

Central Sector

❖ The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** has issued the **Environment (Protection) Amendment Rules, 2021**, under which it has extended the timelines for complying with the emission norms by coal-based thermal power plants (TPPs). The amended rules allow TPPs within 10 kilometres of the National Capital Region (NCR) and in cities with more than 1 million population to comply with new emission norms by December 31, 2022; and TPPs in non-attainment cities and those within 10 kilometres of critically polluted areas by December 31, 2023. Meanwhile, TPPs in the rest of the areas have to comply with the norms by December 31, 2024. A task force will be constituted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to categorise TPPs in three categories on the basis of their location. TPPs declared to retire before December 31, 2025 are not required to meet the specified norms in case such plants submit an undertaking to the CPCB and the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for exemption on ground of retirement. Besides this, the new rules state that there shall be levy of environment compensation on the non-retiring TPP, in case of non-complaint operation beyond the timeline.

❖ The **central government** has asked the **state electricity regulatory commissions (SERCs)** to issue **tariff orders of distribution licensees before April 1 of the tariff year** and report **compliance** to the **Ministry of Power** by **May 31** every year. This aims to ensure timely determination of power tariffs by the electricity regulatory commissions as mandated under the legal provisions of the Electricity Act 2003 and the Tariff Policy 2016. In the past, there has been significant delay in issuance of tariff orders by some of the SERCs, and creation of regulatory assets as a matter of routine.

❖ The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has clarified that the **extension** provided in the **date of commissioning for renewable energy projects** should **not** be more than **6 months**, including the five-month blanket extension given earlier. The extension was to be provided by implementing agencies on account of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown. The MNRE had issued a notification requesting the implementing agencies to consider the lockdown as a 'force majeure' event. The ministry has clarified that if the implementing agencies feel the requirement of granting an extension beyond six months, they should provide justification and supporting documents to the ministry.

❖ **Nabinagar Power Generating Company Limited**, a 50:50 joint venture between NTPC Limited and Bihar State Power Holding Company Limited, has **commissioned** the **second 660 MW unit** at the 3x660 MW **Nabinagar Super Thermal Power Project** in **Bihar**. With this, the total installed capacity of NTPC has reached 65,150 MW. The first unit of the 1,980 MW Nabinagar plant was commissioned in July 2019.

❖ **NTPC Limited** has **completed** the first **5 MW** block at the **upcoming 25 MW floating solar photo voltaic (PV) project** at Simhadri in **Andhra Pradesh**. The remaining work is expected to be completed by June 2021. The project is being executed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited for a value of about Rs 1,100 million.

State Sector

❖ **ONGC Tripura Power Company Limited (OTPC)** has received **environmental clearance** from the central government to **set-up** a **third 363 MW unit at its combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power plant at Palatana, Tripura**. The gas-based power generation company currently has two operational units aggregating 726 MW of capacity at the CCGT at Palatana. The genco would need 1.5 million standard cubic metres per day of gas and is in talks with ONGC for allocation and pricing of the resource.

Private Sector

❖ **Adani Transmission Limited (ATL)** has **signed agreement** with **Essel Infraprojects Limited (EIL)** for **acquiring Warora-Kurnool Transmission Limited (WKTL)** for a value of **Rs 33.7 billion**. WKTL will develop, operate and maintain a transmission system of 1,750 ckt km in Maharashtra, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh along with a 765/400 kV substation at Warangal. The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission has provided regulatory approval, while the lenders' consent will be obtained before the closure of the deal.

❖ **Tata Power** has **taken over** the **management** and **operations** of **North Eastern Electricity Supply Company of Odisha (NESCO)** upon **completion of the sale process**. The utility will now operate under the

Note: Rs 1 crore = Rs 0.01 billion; Rs 1 lakh = Rs 0.1 million; Rs 1,000 million = Rs 1 billion

company name TP Northern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPNODL). Tata Power holds 51 per cent of equity with management control and the state-owned GRIDCO will have 49 per cent equity stake in the company. TPNODL will be responsible for the distribution and retail supply of electricity in five circles of Balasore, Bhadrak, Baripada, Jajpur and Keonjhar districts in Odisha. In a separate development, Tata Power has received a letter of award from Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL) to develop a 60 MW capacity solar project in Gujarat. The plant will generate approximately 156 MUs of energy per year, which will be supplied to GUVNL under a power purchase agreement (PPA), valid for 25 years from scheduled commercial operation date. The project has to be commissioned within 18 months from the date of execution of the PPA.

❖ **Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL)** has **launched** India's first **grid-connected community energy storage system (CESS)** in collaboration with **Nexcharge**. Nexcharge is a joint venture between Exide India and Leclanché, Switzerland. The 150 KW/ 528 KWH CESS installation at Ranibagh substation is expected to improve the supply reliability at the distribution level.

Projects and Ventures

❖ **Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited (KPTL)** has **secured** new **orders** of **Rs 6,250 million**. The orders in power transmission sector include orders from Africa and new power transmission projects in Europe secured by KPTL's international subsidiary. The new orders in the power transmission and distribution business in the African market has provided the company a strategic entry in a new country. With this award, the order wins for KPTL have reached approximately Rs 85 billion at standalone level and more than Rs 160 billion at consolidated level for 2020-21.

Debt and Equity

❖ **Power Finance Corporation (PFC) Limited** and **REC Limited** have **reduced lending rates** by up to **two percentage points** from **April 1, 2021**. This aims to ensure competitive rates, in line with the rates being offered by peers in the market. The reduction in lending rates will help PFC and REC to offer lower rates to power utilities, which will reduce their borrowing costs and interest payments.

❖ **Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL)** has **acquired** a **100 per cent equity stake** in **Spinel Energy and Infrastructure** from **Hindustan Cleanenergy Limited** and **Peridot Power Ventures Limited**. This acquisition of 100 per cent of the share capital and securities of Spinel Energy and Infrastructure will add 20 MW to the existing capacity of AGEL and help in expanding its network to meet the targeted decarbonisation plan. This acquisition is a part of the overall growth strategy of AGEL to build a capacity of 25 GW by 2025.

❖ **India Grid Trust (IndiGrid)** has **completed** the **acquisition** of North Eastern Region (**NER**) **II Transmission Limited** from **Sterlite Power** at an enterprise value of **Rs 46.25 billion**. NER-II is a part of the inter-state transmission scheme (ISTS) network, and was awarded on a build, own, operate, maintain (BOOM) basis with a contractual period of 35 years. The project has 11 elements, including two substations of 1,260 MVA capacity and four transmission lines extending over 830 ckt km. With this acquisition, IndiGrid's asset under management (AUM) has increased 34 per cent to Rs 200 billion.

❖ **PFC** as lead financial institution and **PNB** as co-lender of the consortium has **successfully completed** the **resolution** of **Jal Power Corporation Limited's (JPCL) 4x30 MW Rangit-IV Hydroelectric Project** in **Sikkim**. The stressed project has been handed over to NHPC Limited on March 31, 2021 after the payment of resolution amount to the tune of Rs 1.65 billion to the lenders. The corporate insolvency resolution process for JPCL was initiated in April 2019. In December 2020, National Company Law Tribunal had approved NHPC's resolution plan for the project. The balance work at the project is scheduled to be completed in 38 months.

❖ Private equity firm **Actis** has **planned** to invest **\$850 million** in **two green energy platforms** in **India**. An investment of \$600 million is planned in solar and wind parks platform and \$250 million in the commercial and industrial segment. The investments will be executed from Actis Energy 5 LP fund.

❖ **Edelweiss Infrastructure Yield Plus (EIYP)**, along with **Sekura Energy**, has **acquired 74 per cent stake** in **solar portfolio** of **Engie** in India. The partnership between EIYP and Engie is aimed creating 2 GW of solar assets in the country over the next couple of years. These assets will be developed by Engie and acquired by EIYP post-commissioning. Currently, Engie has 813 MW of operational capacity in India.