள் இடைக்கால ஆணையினைப் பிறப்பிக்கலாம்
- அதிகபட்ச வாக்குகளின் அடிப்படையில் முடிவுகள் எடுக்கப்படும். சமமான வாக்குகள் இருக்கும் பட்சத்தில், மின்சார குறைதீர்ப்பாளர் இறுதி ஆணையை முடிவு செய்வார்
- உரிமதாரர் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட கால அவகாசத்துக்குள் குறைதீர் மன்றத்தின் முடிவினை செயல்படுத்த வேண்டும்
- ♦ உரிமதாரர் ஆணையினை செயல்படுத்தியதற்கான இணக்க அறிக்கையை குறைதீர் மன்றத்திடம் 5 நாட்களுக்குள் தெரிவிக்கவேண்டும்

ஆதாரம்: நுகாவோர் குறைதீர் மன்றம் மற்றும் மின்சார குறைதீர்ப்பாளருக்கான வழிமுறைகள், தமிழ்நாடு மிள்சார ஒழுங்குமுறை ஆணையம்

INITIATIVE OF



