

TN, Karnataka lead in renewable energy growth

Solar power drives energy generation in Karnataka, while wind dominates in TN

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Chennai, December 4

Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are leading the growth of renewable energy India with the two States accounting for a third of new capacity additions as well as generation of clean energy.

Though Tamil Nadu lost the top position in renewable energy capacity addition to Karnataka, the State leads in clean energy generation as of now.

During April-October 2019, the renewable sector in the country generated about 84,490 million units (MU) of energy, which was about 10 per cent of the total energy generated in the country during the period.

Tamil Nadu occupied the number one position with 14,567 MU generation, followed by Karnataka at 14,554 MU. Gujarat took the third position with 10,392 MU. Maharashtra and Rajasthan occupied the fourth and

fifth positions at 8,822 MU and 8,296 MU respectively, according to government data.

However, during April-September 2019 period, Tamil Nadu's generation was 14,034 MU when compared with 12,999 MU of Karnataka. A significant drop in wind generation capacity during October in Tamil Nadu reduced the gap between the two States in the month.

While solar power drives renewable power generation capacity for Karnataka, its wind that brings a major chunk of power generation in Tamil Nadu.

During 2018-19, the total renewable power generation in India was 126,759 MU, up significantly from 101,839 MU in 2017-18. "The States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are among the highest renewable power generators in India. Both States, being urban and industrialised, demand for power is consistently high. Investor con-



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fidence is still high in both States for renewable energy in terms of open access projects and rooftop projects," said Manu Karan, Vice-President, CleanMax Solar.

Renewable energy capacity

As of October 31 this year, India's total installed renewable energy capacity stood at 83,379 MW, of which wind and solar (includes both ground-mounted and rooftop) segments accounted for 37,090 MW and 31,696 MW, re-

spectively. At 14,335 MW as of October 31, Karnataka was the number one State in terms of installed capacity of total renewable power, while Tamil Nadu, which was the top State 2-3 years ago, had an installed capacity of 13,457 MW during the period.

While Karnataka is the leader in the solar power sector with a total capacity of 6,497 MW, Tamil Nadu retains its top position in the wind power sector with an installed capacity of 9,232 MW.

Tamil Nadu's progress in solar has not been impressive, and capacity addition has hit a slow lane despite the announcement of new solar policy this year. It has achieved a little over 3,000 MW in solar capacity including rooftops as of October this year, up from 158 MW in September 2015. The State has set a target to achieve about 9,000 MW installed capacity by 2023 in solar.

Major worry

"For these two States to continue to lead renewable energy installation and adoption momentum, everyone has to worry about the respective State Discoms' financial health. They would have to reinvent their revenue model with a focus on how to add value to distributed generation and open-access power generation business models," said Karan.

"An option could be that Discoms offer, for a fee, payment security to renewable energy

developers, to assist in the collection of payments from the consumers. This can be enforced by taking necessary action against defaulters in case of any delay in payments. Also, certain restrictive policies on net-metering that are proving to be a hindrance in the adoption of rooftop solar should be eliminated for easy accessibility and availability for any customer to go green," he added.

Meanwhile, solar projects to the tune of 17,998 MW are at various stages of installations across the country and tenders for 36,278 MW capacity projects have been issued.

With new tenders of around 15,000 MW planned in the remaining period of 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Centre is racing towards its target in the solar power segment.

In wind power sector, bids for 15,100 MW of wind power projects have been issued so far, out of which projects of 12,162.50 MW capacity have been awarded.

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