

Govt to revise roof-top solar power policy

NTPC looking to acquire 1,000 MW of hydropower projects

OUR BUREAU

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The Centre will rework and expand the ambit of roof-top solar power generation policy, according to Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and Renewable Energy, RK Singh.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an international R&D conclave, organised by the Central Electricity Authority, Singh said, "We are coming up with a new scheme which will improve the present roof-top solar systems. We already have schemes for solar pumps and roof-top solar but we are enlarging those schemes and improving the mechanisms so that they can be delivered faster."

Singh said that the government is also gearing up for taking strides in energy storage. He said, "According to the tra-

jectory we had announced, we are bidding out projects in solar, wind and in hybrid generation. Now we are going to attach a storage component to those bids too. For example, if the entire project is of 1000 MW, the storage capacity with it will be of around 100 MW."

But all envisioned solar power projects have not really materialised. One such is the solar power project in Andaman and Nicobar islands that public sector undertaking NTPC Ltd had proposed.

Responding to a query on the same, Singh said, "We have worked out how the power supply system in Andaman should be. So the base load will be met by gas based power. The work for re-gasification has been given to GAIL (India) and NTPC Ltd will set up the plant. Apart from that there will be solar-wind hybrid projects with storage that will be set up."

Commenting on the same, NTPC's Chairman and Managing Director, Gurdeep Singh, said the company plans to set up a 50- MW gas-based power

plant in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. But solar is not the only pie NTPC has been eating into, he said, "We will call for bids to acquire 1000 MW of hydropower projects within a month."

This will be similar to the call for acquiring thermal power projects that NTPC had issued recently. The company wants sellers to approach them and offer their projects. Based on the feasibility studies and size of projects, NTPC will choose the projects it wants to acquire. "The hydropower projects to be offered should be of a minimum ticket size of 50 MW," NTPC's Singh added.

Singh said that his company is no longer just a thermal power company and is now an end-to-end energy generation company.

Speaking on NTPC's initial plans to set up a storage-cum-thermal power project in Andaman and Nicobar islands, he said, "The project is now being reworked to set up 25 MW (one of 18 MW and another 7 MW) of solar power generation capacity with 10 MW of storage."