

Energy Access Monitor

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Trending topics

Rural Electrification



- Rural electrification row: Centre to survey villages
- Union power ministry bridges rich-poor divide in rural electrification plan
- 56 Narayanpur villages to be electrified soon

Cooking energy access



- Towards a kerosene-free India

Financing energy access



- ADB to fund millions of LED lights, pumps across India
- Singapore firms keen on Smart Cities
- ADB set to grant \$500m to India for solar rooftop systems

Women and energy access



- These Women Entrepreneurs Are Bringing Clean Energy To Their Villages



Rural electrification row: Centre to survey villages. Ever since Narendra Modi announced in his Independence Day speech that 18,452 villages will be electrified and mentioned Nagla Fatela village as an example, reports have emerged about discrepancies between government's claims and the ground reality.

But

after

this confusion, Power minister Piyush Goyal claimed that the data about the village is given to them by states and being in a federal structure they have to trust them.

- 395 people have been contracted to travel to electrified villages to verify data from states. They are called gram in vidyut abhyantas (GVA) village electricity engineers.

To avoid any such controversy, the Centre is conducting surveys to see if there are any discrepancies between claims made by states and the actual condition of rural household electrification. In fact 395 people have been contracted to travel to electrified villages to verify data from states. They are called gram in vidyut abhyantas (GVA) — village electricity engineers.

According to data available with the central government there are 600,000 villages in India as per the 2011 census. The target was to energize 18,452 villages, which were not electrified, by May 2018. So far 10,111 villages have been provided electricity, data from the state governments claim.

Union power ministry bridges rich-poor divide in rural electrification plan. The Centre has expanded the ambit of its rural electrification scheme to include households above poverty line and assured cheap funds to increase the pace of lighting up an estimated 5.5 crore households in the country that are still without power.

Simultaneously, the Union power ministry also allowed states the freedom to use data from either list of BPL (below poverty line) families or Socio-Economic and Caste Census to identify poor households for providing power connections free of cost.

56 Narayanpur villages to be electrified soon. The Chhattisgarh Government will soon take up electrification of a total of 56 unelectrified villages of insurgency-infested Narayanpur district of Bastar region. The project involves laying of 11 Kv & LT Lines besides installation of 16 and 25 Kva 11 / 0.4 Kv distribution transformers, officials informed. A total of 18,960 out of 19,567 villages have been electrified in Chhattisgarh so far, the Centre has informed. According to an official, a total of 607 villages remain to be electrified in the State.

- ✓ The Chhattisgarh Government has targeted to spend Rs5,036 crore for augmenting rural electrification and energy distribution system, officials informed. Notably, the power supply distribution augmentation system project would be funded by Central Government grant, equity contribution from State and loan from financial institutions.
- ✓ The State-owned Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company Ltd (CSPDCL) which is implementing the project has sought additional funding support from the Central Government for achieving 100 per cent electrification of villages in Bastar region by FY 2018.

- ✓ Chief Minister Raman Singh last month had reviewed works of Energy Department and issued directives to complete construction of 34 key power sub-stations in various districts of state including tribal stronghold Bastar and Surguja divisions within 18 months. The construction cost of these 34 power sub-stations is estimated to be Rs2,100 crore.
- ✓ Chief Minister said in the meeting that keeping in view the demands and requests for electricity supply received from villagers during state-wide Lok Suraaj Abhiyan, these power substations should be constructed within the time-limit on priority basis, so that quality electricity supply could be ensured in far-off rural regions.
- ✓ It was also informed in the meeting, by the officials that the electrification of villages not covered under 2,685 hamlets being electrified under Deendayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana at the cost of nearly Rs1,250 crore and the villages being electrified using solar energy, is in progress.

It was also informed in the meeting that till March 2015, the State had 1,080 villages without electricity, out of which 402 villagers were electrified in year 2015-16. In year 2016-17, target of electrification of 678 villages has been set. Against which, electrification of 80 villages has been done and that of remaining is in progress. The Government has also targetted to electrify all the 19,000 villages in the State with solar power during the next two years. Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA) has invested Rs400 crores during last 11 years in developing infrastructure for solar power generation which had resulted in 40 MW of electricity being generated from non-conventional energy sources.

Hindustan Times, 7 September 2016 | The Times of India, 7 October 2016 | The Pioneer, 7 October 2016



Towards a kerosene-free India. After the success of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)/cooking gas, the government has now decided to launch DBT for kerosene (DBTK), starting with pilots in the State of Jharkhand. While the move is well-intentioned, it may not be simple to

implement at scale, and may even fail to eliminate the diversion of subsidised kerosene that it intends to.

The biggest hurdle is the lack of a streamlined and unified digital consumer database, which formed the backbone of the robust and rapid implementation of DBT for LPG. Here, the entire database across India was managed by just three public sector oil marketing companies, which are directly under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. This enabled easier coordination for a nationwide



Picture 1: CEEW's analysis of National Sample Survey Office data highlights that kerosene is predominantly used as a lighting fuel in rural India, with less than 1 per cent of households using it as a primary cooking fuel. (Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/columns/towards-a-kerosenefree-india/article9212049.ece>)

rollout of the scheme. In comparison, the database of subsidised kerosene beneficiaries falls under the Public Distribution System (PDS), which is managed and maintained by each State government. Coordination among the large number of State-level actors, especially in the case of a non-digitised PDS beneficiary database, can create barriers. While e-PDS is being implemented across India, a digital PDS beneficiary database is not yet available for all the States to enable implementation of DBTK.

The second hurdle is the political economy associated with subsidised kerosene. While the Centre bears the fiscal impact of subsidy, the States determine who gets the subsidy and to what extent — in terms of the quantum of subsidised kerosene. This is an important political currency for State governments. Thus, political alignment of States to buy into the idea of DBTK is critical in ensuring effective implementation of the scheme. The good news is that many States have expressed interest in conducting the pilot, which reflects the remarkable efforts made by the Centre towards aligning the States, including those governed by the Opposition.

Promoting Alternate Fuels:

- ✓ The Council on Energy, Environment and Water's (CEEW) analysis of National Sample Survey Office data highlights that kerosene is predominantly used as a lighting fuel in rural India, with less than 1 per cent of households using it as a primary cooking fuel.
- ✓ A recent report by the CEEW shows how shifting from kerosene to alternatives such as solar-assisted solutions for lighting and LPG for cooking could be economically beneficial for both the government as well as households. The shift would provide households with much better end-services and avoiding the adverse health impacts associated with kerosene use. This analysis suggests that such a transition could result in an annual saving between Rs.8,000 and Rs.12,000 crore to the exchequer.

As LPG is a clean and efficient fuel, it is rational to continue subsidising it for the underprivileged who cannot afford it otherwise. However, with energy security and clean energy access high on India's priorities, we must look beyond kerosene to provide cooking and lighting solutions to poor households, while ensuring affordability, reliability and universal availability of these alternatives. The government has been persistently focussing on structural reforms in various sectors of the economy, and moving away from subsidised kerosene, and envisioning a kerosene-free India would be one such visionary step.

The Hindu, 13 October 2016



ADB to fund millions of LED lights, pumps across India. Multilateral lending agency Asian Development Bank (ADB) said it will extend a USD 200 million loan to India for installation of energy-efficient home and street lights, and water pumps. The entire exercise could save energy to the tune of 3,800 gigawatt-hours per year.

"Energy efficiency is by far the least costly option to ensure or expand energy access while still cutting deadly greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants," ADB said in a statement, quoting Director General of

ADB's South Asia Regional Department, Hun Kim.

- ✓ The statement said ADB will provide the funds to Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL), a joint venture between four public sector bodies - the National Thermal Power Corporation, Powergrid Corporation of India, Power Finance Corporation, and Rural Electrification Corporation - established in 2009.
- ✓ EESL will make loans available for installing light-emitting diode (LED) municipal streetlights, energy-efficient domestic lights and fans, and energy-efficient agriculture water pumps. The entire USD 400 million project will install 1.5 million LED street lamps, 42 million LED household lamps, ceiling fans and LED tube lights, and 225,000 new pumps.
- ✓ Lending will be made available in Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh, as well as other states going forward, the statement said.

The Manila headquartered agency said it hopes the success of these sub-projects will attract more investment into energy efficiency.

Singapore firms keen on Smart Cities. Businesses in Singapore want to invest in Indian Smart Cities, with special focus on water treatment, renewable energy and technology financing, Teo Siong Seng, chairman of Singapore Business Federation, said. He was speaking at an interaction organised by the Ficci. A business delegation from Singapore is accompanying its Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on a three-day visit to New Delhi. Singaporean companies praised the government's efforts to liberalise foreign investment and facilitate doing business. But investors complained of difficulties in accessing information on investment opportunities, a Singapore official told Business Standard.

On 4th October, India and Singapore signed three agreements, including one on cooperation in skill development and another on intellectual property. Also, Indian companies will be allowed to sell rupee-denominated bonds in Singapore to finance infrastructure projects.

ADB set to grant \$500m to India for solar rooftop systems. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is set to provide US\$500 million for rooftop solar systems that will help the Indian government expand energy access using renewable energy. ADB will provide the financing to Punjab National Bank – one of India's largest commercial banks – which will use the ADB funds to make loans to various developers and end users throughout India to install rooftop solar systems.

- ✓ The financing comprises \$330 million from ADB and \$170 million from the multi-donor Clean Technology Fund administered by ADB. This funding should mean that 11 million fewer tonnes of greenhouse gases are emitted over the typical 25-year lifetime of solar rooftop systems. Combined with an additional \$300 million in subproject equity investment and \$200 million in loans from commercial banks and other financiers, the cost of the Solar Rooftop Investment Program is \$1 billion.
- To support efforts by India and other Asian developing member countries to meet their targets, ADB has also committed to doubling its annual financing for climate mitigation and adaptation to \$6 billion by 2020.

The government of India aims to increase the amount of energy sourced from solar rooftop systems to 40 gigawatts by 2022. This is part of a wider goal under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission to increase its overall solar energy generation to 100 gigawatts by the same date. India's intended nationally determined Contribution, or carbon-emission reduction target under the 2015 Paris agreement, is to lower the emissions of the Indian economy by 33 per cent from 2005 levels and to increase the share of non-fossil-fuel-based power generation capacity to 40 per cent of installed power capacity by 2030.

moneycontrol.com, 4 October 2016 | Business Standard, 6 October 2016 | nationalmultimedia.com, 23 October 2016



These Women Entrepreneurs Are Bringing Clean Energy To Their Villages. Varsha Pawar of Osmanabad district in Maharashtra was like any other housewife—until she started selling solar cook stoves and lamps in her neighbourhood a little over a year ago. Life was never the same again. Today, she is the *sarpanch* (village council chief) of Tirth Khurd, advocating the use of clean energy not only in her village but also in the entire Tuljapur administrative block.

Not only the women travel to meet her and take advices on how to be independent but she has also approached to many of the important decisions of her home as well as her village.



Picture 2: Varsha Pawar of Osmanabad district in Maharashtra, enlightening her neighbors about the importance of solar cook stoves and lamps.

Source: <http://www.huffingtonpost.in/soumya-sarkar-/these-women-entrepreneurs-are-bringing-clean-energy-to-their-vil/>

She is one of the 1010 women entrepreneurs in the villages of Maharashtra and Bihar who have empowered themselves by running successful businesses of selling solar appliances to rural

households. This was made possible through the efforts of [Swayam Shikshan Prayog](#) (SSP), a non-profit based in Pune in Maharashtra that helps village women to become clean energy entrepreneurs.

huffingtonpost.in, 4 October 2016 | [Swayam Shikshan Prayog](#), 4 October 2016