

Energy Access Monitor

November-December 2016

Trending topics

Rural Electrification



- UP CM seeks release of funds for rural electrification
- Every Bihar household to be lit up by end of next year: Nitish Kumar
- West Bengal government plans to generate 180 MW of solar power 2 years
- Power Ministry to launch GARV-II app to ensure power access to all

Cooking energy access



- 10 mn more homes to get piped gas in 5 years
- This Australian Innovator Designed an Energy Efficient Rocket Stove to Save Trees in the Himalayas

Financing energy access



- Obama Administration Announces New Financing For Renewable Energy Projects
- India, US launch USD 20 mn funding initiative USICEF



UP CM seeks release of funds for rural electrification. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister on 7th December 2016 wrote a letter to Prime Minister of India for immediate release of funds for disbursement to the state's power distribution companies under the 'Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna'. In his letter, he pointed out that barring Rs 18.74 crore meant for Varanasi, the remaining fund of the entire scheme for all the 75 districts of the state amounting to Rs 6,946.91 crore have not been released till now, an official release here said.

Work has been stalled in the remaining 74 districts due to non-release of funds, the release said, seeking immediate release of the first and second installment.

The release said that a tripartite agreement was reached between distribution companies, state government and Rural Electrification Corporation for implementation of the scheme designed to provide continuous power supply to rural India.

Every Bihar household to be lit up by end of next year: Nitish Kumar. Chief Minister of Bihar said that every household in the state would get electricity by the end of next year and exhorted people to start practising rational use of power to avoid fat bills. Survey work has been carried on households still not having power connection and the government would provide free electricity connection to all such households across Bihar by the end of 2017, Kumar said at the 'Chetna Sabha' in course of his 'Nishchay yatra.'

Providing free electricity connection to every household forms a part of "seven resolves" which the grand alliance government has adopted as policy of "sushasan" (good governance) for rest of its term, he said.

The programme focuses on providing free power connection to 50 lakh households above the poverty line who are still deprived of power.

He had launched 'Har ghar bijli lagataar' programme on November 15 in Patna to achieve this target. Launching the key programme, the CM had promised to provide free electricity connection to about 50 lakh households above the poverty line deprived of power connection so far. The objective would be met at an investment of Rs 1857.5 crore. The programme focuses on providing free power connection to 50 lakh households above the poverty line who are still deprived of power.

West Bengal government plans to generate 180 MW of solar power 2 years. The West Bengal government is planning to generate 180 megawatt of solar power in the next two years. So far only seven megawatt of solar power is produced in West Bengal, which is very poor, compared to states like Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

It has identified 1,300 government buildings, schools and hospitals for setting up solar panels. In 2016-17, the target is to generate 61 megawatt of power, whereas in 2017-18, the target is 120 megawatt. The government is planning to spend over Rs 1,000 crore on the project.

- ✓ The government had pledged of 100 per cent of rural electrification by next year. It had also planned to bring the remotest islands of Sundervans under the power grid by this year. However, not much progress could be made because locals were objecting against the acquisition of land, however, small it might be for installation of poles.

- ✓ Land acquisition has become a sensitive subject in Bengal, post Singur. Bengal's Chief Minister, who led the save farm land movement from 2007, is also not ready to antagonise the people, if they were not willing to give away their land for public purpose.



An official from the power department said that CM has asked them to negotiate with the locals and try and convince them about what changes rural electrification will bring in their lives. She has also asked the people's representatives at the local level to go for a consensus before embarking on the project.

The panchayat and rural development department has agreed to make use of nearly 400 buildings. The health department is willing to offer 200 terraces of its various buildings. A huge amount of money is spent on account of electricity bills. The government hopes to cut down the expenses of several crores once the panels are fitted on the roof tops and terraces.

Power Ministry to launch GARV-II app to ensure power access to all. To ensure transparency in implementation of rural electrification programme, the Power Ministry will launch a new app, GARV-II, to provide real time data of all six lakh villages of the country. According to an official, the earlier version of GARV mobile phone application used to provide data about rural electrification regarding 18,452 un-electrified villages. The new version GARV-II to be unveiled on Tuesday will provide real time data for all six lak villages in the country.

The official further said that GARV-II will enable the commoners to participate in the development work and can give their input about rural electrification programme. Thus, the rural electrification work would be open to public scrutiny. Under this facility, village-wise; habitation-wise base line data on household electrification for all states provided by them has been incorporated. Further, village-wise works sanctioned under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) have also been mapped to monitor progress of works in each village.

- ✓ GARV-II will have a citizen engagement window 'SAMVAD' to enhance participation. They can contribute in the programme by providing their feedback and suggestions which shall be automatically forwarded to the concerned Managing Directors and Superintending Engineers of DISCOMs through SMS & Email on their dashboard.
- ✓ The objective of GARV-II is to ensure electricity access to all households as government has already electrified over 11,000 villages out of 18,452 un-electrified villages.



Cooking energy access

10 mn more homes to get piped gas in 5 years. Prime Minister of India on 5th December announced that the government will extend Piped Natural Gas to ten million houses over the next five years. The policy is set to come as a huge fillip to plans to extend India's last mile cooking gas pipeline network.

To protect the vulnerable and the middle class, a subsidy is paid directly to one hundred and sixty nine million bank accounts. "This has eliminated leakages and misuse of cooking gas subsidies, resulting in large fiscal savings," he added.



The Prime Minister also urged the oil industry to increase domestic oil and gas production and reduce import dependence. Efforts, he said, should be focused towards becoming a gas-based economy while giving a vision statement for India's energy future that stands on four pillars — energy access, energy efficiency, energy sustainability and energy security.

He also said that the government is committed to expanding the National gas grid network from its current length of fifteen thousand kilometres pipeline to thirty thousand kilometers. Urging investors in the oil industry to look into recent initiatives of the government, he asked them to explore investing in India.

This Australian Innovator designed an energy efficient Rocket Stove to Save Trees in the Himalayas. Australian innovator Russell Collins has developed a Himalayan rocket stove that is energy efficient, clean, and less polluting. It uses four to five times less firewood than a conventional stove for burning.



Russell Collins at his workshop in Ladakh

It was in 1992 when Russell visited India for the first time. Born and brought up in Adelaide, he dropped out of a Bachelor of Science course and lived in an alternative ecological community on the east coast of Australia for many years. The culture and the community kept calling out to him. He soon started bringing tourists to India every year through his venture 'Yak Trak – unique journeys' and travelled widely in the lower

Himalayan region. While he was arranging tours and travels, he was also interacting with the locals and observing their lifestyle.

To test the prototype, he ran a crowd funding campaign in Australia for the seed funding and attracted the attention of a major sponsor. With the funds, he set up a small manufacturing unit in Ladakh. He

then rolled out the first batch of 30 stoves and donated all of them to lower income households, nunneries, and monasteries there.

- Rocket stoves use firewood (small diameter sticks) as fuel. Small twigs of wood are burned in a high-temperature combustion chamber that is fitted with an insulated vertical chimney, which lets out smoke.
- Russell is also designing a Himalayan Rocket Stove Project on the lines of the social entrepreneurship model. While the stoves will be priced in the range of Rs. 15,000 to 20,000 per unit, he plans to subsidise the rates for lower-income families from the profits.
- Russell is also conducting workshops to train locals to make another type of the stove made from clay. In the process of developing the Himalayan Rocket Stove, he stumbled upon this design of the clay-based smokeless cookstove.

This cleaner burning process makes the Himalayan Rocket Stove highly energy efficient. Among its other features, it can heat water as well as heat up the room whilst being used as a cook top. A newer version also has the capacity to charge phones.

For more information about Rocket stoves: <https://youtu.be/60Rf2EJlvEg>

[The New Indian Express](#), 6 December 2016 | [The Better India](#), 27 December 2016



Obama Administration Announces New Financing For Renewable Energy Projects.

The Obama Administration has announced a number of actions to continue the global transition to zero-and-low carbon energy sources.

- ✓ Committing \$125 million in OPIC financing for renewable energy projects in El Salvador and India;
- ✓ Announcing seven Innovation Challenges identified by MI member countries that highlight clean energy areas with the potential to play a significant to achieve deep-decarbonization;
- ✓ Creating a partnership between USAID, the Department of State with the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory to identify a pipeline of clean energy entrepreneurs in developing countries;
- ✓ Providing \$4 million in awards to eight household solar firms under the Power Africa Scaling Off Grid Grand Challenge -- a \$36 million investment to empower entrepreneurs and investors to connect 20 million households in sub-Saharan Africa to modern, clean, and affordable electricity;
- ✓ Releasing a White House report on the state of the market for access to off-grid energy services and efficient appliances;



- ✓ Announcing more than \$11 million raised, in partnership with other governments and development partners, for the deployment of efficient off-grid technologies globally through the Efficiency for Access (E4A) Coalition;
- ✓ Launching a partnership with the philanthropic sector to bring more efficient appliances to rural Indian villages; and
- ✓ Supporting the first Solar Decathlon competition in Africa that creates opportunities for university students to learn about and showcase solar energy technologies.

India, US launch USD 20 mn funding initiative USICEF. India and the US on 16 December launched a USD 20-million financing facility 'USICEF' that will help in unlocking OPIC financing and contributing to India's ambitious renewable energy and energy access goals. OPIC (Overseas Private Investment Corp) is US government's development finance institution. It mobilises private capital to help address critical development challenges and in doing so, advances US foreign policy and national security priorities.

- ✓ New and Renewable Energy Minister and US Ambassador to India launched US-India Clean Energy Finance (USICEF) Initiative, which would help in unlocking OPIC financing and mobilise public and private capital to expand access to distributed clean energy projects, according to an official statement.
- ✓ According to the statement, Letter of Intents were signed and exchanged between MNRE and OPIC for the creation of a USD 20 million for USICEF initiative, equally supported by the US and India would support projects which, upon long-term financing and deployment, and would qualify for the support of long-term debt financing from OPIC.

The US-India Clean Energy Finance facility would support project preparation activities for distributed solar projects in order to unlock OPIC financing and mobilise public and private capital to expand access to distributed clean energy solutions that will benefit disadvantaged communities in India and contribute to India's ambitious renewable energy and energy access goals.

USICEF builds on the success of other project preparation facilities to support renewable energy in emerging markets. Through this initiative, project developers pursuing mini-grid, distributed rooftop and off-grid solar projects, as well as smaller-scale grid connected solar projects would be benefitted, it said.

tdworld.com, 15 November 2016 | Economic Times, 16 December 2016