Volume VII, Issue 11

Current News
மின் செய்திகள்

November, 2022

Energy Conservation Act (Part-4)

The Government of India passed the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 (from here on called the Act) to implement policies/programmes for energy conservation and efficiency in the nation. In this series we discuss the schemes passed under this Act and various benefits for the electricity consumer. In the previous issue we explained Demand Side Management and the Indo-Swiss Building Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP). The primary objective of BEEP is to promote Energy-Efficient and Thermally Comfortable (EETC) buildings. EETC buildings are buildings designed to reduce heat (or retain warmth in colder climates), make best use of daylight and provide natural ventilation.

This editorial will discuss some of BEEP's flagship schemes along with other initiatives passed under this Act:

A.BEEP Student Camp: This program equips students of architecture and engineering with the fundamentals of building physics and application through the integrated design process to build EETC buildings.

B.Media Engagement Program: Educational programs for media personnel across the country to mainstream and popularise the concept of EETC building design. They are given training to understand, draft, and disseminate information on EETC buildings for mainstream consumption

C.BEEP Vayu Pravah: This is a downloadable simulation environment software tool designed to help architects, building designers and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) consultants to map the natural ventilation potential of a building and use the same for EETC building design.

D.Eco-Niwas Samhita: ECBC for residential buildings was passed on 14th December 2018. This code provides guidelines on EETC buildings. The latest Amendment Bill will implement this code- to include large residential buildings.

E.Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL):

Provisions: Section 14(t) empowers the Central Government to take all measures necessary to create awareness and disseminate information for efficient use of energy and its conservation. Section 14(u) also provides for capacity building and training of specialists.

Operational: Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) was constituted in 2009 and promoted by the Ministry of Power. It is a Super Energy Service Company (ESCO). An ESCO typically works as a service providing cost- effective energy efficiency technology for organisations. EESL functions nation-wide to benefit consumers, industries and governments by enabling them to effectively manage their energy needs.

Currently, EESL holds an energy efficiency portfolio across various sectors like lighting, buildings, industry electric mobility, smart metering and agriculture. This is a joint venture with four public sector undertakings, under the Ministry of Power: a) Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) b) NTPC Limited (formerly National Thermal Power Corporation Limited) c) REC Limited (formerly Rural Electrification Corporation Limited) d) Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC)

EESL conducts and promotes the business of energy efficiency. It functions as a consultant in the field of clean development mechanism, carbon markets, demand side management, energy efficiency, climate change and other associated areas. In addition to this, EESL also implements projects with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

(To be continued)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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Understanding the different charges borne by an electricity consumer (Part 3)

The previous issue explained the one-time charges borne by consumers towards obtaining an electricity service connection. This editorial will focus on meter related charges according to regulation 5 (11) of Tamil Nadu Supply Code, 2004.

6.Meter Related charges:

An electricity meter mandatorily needs to be installed to measure electricity consumption. This displayed as electrical "units". During the new service connection application process, TANGEDCO meter-related charges such as meter cost or meter rental charges from the consumer. In addition to that, TANGEDCO also collects charges towards changing of meters and meter boards, testing of meters, testing of installations and inspection charges at the rates specified by the Tamil Nadu Commission (TNERC) from time to time.

A.Meter cost: Regulation 5 (11) allows Low Tension (LT) and High Tension (HT) consumers to purchase meters either directly from TANGEDCO or from any of the suppliers in the TANGEDCO's empanelled list. The meter costs for LT consumers are as follows:

(i) Single phase meters: Rs.670/- + Operational cost

(ii) Three Phase meters: Rs.1800/- + Operational cost

(iii) Three Phase bi-directional meters Rs.3960/- + Operational cost**.** Operational costs include materials upto meter board connection.

The estimate of the operational cost will be decided by TANGEDCO based on the consumer category.

B.Meter rent charges: Under the recent miscellaneous order renting of meters, meter rental charges are applicable only to High Tension (HT) consumers. Meters are not available on rent for Low Tension (LT) consumers.

C.Changing / shifting of meter board / LTCT box / HT box due to damage or for accommodating additional safety features like ELCB / RCD etc: The changing / shifting of the meter board / meter box for reasons such as alteration of the premises, for safety purposes and temporary disconnection of the meter will incur additional costs. To effect this, the consumer should submit an application along with the prescribed charge to the local TANGEDCO office. After collecting the prescribed charges, TANGEDCO employees should complete the relocation within 25 days. Rs.1000/- is the charge payable by low tension consumers.

D.Changing of meter at the request of the consumer without any dispute in the accuracy of the meter: If a consumer wants to procure a new meter for reasons other than questions over its reliability, the consumer can request a change of device. For this, the following steps are required:

(i) Approach the local TANGEDCO office with a request letter

(ii) TANGEDCO will conduct a meter test to check its reliability (even if this was not in question) collecting testing charges

(iii) It is to be noted that Meter Testing is conducted by a different department called Meter Relay Testing wing

(iv) The data will be verified. If the meter functioning correctly, TANGEDCO will change the existing meter for a charge of Rs.1000/- (for low tension consumers).

E.**Charges for replacement of damaged / burnt meter:** A meter can be damaged by the consumer due to overloading of appliances, physical tampering etc. Other causes could be voltage fluctuations as a result of poor quality transformers, distribution networks etc. In the latter scenario, the fault will be with TANGEDCO or the distribution licensee/utility. If the meter is burnt out due to mis-use by the consumer, TANGEDCO collects Rs.1000/- towards replacing the damaged meter. If the fault lies with TANGEDCO, the meter will be replaced at no additional cost.

F.**Installation Testing Charges:** During the application process, consumers are informed about all equipment/infrastructure requirements for providing an electricity service connection. Before installation, TANGEDCO will test these equipment. The initial testing is free. Further testing will require low consumers to pay Rs. 150/- per assessment.

(To be continued)

Tamil Nadu News

Peak-hour power charges to be reduced from 25% to 15%, says MSME Department

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Department on Wednesday said peak-hour electricity charges for industries falling under the Low Tension III-B tariff category will be reduced from 25% to 15%. The MSMEs welcomed the move but said the fixed charges should have been reduced.The State government had received representations in this regard from MSMEs, and had directed the Department to provide guidance on the issue, according to a statement. As per the tariff hike, which came into effect on September 10, the peak-hour charges were increased from 20% to 25%. The morning peak hours were revised as 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m., and evening peak hours were revised as 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. instead of 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. V. Thirugnanam, president of Coimbatore District Small Industries' Association, welcomed the move, but said fixed charges should have been reduced.

"The reduction in peak-hour charges won't save MSMEs in the State, which are reeling from high input costs and other financial challenges. The MSME owners in the State are upset, and continue to live in despair," said K.E. Raghunathan, State Advisory Committee member, TNERC, and National Chairman, Association of Indian Entrepreneurs. "Reducing only peak-hour charges will have no impact on the exorbitant increase [in cost]. The ultimate effect will be on the finished product, which will have to compete with [those from] other developing States like Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. The Tamil Nadu MSMEs are losing to competition due to the recent increase in property tax and electricity charges, which will impact social and economic growth," he added. "The Electricity Department should install TOD (Time of Day) meters to calculate peak-hour consum ption. But it has said there is a shortage of these meters. Currently, Tangedco is calculating peak-hour consumption for the MSMEs from the total consumption and levying peak-hour charges. It should install the meters so that the MSMEs derive actual benefit from the reduction in charges," Coimbatore Tiny and Small Foundry Owners' Association president A. Sivashanmugha Kumar said.

Source: The Hindu, November 9,2022

India News

'Electricity essential service, person can't be deprived of it without lawful reasons', says Delhi HC

In a plea seeking direction to a private discom to install a fresh electricity meter without asking for a no objection certificate (NOC), the Delhi High Court has observed that electricity is an essential service and a person cannot be deprived of it without cogent and lawful reasons. A single judge bench of Justice Manoj Ohri in its judgment of November 14 held, "It is well-settled that even if disputes exist as to ownership of the property at which an electricity connection is sought, the concerned authorities cannot deprive the legal occupant thereof by insisting that an NOC be furnished from others who also claim to be owners." The plea was moved by a senior citizen couple embroiled in a partition suit with the brothers of the husband. They sought the installation of a fresh electricity connection from BSES Yamuna Power Ltd (BYPL) but the same was denied for want of NOC by the husband's brothers. The couple said that though an electricity connection was granted to two brothers without NOC from the couple, the same was denied to them. "Presently, the electricity supply to the portion occupied by petitioners in the subject premises is received as per inter se arrangement, however the same has led to multiple disputes between the parties," the high court noted.

The couple's lawyer said that they were ready and willing to "apply afresh for grant of new electricity connection". The couple further undertook to comply with all the "codal and commercial formalities" of BYPL. They also submitted that there were no outstanding dues with respect to the electricity connection installed at the subject premises. This was confirmed by the counsel appearing for BYPL during the course of the proceedings. BYPL counsel further said the discom would consider the couple's application for a fresh electricity connection in accordance with the law, without insisting on the NOC from the brothers.

Source: The Indian Express, November 17, 2022

Consumer Focus

The appellant had applied for shifting of a 500 kVA transformer and two poles situated at the entrance of his house. The appellant approached the respondent (TANGEDCO) who stated that shifting of the transformer and poles was not feasible. The appellant was not satisfied with this response and filed a complaint with the CGRF. On 16.03.2022 the CGRF dismissed the complaint. The order stated that the appellant's land and the transformer in question were located in a central area and supplied electricity to all the shops in the market. They stated that it was technically not feasible to shift it from its current location and that there was no other alternate space to move it to. Aggrieved by this, the appellant approached the Ombudsman on 29.07.2022.

The appellant argued that the presence of the transformer and poles in front of their house was not just a matter of inconvenience. They submitted that given their old age (over eighty years old) these large structures posed as practical hazards, making it unsafe for them to enter and exit their house. Furthermore, the appellant submitted 4 different places that were vacant in the surrounding area that could house the transformer. They explained that their age related chronic ailments needed frequent hospital visits, and the current location of the transformer made these journeys dangerous. They also said that they were unable to attend the CGRF meeting in person because of their physical inability and that none of their family members were consulted or contacted by the respondent while conducting technical inspection.

Finally, in reference to the transformer being there for so long without any complaints the appellant declared that they were unaffected by it when they were young and active. The respondent submitted that the transformer and poles were erected 60 years ago, while the appellant built their house only 50 years ago and that it had therefore been incumbent on the appellant to build their house taking into account the already installed transformer. The respondent also stated that there is 6 horizontal distance between the transformer and the house, which is more than the 4 feet prescribed in Regulation 61 of the Central Electricity Authority (Measures relating to Safety and Electric supply) Regulations, 2010.

The respondent also observed that the sites recommended by the appellant might not be suitable as technical feasibility studies have not been undertaken at these sites. The respondent concluded saying that the structures in their current location do not pose a threat to the safety of the appellant. Considering the facts of the case, arguments put forth, cases cited, and the statutes relied upon, Ombudsman passed the following order:

- There is an adequate distance of six feet between the transformer and the house, respondent has complied with Regulation 61 of the Central Electricity Authority (Measures relating to Safety and Electric supply) Regulations, 2010.
- If the appellant still wishes to shift the structure, he may approach the respondent to shift the structure under Deposit Contribution works (DCW) basis, where the cost of shifting is borne by the consumer (Rule 6 of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Supply Code). This is also subject to technical feasibility.
- With the above findings, the petition was dismissed by the Electricity Ombudsman.

Source - **Ombudsman Case, TNERC** Reference: CAG's poster on safe distances from power lines

ECC VOICE

சேலம் மாவட்டம், அன்னதானப்பட்டி கந்தப்பா காலனியை சேர்ந்த திரு.செல்வமின் மின்னிணைப்பு மீட்டரின் "DISPLAY" பழுதாகிவிட்டது. இது தொடர்பாக அவர், சேலம் மின் நுகர்வோர் மையத்தின் ஆலோசகர் திரு.ஜெயராமன் அவர்களை தொலைபேசி வாயிலாக தொடர்பு கொண்டு தனது புகாரை தெரிவித்தார். மின்ஆலோசகரின் ஆலோசனைப்படி திரு.செல்வம் , பழுதடைந்த மீட்டரின் புகைப்படம் மற்றும் மின் அட்டையின் புகைப்படங்களை மின்வாரிய உதவி செயற்பொறியாளரிடம் இந்த புகாரை தெரிவித்தார். புகாரை பெற்றுக்கொண்ட உதவி செயற்பொறியாளர் இந்த புகாரை நிவர்த்தி செய்யபடும் என்று உறுதி அளித்தார்.

புகார் கொடுத்த இரண்டு நாட்களில், திரு.செல்வம் வீட்டில் களஆய்வு மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டது. களஆய்வு செய்த பின்னர், உதவி பொறியாளர் புதிய மீட்டருக்கான தொகையை செலுத்துமாறு திரு.செல்வமிடம் அறிவுறுத்தினார். உரியதொகை செலுத்திய பிறகு புதிய மின் மீட்டர் பொருத்தப்பட்டது. புதிய மின் மீட்டர் மாற்றி அமைக்க உதவி செய்த சேலம் மின் நுகர்வோர் மையத்திற்கு திரு.செல்வம் தனது நன்றியினைத் தெரிவித்தார்.

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Initiative of

CAG
Citizen consumer and civic Action Group

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

World News

Current News

UK Town's Pavement Generates Electricity When Pedestrians Walk On It

Wondering how to charge your mobile phones when you are outside and not carrying a power bank? In an interesting news, a town in the United Kingdom has a new bouncy pavement which can generate electricity from people's footsteps to power two nearby public charging points, as per a report in BBC. The pavement is located in Telford, the largest town in Shropshire. The mobile phone chargers are installed into a nearby bench and are powered by electricity generated by people using the Station Way bouncy part while walking or running.

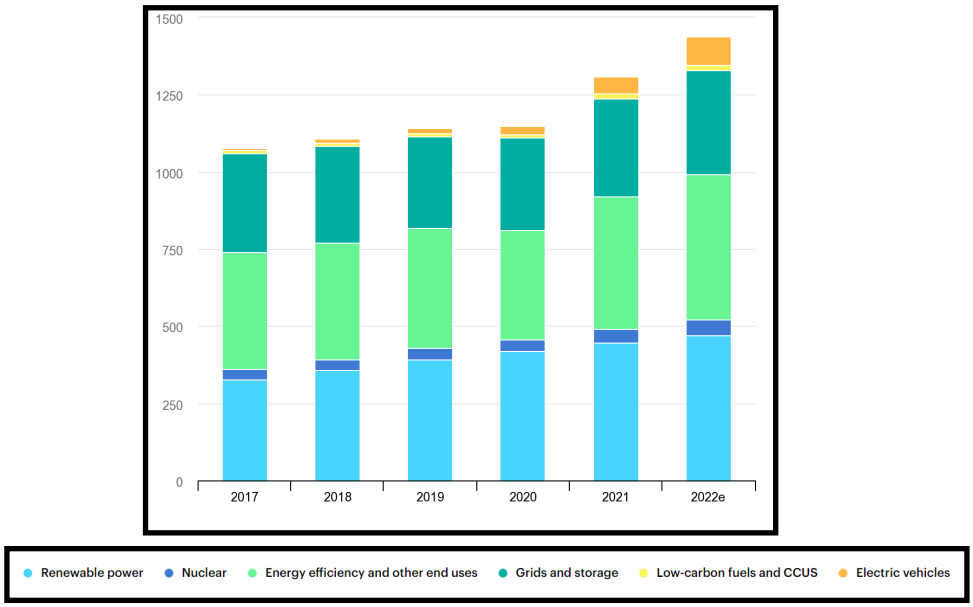
As per the outlet, Councillor Carolyn Healy said it was an "engaging" way to show how clean electricity can be generated. She said, "In Telford the pavement will make people much more aware about climate change issues... because this is something that is engaging, you can walk across it when you're coming back off the train into Telford, you can see the screen will pop up and tell you the energy you're creating." The Councillor also stated that the kinetic pavement is a reminder that there are several innovative ways to tackle climate change and move away from fossil fuels.A jogger on the pavement, Tina Brasenell, told BBC that she was impressed she could power a phone. "I just heard about this pavement that was generating electricity and thought I'd come and give it a go and see how it worked," she said. Pavegen, the company working on this project with Telford & Wrekin Council wrote on its Facebook page, "The Pavegen install is helping to raise awareness around the Council's commitments to sustainability alongside their new solar and wind projects. We are highlighting Telford's ambition to help fight climate change and protect the planet and get every member of their community involved through the power of footsteps!"

Source: NDTV, November 14, 2022

Publications / Regulations

1. Renewable energy targets in 2022: A guide to design, November 2022, IRENA
2. Renewable solutions in end-uses: Heat pump costs and markets, November 2022, IRENA
3. Climate Resilience for Energy Security, November 2022, IEA
4. Coal in Net Zero Transitions, November 2022, IEA

Annual clean energy investment, 2017-2022



Source: IEA