MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉCONOMIE, DES FINANCES ET DE LA RELANCE
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En bref

Infrastructure

- Le Ministère des Routes annonce la création d'un groupe d'expert en charge de formuler des recommandations sur le développement de l'hydrogène vert, des véhicules électriques et autonomes, des biocarburants et des normes de sécurité et d'émissions des véhicules.

Ferroviaire

- Les Indian Railways ont mis en service plus de 800 nouveaux trains ces cinq dernières années.
- Le Ministre des Chemins de Fer annonce la rénovation de 150 gares à travers le pays et la connexion de 300 gares au réseau grande vitesse.

Développement et transports urbains

- Plus de cent villes possèderont leur réseau de metro d'ici 2047, selon le Secretary du *Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs* (MoHUA).
- En 2022, l'Inde comptera plus de 900 km de métro en opération selon le MoHUA pour 740 km actuellement.

Pétrole, gaz et biocarburants

- SpiceJet et l'aéroport de Bangalore s'engagent aux côtés d'une soixantaine d'entreprises du secteur aérien à porter la part des *sustainable aviation fuels (SAF)* dans l'approvisionnement mondial des avions à 10% d'ici 2030.
- Leréseau de gaz de ville pourrait desservir 70% de la population indienne en 2030 (20 à 30% aujourd'hui) selon une étude.

Electricité et énergies renouvelables

- Le gouvernement indien devrait publier prochainement des appels d'offre pour la construction de plus de 4 GWh de capacités de stockage sur batteries.
- Les Etats indiens s'alignent derrière le gouvernement central pour la mise en œuvre de la réforme du secteur de la distribution d'électricité.
- La hausse de la *Goods & Services Tax (GST)* à 12% sur les panneaux solaires annoncée par le gouvernement mi-septembre est entrée en vigueur au 1er octobre.
- Le gouvernement ouvre la voie à une refonte de la gestion du réseau de transport d'électricité, visant à alléger les contraintes d'accès au réseau pour les entreprises du secteur.
- Adani Green (AGEL) finalise l'acquisition de SB Energy (producteur d'énergie solaire) pour un montant de 3,5 Mds USD.
- L'Inde fait face à une pénurie de charbon qui menace l'alimentation de ses centrales électriques.
- Le PDG d'Adani annonce des investissements de 50-70 Mds USD sur dix ans dans le secteur énergétique, dont 20 Mds USD consacrés au développement des EnR.

Mobilités électriques

- Le gouvernement indien demande à *Coal India* de diversifier ses activités en faveur des mobilités électriques.
- L'Inde adopte des mesures obligeant la mise au rebut de véhicules thermiques ne respectant pas les standards d'émissions et incitant à leur remplacement par des véhicules électriques.
- TVS Motor et Tata Power signent un Memorandum of Understanding visant le développement d'un réseau de bornes de recharge électrique pour deux-roues.

Environnement et qualité de l'air

- Les nouveaux standards de qualité de l'air établis par l'OMS classifient la quasi-totalité de l'Inde en territoire pollué.
- Le Ministre des Sciences de la Terre détaille les engagements de l'Inde pour réduire ses émissions de CO2 en Antarctique.
- Le gouvernement propose une mise à jour de la réglementation sur la gestion forestière pour libéraliser les lois en vigueur tout en préservant des zones sanctuaires.

Revue de presse

1. Infrastructure

Road transport ministry to set up expert group on road transport

Financial Express, 05/10/2021

The ministry of road transport and highways (MoRTH) plans to set up an expert group to advise it on formulating strategies and policies regarding road transport, including the automotive sector.

The expert advisory group (EAG) will consist of five members. It will advise the ministry on issues like strategising policy on the use of alternative fuel, hydrogen fuel and bio fuel, electric vehicles, vehicle emission standards and driverless vehicles.

It will also advise the ministry on vehicle emission standards, central motor rules and regulations, design and safety of vehicles, and formulation of rules for upgrades as per European/ international standards.

The members, to be selected on a search-cum-selection basis, will have to be eminent in domains related to automotive and road transport sectors.

"Domain experts shall ensure that there should be no conflict of interest in their engagement with EAG during the period. They should possess very high integrity and maintain confidentiality," MoRTH said in a notice seeking expression of interest from domain experts.

2. Ferroviaire

Indian Railways introduced over 800 new trains in last five years, says RTI reply

Financial Express, 06/10/2021

In the last five years after the Railway Budget was merged with the General Budget in the year 2016, over 800 new trains were introduced across the Indian Railways network and the practice of one-time announcement of trains was ended by the national transporter, an RTI reply has revealed. The Railway Board in its RTI reply to a query made by Madhya Pradesh based Chandra Shekhar Gaur said no new trains were introduced in the financial year 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic which led to the suspension of all existing passenger train services. While the Railway Ministry did not launch any new trains during the Covid-hit 2020-21, it brought in as many as 144 new train services in 2019-20, 266 services in 2018-2019, 170 services in 2017-2018 and 223 services in 2016-2017, a PTI report said.

While presenting the Railway Budget in fiscal 2015-16, Union Minister Suresh Prabhu did not announce a single new train or extension of train services. However, Prabhu's predecessor, D V Sadananda Gowda, who presented the budget for the financial year 2014-15, had announced five new 'Jansadharan' trains, five premium trains and six air-conditioned trains, 27 new express trains, eight new passenger services, five DEMU services as well as two MEMU services. A railway official was quoted in the report saying the announcement of new train services was often done for political reasons.

Nowadays, according to him, things have been rationalized and the announcement of new trains will be made when and where there is a need for them.

As Railway Minister in the financial year 2011-2012, Mamata Banerjee announced a total of 56 new trains. Moreover, in 2012-13, as many as 72 trains were introduced in the Budget. The following financial year, 112 trains were introduced and in fiscal 2014-15, 43 new trains were announced. PM Narendra Modi has already announced that to mark the 75 years of Indian Independence, the national transporter will introduce 75 new Vande Bharat Express' by August 2023.

150 railway stations to be redeveloped: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

The Economic Times, 07/10/2021

As many as 150 railway stations will be redeveloped while 300 will be connected with a high speed corridor, said Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw here on Saturday.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given me this responsibility and my father has wished me to bring smiles on the faces of each passenger. I would try my best to rise to the expectations of both," he said during the foundation-laying ceremony for a building at a railway station here.

It was Vaishnaw's first visit to Jodhpur after assuming the charge of the railway minister. As many as 150 railway stations will be redeveloped in entire country, of which, eight stations in Rajasthan will be developed in first phase, he said. He said the eight station to be redeveloped in the state are Jaipur, Gandhinagar (Jaipur), Jodhpur, Ajmer, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Abu Road (Sirohi).

He further said 300 stations will be connected with a high speed corridor. He said the work on the electrification of rail lines is under progress at a fast pace and it would be completed in the next a year and a half. "Electrification would lead to the realisation of Atma Nirbhar Bharat," he said.

3. Développement et transports urbains

At least 100 cities in India to have their own Metro networks by 2047, says top official

Hindustan Times, 07/10/2021

With Metro train projects already functional or in the pipeline in several cities across the country, at least 100 cities will have their own such networks by 2047 -- the 100th year of independence -- Durga Shanker Mishra, secretary, Union housing and urban affairs ministry, has said. Mishra made this observation while delivering his remarks on the second day of the New India Urban Expo in Lucknow, on Wednesday.

"In 2047, when the country marks the 100th year of its independence, we will have Metro trains running in at least 100 cities. The total length of the Metro network in the country currently stands at 500 kilometers. By 2047, its length will have increased 10 folds to 5000 kilometers," Mishra said, according to Hindustan Times' sister publication Live Hindustan.

The official also projected that once the Covid-19 pandemic is over, the daily ridership of this mode of transit, across all networks, will rise to 10 million. "Before the pandemic, up to 8.5 million people were travelling on Metro trains each day. At

present, their number is at around 3-3.5 million," he further said.

Mishra also heaped praise upon other related modes of transit such as Metrolite, Metro Neo and Water Metro, saying that these cost less than a Metro project.

At present, India's Metro network is the fifth-largest globally, with trains operating in cities such as Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Jaipur, Gurugram, Noida, Lucknow etc. Projects are lined up in various other cities as well. Kolkata Metro, launched in 1984, is the oldest while Delhi Metro, which commenced operations in 2002, is the second-oldest, as well as the largest and busiest.

India will have 900 km of operation metro network by 2022, says Puri

Mint, 07/10/2021

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday said that nearly 740 km of metro lines are operational currently in various cities in India. The minister was speaking at the inauguration of the 1.2-km Najafgarh-Dhansa Bus Stand corridor of Delhi Metro's Grey Line. On Saturday evening, Puri inaugurated the corridor along with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

"We are going to cross major milestones. Nearly 740 km or so of metro lines are operational in various cities in India, and the network span is 'steadily scheduled to rise', and we have various steps planned out throughout the country. So, it will be over 900 km, I think by 2022," he said, adding that 900 km of operational metro network will be an achievement in itself.

He further added, "Besides, another 1,000 km metro lines are under construction in various cities in India, so the total span will be close to 2,000 km in coming years."

Lauding various achievements of the Delhi Metro amid the pandemic, Puri said that he hopes the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Limited (DMRC), under the leadership of its chief Mangu Singh, its ridership can be ramped back to 65 lakh a day as was before the Covid pandemic, or perhaps even higher, taking into account other factors.

The overall ridership in metros across the country was 85 lakh in pre-Covid time.

With the opening of Najafgarh-Dhansa Bus Stand corridor, Delhi Metro further enters the interior areas of Najafgarh in outer and semi-urban areas. The DMRC span has now increased to nearly 392 km with 286 stations (including the Noida–Greater Noida Metro Corridor and Rapid Metro, Gurgaon)

The Union minister said, "Delhi Metro is a trailblazer transportation system in the country and the work on expanding the metro lines was literally just a start, and with the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) and other projects we are poised to take it to a much higher level in the coming years."

Delhi will also become one of the most beautiful cities in the world, he said.

Under the Delhi Metro's Phase-IV, 65.10 km of new metro lines shall be constructed across three priority corridors comprising 46 metro stations. These new sections shall provide interconnectivity among the already operational sections of the Delhi Metro.

The Mukundpur-Maujpur, R K Ashram-Janakpuri West and Aerocity-Tughlakabad corridors were approved by the Union Cabinet in March 2019.

The other three proposed corridors of Phase-IV, which have not yet been approved by the government are Rithala-Bawana-Narela, Inderlok-Indraprastha and Lajpat Nagar-Saket G Block.

Ambassador of Japan to India, Satoshi Suzuki, who joined over video link from the Embassy, said the Delhi Metro is a "shining example" of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Secretary, Housing and Urban Affairs, Durga Shankar Mishra said about 1,050 km of metro lines were under construction in 27 cities.

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation earns Rs 19.5 crore from sale of 3.55 million carbon credits

Financial Express, 06/10/2021

Delhi Metro has earned a noteworthy amount of Rs 19.5 crores from 3.55 million carbon credits' sale, which it had collected from 2012 to 2018. Being a pioneer in the country in quantifying climate change benefits from its operations, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has a number of dedicated projects to its credit oriented towards energy efficiency. In the year 2007, DMRC became the world's first Metro network to be registered by the UN under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which allowed the Delhi Metro rail network to claim carbon credits for its Regenerative Braking Project.

According to DMRC, the CDM is a project-based Green House Gas offset mechanism, allowing the public and private sector in high-income nations the opportunity to purchase carbon credits from projects reducing greenhouse gas emissions in low-income or middle-income countries as part of their efforts to meet global emissions targets under the Kyoto protocol. Clean Development Mechanism projects generate emissions credits known as Certified Emission Reductions (CERs), which are then purchased and traded. One CER is equivalent to one ton of Carbon dioxide (eq) emission reduced. Delhi Metro's first CDM project was based on regenerative braking technology. Till 2012, carbon credits generated from this project were sold for an amount of Rs 9.55 crore.

The second CDM project is based on Modal Shift's principle. Under this project, the carbon footprint of people travelling by metro system is much lesser than that of the same journeys performed by other transport modes. So far, the Delhi Metro rail network has registered four projects viz MRTS PoA project, Regenerative Braking project, Modal Shift project, and Solar project with UNFCCC, all of which are the first of their kind in the world. Apart from this, in the year 2014, the Delhi Metro rail network also became the world's first ever metro system to be registered with the prestigious 'Gold Standard Foundation', Switzerland. Till now, Delhi Metro has registered four projects with the Gold Standard Foundation.

Since the year 2015, DMRC has also been offering CDM consultancy services to other Metro networks in India, allowing them to earn carbon credits from their project. Already other metro networks like Mumbai Metro, Chennai Metro, Gujarat Metro, etc., have registered their projects under the DMRC's Program of Activities project allowing them to earn carbon credits as well

as contribute to India's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution in compliance with the Paris Agreement.

4. Pétrole, gaz et biocarburants

Spicejet among 60 companies committed to take global sustainable aviation fuel supply to 10% by 2030

Moneycontrol, 23/09/2021

At least 60 companies globally, including Spicejet and Bangalore airport from India, have committed to accelerate their efforts to take the supply and use of sustainable aviation fuel to 10 per cent of global jet aviation fuel supply by 2030, the World Economic Forum (WEF) said on Thursday.

Releasing a "2030 Ambition Statement", the WEF said carbon-free energy is in sight in some sectors but progress on abating carbon emissions in the aviation sector has been slower.

Signatory companies to the Statement represent a global group of airlines, airports, fuel suppliers and other industry stakeholders who are making a mission-critical commitment on the path to net-zero emissions by 2050.

The World Economic Forum's Clean Skies for Tomorrow Coalition – whose mission is to accelerate the deployment of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) – has achieved a milestone on the path to net-zero emissions by 2050, by working together to power global aviation with 10 per cent SAF by 2030, it added.

As aviation remains a "hard to abate" sector in reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, strong climate action from the industry is particularly important as travel begins to return to pre-pandemic levels, it said.

The 60 organisations who have signed the 2030 Ambition Statement include Accenture, ACME, Airbus, Airports Council International, American Airlines, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), Biodiesel Association of India (BDAI), Boeing, bp, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways and Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW).

These also include Delta Air Lines, Dubai Airports, Fraport, Heathrow Airport, Indian Institute of Petroleum, International Airlines Group, Japan Airlines, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, oneworld alliance, Praj Industries Ltd, Punjab Renewable Energy Systems Pvt Ltd, Qatar Airways, SpiceJet, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), United Airlines and Virgin Atlantic.

The signatory companies also include non-aviation companies that rely on corporate air travel for their business operations, demonstrating that the responsibility of decarbonizing the industry lies with all those who depend on the aviation sector.

This statement is also in full support of the UN High Level Climate Champions' 2030 Breakthrough Outcome for aviation, one of over 30 sectoral near-term targets that are critical to halving emissions by 2030 and delivering the promise of the Paris Agreement.

Synthesized from sustainable, renewable feedstocks – such as municipal waste, agricultural residues and waste lipids, or

developed through a power-to-liquid route – SAF has already fuelled more than 250,000 commercial flights.

Difficulties, however, remain in getting SAF to scale up production due to its prohibitively high price gap with fossil-based jet fuel, resulting in a "chicken and egg" problem with supply and demand.

The WEF said costs will fall if production scales up, but fuel providers are facing headwinds due to high price pressure on low SAF demand, and high risks associated with policy and investment uncertainty.

Demonstrating sufficient demand and policy certainty will be crucial to building investor confidence, hence the power of this major commitment from the leading companies in the aviation energy value chain, it added.

CGD network may cover 70% of India's population by 2030

Mint, 06/10/2021

Gas demand will continue to grow in India in the medium term buoyed by increasing coverage of the city gas distribution (CGD) network, according to analysts.

As much as 70% of the population is expected to come under the CGD network by 2030, up from 20-30% at present. Improving gas pipeline connectivity with the doubling of the network compared to the current 50% utilization, an estimated 15% growth over two years in production of domestic gas, which is cheaper than liquefied natural gas (LNG) is expected to incentivize conversion to gas from fossil fuels. "With the completion of expansion of CGD network bid out during round 9 and 10, we expect population coverage to increase to 71% from <20% levels in 2014. From an area perspective as well, coverage will likely go up to 53% from <10% levels in 2014," HSBC said in a 1 October report.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) is working on its 11th bidding round with the aim of covering 300 districts, which will increase the reach to the entire population, it said.

Within the CGD network, expansion in domestic piped natural gas (PNG) connections and increase in gas usage as transportation fuel through compressed natural gas (CNG) looks more promising.

Over the last eight years, India's natural gas demand has largely remained stagnant. However, gas consumed by CGD recorded a compound annual growth rate of 8% over FY11-21 to 25 million metric standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd), boosting its share to 16% of India's total gas demand from 9% in FY12.

Crisil Ratings predicts sales volume of CNG and PNG to surge 25-27% this fiscal, driven by a recovery in vehicular mobility and industrial activity, as well as a strong price advantage of gas, compared with competing fuels such as petrol, diesel, and furnace oil.

The growth will help city gas distributors sustain robust operating margins of 28%, even as higher LNG prices are partly absorbed to cushion the impact on consumers.

Last fiscal saw city gas volumes contract 13% as both demand for CNG and industrial PNG, which together contribute 90% of total city gas consumption, were hard hit by the pandemic, especially in the first quarter.

5. Electricité et énergies renouvelables

Bids for 4,000 MWhr battery storage projects to be invited soon: Power Minister R K Singh

The Economic Times, 16/09/2021

India will soon invite global bids for battery storage projects totalling 4,000 MWhr (megawatt hours), Union Power Minister R K Singh said on Thursday. He made the announcement while addressing the US India Strategic Partnership Forum and industry leaders in a Virtual Energy Industry Roundtable, the Ministry of Power said in a statement. Singh added that a battery project of 12 gigawatt hours (GWhr) will be set up in Ladakh.

"In the near future, India will have bids to invite global and domestic manufacturers for developing battery storage...India will soon have bids for 4,000 MWhr Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)...and later will take up 12 GWhr project in Ladakh," the statement quoted Singh as saying. India has set an ambitious target of having 175 GW renewable energy (RE) capacity by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030. At present, India has 100 GW installed solar and wind capacity and after adding hydro, the total installed renewable capacity is 146 MW, he said. Another 63 GW of renewable capacity is under construction, Singh said.

The minister also informed the conference that India would be inviting bids for green hydrogen in the next 3-4 months to pave the way for viable usage of hydrogen as fuel. "We have been working continuously to increase our pumped hydro storage capacity... the world needs to come up with more number of eletrolyzers, battery storage facilities, etc to bring economies of scale in these technologies and make these commercially viable," he said. PTI ABI ABM ABM

All states on board for power distribution reforms scheme

The Economic Times, 23/09/2021

All states have agreed to come on board for the Rs 3.03 lakh crore state power distribution reforms scheme and most are expected to submit their consent by October 31, power and renewable energy minister R K Singh said on Thursday. Singh held region wise meeting with state power ministers' on September 21 and Thursday.

"All states are confident to hering down losses and avail the money under the scheme. Most states said they will submit their consent by October 31," he told reporters at a media briefing.

Singh said teams from central government will reach out to states for hand holding in preparing their proposals. Singh has asked states to carry out system studies on demand assessment and system strengthening before submitting their proposals. Funding under the revamped distribution scheme will be released based on progress in operational and financial improvements in distribution utilities.

The reforms-based and results-linked, revamped distribution sector scheme has been launched with an outlay of Rs.3,03,758 crore and estimated GBS of Rs 97,631 crore from the Centre. Network strengthening and modernisation, financial viability and smart prepaid metering are the key aspects of this scheme.

Higher GST rate for solar PV module and other renewal energy equipment to come into effect today

Business Line, 01/10/2021

Rates on 10 ores and concentrates raised to 18%

The Finance Ministry has notified 12 per cent rate of goods & services tax (GST) on solar photo-voltaic (PV) module and other renewal energy equipment with effect from Friday. The notification also prescribes 18 per cent GST rate for 10 types of minerals ores and concentrate. All these are follow-ups to recommendations by the GST Council and aims to end the anomaly of inverted duty structure.

However experts say this will affect consumers.

According to the notification, renewable energy devices and parts for their manufacture such as bio-gas plants, solar power based devices, solar power generator, wind mills, wind operated electricity generator (WOEG), waste to energy plants and devices,solar lanterns and solar lamps, ocean waves/tidal wave energy devices and plants, and photo voltaic cells, whether or not assembled in modules or made up into panels, will attract GST at the rate of 12 per cent against 5 per cent.

70:30 regime

It has also been clarified that the existing regime of 70:30 ratio will continue. Under the existing regime, 70 per cent of the gross value of the contract was considered for the supply of goods, attracting a 5 per cent rate – which will now be 12 per cent.

Tushar Aggarwal, Founder Partner of Tattvam Advisors, said that the decision to hike the GST rate to 12 per cent from 5 per cent on renewable energy parts and devices, including EPC contracts of renewable energy projects such as solar power, windmills, bio-gas plants, etc. to the extent of goods, will negatively affect growth and development in the renewable energy sector.

"Instead of providing the mechanism to allow refund of unutilised credit on input services and capital goods, the government has increased the GST rate on output supplies which will put additional burden in the hands of consumers. Further, the rate change will create transitional issues for ongoing renewable energy projects," he said.

Inverted rate structure

This issue was discussed in the Fitment Committee (part of GST Council, comprising of tax officials from the Centre and States). After detailed examination, the committee felt that the 5 per cent rate on renewable equipment has created an inverted rate structure for these items as most of their inputs attract 18 per cent rate. There is need to correct inversion in GST rate for these equipments. While a NIL rate on solar energy causes an inversion for solar power as well, the committee noted that correction of inversion of renewable equipment would at least help domestic manufacturing of these items.

Accordingly it recommended GST at the rate of 12 per cent, which was accepted by GST Council in its meeting on September 17 after which the Ministry notified the changes.

Ores and concentrates

The notification also prescribed rate of 18 per cent for ores and concentrate of Iron, Manganese, Copper, Nickel, Cobalt, Aluminium, Lead, Zinc, Tin and Chromium. It was said that these ores are used in the production of metals which attract GST rate of 18 per cent. However, while ore/concentrate attract GST at the rate of 5 per cent, their input services like royalty attract GST at the rate of 18 per cent. Thus, it was said that ore/ concentrate suffers a significant inverted duty structure and there is need for correction.

Centre notifies new rules providing easier access to electricity transmission network

ETEnergyworld, 03/10/2021

Power Ministry has promulgated the Electricity (Transmission System Planning, Development and Recovery of Inter-State Transmission Charges) Rules 2021. This paves the way for overhauling of transmission system planning, towards giving power sector utilities easier access to the electricity transmission network across the country.

At present, generating companies apply for long-term access (LTA) based on their supply tie-ups, while medium-term and short-term transmission access is acquired within the available margins. Based on LTA application, incremental transmission capacity is added. A number of sector developments, such as the increasing focus on renewable energy, and the development of the market mechanism, necessitated a review of the existing transmission planning framework based on LTA.

The rules underpin a system of transmission access which is termed as a General Network Access (GNA) in the inter-state transmission system. This provides flexibility to the States as well as the generating stations to acquire, hold and transfer transmission capacity as per their requirements.

In a major change from the present system of taking transmission access, power plants will not have to specify their target beneficiaries. The rules will also empower state power distribution and transmission companies to determine their transmission requirements and build them. Also, states will be able to purchase electricity from short term and medium term contracts and optimise their power purchase costs.

Apart from introducing GNA, the rules also specify clear roles of various agencies involved in the transmission planning process. The Central Electricity Authority shall prepare a short-term plan every year on rolling basis for next 5 years and prospective plan every alternate year on rolling basis for next 10 years. The Central Transmission Utility shall prepare an implementation plan for inter-State transmission system every year on a rolling basis for up to next 5 years which will take into account aspects such as right -of-way and progress of the generation and demand in various parts of the country.

The rules specify how the existing LTA would be transitioned into General Network Access. The rules also outline the recovery of GNA charges from the users of the transmission network and assign the responsibility of billing, collection and disbursement of inter state transmission charges to the Central Transmission Utility.

The rules have enabled, for the first time, that the transmission capacity can be sold, shared or purchased by the States and generators. The rules prescribe that excess drawal or injection over the GNA capacity sanctioned shall be charged at rates which are at least 25 per cent higher and this will ensure that the entities do not under-declare their GNA capacity. The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) has been empowered to bring out detailed regulations on GNA in inter state transmission systems.

The Central government has notified these rules with a view to streamline the process of planning, development and recovery of investment in the transmission system. The rules are aimed at encouraging investments in the generation and transmission sectors. The rules will enable the country to develop deeper markets.

Transmission system is the vital linkage in the power sector value chain connecting the generation and the demand. The Central government is committed towards ensuring adequacy of transmission system for the supply of power from one State to another State and across regions. The rules brought out by the Central government underpin that "electricity transmission planning shall be made in such way that the lack of availability of the transmission system does not act as a brake on the growth of different regions and the transmission system shall, as far as possible, to be planned and developed matching with growth of generation and load and while doing the planning, care shall be taken that there is no wasteful investment".

In a series of other reforms carried out earlier, the Ministry had separated the Central Transmission Utility from POWERGRID to provide transparency and a level playing field in the bids for transmission and reduced the lock-in period for transmission projects in order to attract investments and more competition. The Ministry of Power also issued the Right of Consumer rules, which empower consumers and rules laying down the ceiling for late payment surcharge.

AGEL buys SB Energy India in a $3,5 bn deal

Mint, 04/10/2021

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) has completed the acquisition of Japan's SoftBank Group Corp.'s and Bharti Enterprises Ltd-owned solar power producer SB Energy India for an enterprise value of $3.5 billion, AGEL said in a statement on Monday.

SB Energy India has a total renewable portfolio of 5 gigawatt (GW) spread across four states in India.

"Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), the world's largest solar power developer, successfully completed the acquisition of SB Energy Holdings Ltd (SB Energy India) in an all-cash deal for which definitive agreements were signed on 18 May 2021," the statement said.

"The portfolio holds 1,700 MW of operational renewable assets, 2,554 MW of assets under construction and 700 MW of assets near construction2. Solar capacity accounts for 84% of the portfolio (4,180

MW), wind-solar hybrid capacity accounts for 9% (450 MW) and wind capacity accounts for 7% (324 MW), the statement added.

AGEL recently raised $750 million through a green bond to fund the equity for its under-construction projects. There is a growing interest in India's green economy. Royal Dutch Shell is in talks with state-run Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL) to invest $500 million in its decentralized solar business as reported by Mint on Monday.

"The value accretive acquisition brings AGEL's operational portfolio to 5.4 GW and overall portfolio to 19.8 GW," the statement said.

AGEL recently announced that it will acquire a 40 megawatt (MW) operational solar project from Essel Green at an enterprise value of Rs219 crore.

"With this deal, SB Energy India is now a 100% subsidiary of AGEL. Earlier, it was a 80:20 joint venture between Japan-based SoftBank Group Corp and Bharti Group. The transaction pegs SB Energy India at an enterprise valuation of USD 3.5 Bn (~Rs. 26,000 Cr) and marks the largest acquisition in the renewable energy sector in India," the statement said.

France's Total has invested $2.5 billion for acquiring a 50% stake in 2.35GW operating solar assets of AGEL and a 20% stake in AGEL. The Adani-Total JV plans to commission 25GW by 2025. This comes in the backdrop of India's solar and wind generation recording an all-time high of 43.1GW on 27 July. India has also crossed the 100 GW milestone of installed renewable energy capacity.

"Just last week, Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani had announced that the Group would invest over 20 Bn dollars across the next 10 years in renewable energy generation," the statement added.

India's installed renewable energy capacity is 147.05 GW, including hydropower projects of 46.37 GW. The country has installed solar and wind energy capacity of 100.68 GW with India's solar and wind generation recording an all-time high of 43.1 GW on 27 July. India has reached 38.5% of its installed power capacity from non-fossil fuels and this will go up to 66% by 2030, according to the government.

Coal crisis leaves India with few options to avoid power crunch

Mint, 06/10/2021

India is grappling with an escalating crisis as stockpiles of coal, the fuel used to generate about 70% of the nation's electricity, dwindle to the lowest in years just as power demand is set to surge.

Coal-fired power stations have an average of four days' worth of stock of the fuel, according to the latest data, and more than half the plants are already on alert for outages. Power Minister Raj Kumar Singh has warned that the nation could be handling a supply squeeze for as long as six months.

Power shortages are already emerging, and the gap between available electricity supply and peak demand widened to more than 4 gigawatts on Monday, according to government data from power ministry.

While shortages of coal in China, and that nation's power crunch, have commanded most attention, it's India that's facing a potentially worsening scenario.

Industrial and domestic consumption usually hits peak levels as India enters a festival season from later in October and that could risk stalling a rebound in Asia's third-biggest economy, which has been recovering from an unprecedented 7.3% contraction in the fiscal year ended in March.

Here are some potential next steps and constraints in India's crisis:

Mining Rebound

State-run Coal India Ltd., the world's top producer of the fuel, is seeking to increase daily coal supply to 1.9 million tons by mid-October from about 1.7 million tons currently, an increase that would go a long way to help ease the deficit. Deliveries to power plants are currently short by between 60,000 and 80,000 tons a day, according to Anil Kumar Jain, India's coal secretary.

Coal production has been hit by severe flooding in India's eastern and central states during the typical monsoon season, with mines and key logistics routes impacted. Any recovery will hinge on the weather -- rains need to stop to allow mines to ramp up operations and for coal trucks to resume deliveries.

On Tuesday the government said it will allow companies that have been allotted coal and lignite mines for their own use to sell 50% of their annual output in a bid to ease shortages.

While coal stockpiles at power plants are perilously low, it remains unlikely the operations will completely run out of fuel. Government ministries and industry are working to closely monitor stocks, and could move again to divert supplies away from industrial users -- like aluminum and cement makers -- to prioritize power generation. That'd leave those industries faced with their own dilemma: curb output, or pay high prices for imported coal.

Supply Controls

Rationing domestic power supplies, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, may emerge as one of India's easiest solutions -- though it'd pose other challenges for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Indian power distributors do typically cut supplies to certain areas on a rotational basis when generation is lower than demand, and an extension of load-shedding would likely be considered if power plants take any further hits.

However, doing so would risk jeopardizing the country's fragile economic recovery and Modi's government is already facing criticism for failing to generate enough new jobs.

Price Incentive

Soaring power prices could potentially make it viable for some coastal plants to use high-cost imported coal, easing some of the burden on domestic miners.

The country meets around three-quarters of power demand with locally-produced coal, and much of the rest is imported from countries including Indonesia, South Africa and Australia.

Spot prices of power sold through the Indian Energy Exchange Ltd. jumped more than 63% year-on-year in September to average 4.4 rupees ($0.06) a kilowatt hour and were as high as 13.95 rupees on Wednesday,

according to official data. That means some plants likely could now look to snap up prompt cargoes of seaborne coal, even with prices of the commodity at a record.

New guidelines are being drafted to allow generation companies to sell surplus electricity on the exchanges, in part to spur idled plants back into action. Two giant plants in Gujarat state owned by Tata Power Co. and Adani Power Ltd. are among those that have been mothballed as a result of issues including high imported coal prices.

Fuller Dams

The same monsoon rains that have flooded coal mines are likely to boost hydro-power generation.

Large hydro-electric projects on dams are India's major electricity source after coal and the sector performs at its peak around the rainy season which typically extends from June to October.

Generation from the projects accounted for about 14% of India's total during the six months through Sept. 30, and that share could increase if the plants can operate at higher utilization rates. Recent data shows hydro-power generation is above target in a sign that companies are beginning to ramp up output.

Turn to Gas

There could be a larger role for natural gas to play, even with global prices currently surging. India has almost 25 gigawatts of gas-based generation capacity, though nearly 80% of that capacity remains unused because of high prices of the fuel.

At current prices, imported LNG cargoes bought on the surging spot market aren't a solution for Indian power generators, according to Arun Kumar Singh, chairman of Bharat Petroleum Corp, India's second biggest fuel retailer which also buys and sells LNG.

However, in a desperate situation the gas-powered fleet could help prevent any widespread power outages. State-run generator NTPC Ltd., for example, has idled capacity that could can be fired up in around 30 minutes if needed and is connected to a gas grid.

Pricey Diesel

Any switch to oil products like fuel oil and diesel could be limited due to pollution curbs and prohibitively high prices. As it stands, the lack of large oil-fired plants directly connected to the grid means gas-to-fuel swaps are unlikely to take place on a grand scale.

Some commercial establishments, including hospitals and malls, as well as small industries use diesel-based generators to ensure uninterrupted power supply in case of outages. But record high diesel prices in the country will prevent their widespread use.

Gautam Adani says $50-70 bn investment planned across energy chain

ETEnergyWorld, 05/10/2021

Billionaire Gautam Adani on Monday said his infrastructure conglomerate will invest between USD 50-70 billion in organic and inorganic growth opportunities across the entire energy value chain over the next

decade. Speaking at an industry event, he said the port-to-energy group will invest over USD 20 billion in renewable energy generation alone.

"Over the next decade, we will invest over USD 20 billion in renewable energy generation. Our overall organic and inorganic investments across the entire green energy value chain will range between USD 50 billion and 70 billion," he said.

This will include investments with potential partners for electrolyzer manufacturing, backward integrations to secure the supply chain for our solar and wind generation businesses, and AI-based industrial cloud platforms.

He however did not give details of the areas where the investment will be made.

"Adani Group is not sitting still. We are tripling our solar power generation capacity over the next four years. This is a rate of growth currently unmatched by any other company anywhere on the planet," he said.

Stating that the group's renewables portfolio has reached the initial target of 25GW a full four years ahead of schedule, he said the conglomerate already is the world's largest solar power player.

"This puts us well on track to be the world's largest renewable power generating company by 2030," he said. Adani said last year he had seen India becoming a USD 28 trillion economy over the next three decades.

By 2050, India's per capita income will expand from about one-thirtieth of that of the US to one-third of the US.

"I fundamentally believe the Indian economy is still to hit its inflexion point of decades of double-digit growth. Therefore, I now think I may have understated my 2050 GDP projection of USD 28 trillion," he said.

He said the global effort to combat climate change will result in the creation of opportunities equal to trillions of dollars of investments.

These will include next-generation high-efficiency solar panels, low carbon materials that make the largest offshore wind turbines affordable, mainstreaming of carbon capture technologies, various fit-for-purpose battery technologies, algorithm-driven smarter and distributed grids, electric mobility, and hydrogen-related technologies.

6. Mobilités électriques

India asks Coal India to invest in electric vehicles, charging pods

ETEnergyWorld, 05/10/2021

India's coal ministry has asked state-run Coal India to diversify its interests to areas such as electric vehicles and charging stations, according to an agenda document on the ministry's website.

"Coal India must diversify its business and must explore prospects in sunrise industries electric charging pods, electric vehicles etc," the coal ministry said in a document titled "Ministry of Coal's agenda for 2021-22".

Coal India is the world's largest coal mining company by production and accounts for over 80% of India's output of the fuel.

India is the second-largest importer, consumer and producer of coal, and has the world's fourth-largest reserves. It mainly imports from Indonesia, Australia and South Africa.

The federal government-controlled miner has already announced plans to invest in solar wafer manufacturing and power generation, coal gasification, extraction of coal bed methane and setting up aluminium smelters.

India has also asked the miner to consider participating in foreign tenders seeking coal after meeting domestic demand.

"Traders/coal consumers of the neighboring countries can also participate in the Special Spot e-auction / Spot e-auction windows of Coal India," the document read.

The ministry also said a "robust media campaign" was needed for "perception management in the coal sector," adding that plans submitted by Coal India and its units were being finalized.

Indian utilities are currently scrambling to secure coal supplies as inventories hit critical lows after a surge in power demand from industries and sluggish imports due to record global prices push power plants to the brink.

Vehicle scrapping policy: A giant leap towards pollution free new India

Times of India, 05/10/2021

The past decade has seen a sharp rise in the sale of personal automobiles across the country. In order to ensure emission standards are adhered to, the government has mandated frequent tests for vehicles to determine their fitness for use. However, every vehicle has an estimated life, and irrespective of how well an owner takes care of their automobiles, after a certain period, the automobile starts to pollute the environment. In this context, the recently introduced Voluntary Vehicle-Fleet Modernization Program, or as it is better known, the vehicle scrapping policy is a forward-looking announcement by minister of road transport and highways, Nitin Gadkari.

The new policy mandates the scrapping of commercial vehicles older than 15 years and private vehicles older than 20 years who fail to pass a fitness test at an authorized Centre. According to data by the ministry of road transport and highways, this decision would impact 51 lakh light motor vehicles that are more than 20 years old and 34 lakh vehicles that are over 15 years old. Additionally, this would also bring a check on 17 lakh medium and heavy commercial vehicles that are older than 15 years and without valid fitness certificates.

In order to encourage responsible scrapping of vehicles, the government has decided to provide 4-6 percent of the ex-showroom price of the new vehicle as an incentive. Additionally, vehicle manufactures will be advised to offer discounts up to 5% on presenting a scrapping certificate and registration fees on the new vehicles will be

shelved. The policy exempts agriculture equipment and electric vehicles. The Centre has also proposed to state governments to provide up to 25 per cent discount on road tax for buyers who purchase electric vehicles after scrapping old automobiles.

This decision would not only help ensure the environment is protected, but also pave the way for a formal scrapping and recycling industry which is expected to generate 35,000 direct jobs. Additionally, the proposed framework will also support the local automotive sector in becoming the world's third-largest market by the year 2026. The scrapping policy would also add to India's "Make in India" mission and compliment Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision by encouraging investment, fostering innovation, enhancing skill development, and creating a world-class infrastructure.

I believe that the provisions to create an ecosystem for phasing out old, unfit and polluting vehicles would not only open avenues for recycling and the automobile industry but more importantly, ensure that environmental and healthcare concerns arising from it are addressed. Our country accounts for 2.5 million deaths per year because of air pollution. Research from across the world has further indicated how air pollution is one of the biggest causes of health concerns for all citizens. The Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in his briefing dated 27 October 2020 stated "It is found that pollution is contributing to mortality in COVID, that's well established by studies". A study published in the journal Cardiovascular Research also suggests that 15 percent of deaths across the world are linked with prolonged exposure to air pollution. Studies conducted in India also corroborate the correlation between caseload and areas with high usage of fossil fuels.

In addition to healthcare benefits, the scrapping policy is also going to reduce our imports bills on oil and metals required for the manufacturing of automobiles. This tried and tested model across the world has aided economies to recover from slowdown. Programs such as US's Car Allowance Rebate System (CARS) i.e. 'Cash for Clunkers', Germany's 'Umweltpramie' and Canada's 'Retire Your Ride' supported these countries to come out of the 2008 economic crisis. According to a study 28 million vehicles would be off the roads by 2024/25. That in itself is a huge business opportunity for banks and auto manufacturers.

The country has already made headways in establishing testing and scrapping infrastructure. Now, while upscaling it, we need to integrate it with urban planning to allocate ample land resources to set up Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF). The scrapping industry would gradually evolve and diversify to accommodate both big and small businesses in rural India. I hope the robust implementation of this program, by first targeting polluted cities, will reap optimum health and economic benefits for the country.

TVS Motor Company signs MoU with Tata Power to collaborate on electric two-wheeler charging eco-system in India

The Economic Times, 07/10/2021

TVS Motor Company on Tuesday announced that it has entered into a

strategic partnership with Tata Power to drive the comprehensive implementation of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) across India and deploy solar power technologies at TVS Motorlocations. The partnership aims to create a large dedicated electric two-wheeler charging infrastructure to accelerate electric mobility in India.

This will also give the customers of TVS iQube Electric access to the widespread charging network by Tata Power through the TVS Motor customer connect app and Tata Power EZ Charge app across India, the company said in a statement. It aims to create a regular AC charging network and a DC fast-charging network for electric two-wheelers. "Our partnership will substantially enhance customer convenience through world-class fast-charging solutions. Fitting to TVS Motor vision of electrification, we envisage a wide and reliable charging infrastructure for two and three-wheeler EV customers across India, powered by renewable sources of energy such as solar," said Sudarshan Venu. Joint Managing Director, TVS Motor Company.

The two companies will also explore opportunities to use solar energy to power select TVS Motor locations. "This collaboration will further leverage our expertise to enhance synergy between sustainable mobility and renewable energy integration resulting in the creation of robust EV charging eco-system across India," said Dr Praveer Sinha, CEO & MD, Tata Power. The company's MoU with Tata Power is in line with its commitment to expanding the presence of TVS iQube Electric in over 25 cities within the next few months. The electric scooter is presently available in Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, Kochi, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Surat, Vizag, Jaipur, and Ahmedabad.

Tata Power has an expansive network of over 5,000 home chargers and over 700 public chargers in more than 120 cities in India. The company is present across all segments of the EV eco-system– public charging, captive charging, home and workplace charging stations, and has deployed all types of chargers, including DC chargers and AC Chargers.

7. Environnement et qualité de l'air

New WHO air quality guidelines show almost all of India is polluted

India Today, 23/09/2021

In a bid to push countries towards clean energy, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has tightened the air quality guidelines for the first time since 2005. The UN body said that seven million people die every year from air pollution while it also results in the loss of millions more healthy years of life. The new guidelines put almost all of India in the polluted category.

The organisation has revised air quality levels for six pollutants that include particulate matter (PM), ozone (O), nitrogen dioxide (NO) sulfur dioxide (SO) and carbon monoxide (CO). Even at very low levels, research has shown "air pollution affects all parts of the body, from the brain to a growing baby in a mother's womb," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a news conference.

Globally, countries are under pressure to pledge bold emissions-cutting plans ahead of the UN climate conference in November

in Glasgow, Scotland. "Air pollution is one of the biggest environmental threats to human health, alongside climate change. Improving air quality can enhance climate change mitigation efforts while reducing emissions that will, in turn, improve air quality," WHO said in a statement.

NEW GUIDELINES

The new recommendations slash in half the WHO limits for a measure called PM2.5, which stands for particulate matter smaller than 2.5 micrometres or less than one-thirtieth the width of a human hair. That is small enough to travel deep into the lungs and even enter the bloodstream.

According to the new limits, average annual PM2.5 concentrations should be no higher than five micrograms per cubic meter. The old recommendations set the average annual limit at 10. But scientists have determined that long-term exposure to concentrations even that low still contributed to heart and lung diseases, stroke and other negative health impacts.

Announcing the new guidelines, the WHO said that "almost 80% of deaths related to PM2.5 could be avoided in the world if the current air pollution levels were reduced."

PM is primarily generated by fuel combustion in different sectors, including transport, energy, households, industry, and even agriculture. In 2013, outdoor air pollution and particulate matter were classified as carcinogenic by WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

ALMOST ALL OF INDIA POLLUTED

In 2019, a total of 90 per cent of the global population was breathing air considered unhealthy by the 2005 guidelines, according to WHO data. And some countries, including India, still have national standards that are lower than those 2005 recommendations. The new guidelines indicate that almost the entirety of India would be considered a polluted zone.

A recent report showed that the pollution levels have expanded geographically over time and increased so much in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh that an average person is now losing an additional 2.5 to 2.9 years of life expectancy. India is the most polluted country in the world, with more than 480 million people or about 40 per cent of its population living in the Indo-Gangetic plains in the north where pollution levels regularly exceed those found anywhere else in the world by an order of magnitude, stated the University of Chicago's Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) report.

The WHO said that disparities in air pollution exposure are increasing worldwide, particularly as low- and middle-income countries are experiencing growing levels of air pollution because of large-scale urbanization and economic development. "Countries with strong policy-driven improvements in air quality have often seen a marked reduction in air pollution, whereas declines over the past 30 years were less noticeable in regions with already good air quality," the UN agency said.

THE WAY FORWARD

Experts said that efforts to curb pollution by reducing fossil fuel use would provide a

double benefit, in both improving public health conditions and bringing down climate-warming emissions.

Reacting to the new guidelines, Greenpeace India said, "The WHO's updated Air Quality Guidelines are a firm warning about the severity of our air pollution crisis. Governments around the world must take bold action to ensure their cities and communities turn from sources of air pollution-related health risks to safe places for billions of humans to reside.

The agency urged governments to adopt WHO Air Quality Guidelines, which are based on the latest scientific understanding and seek alternatives to burning fossil fuels for power, transport and industry. "Establish private vehicle-free days or zones in urban areas to alleviate pollution and create green spaces in urban areas and encourage biodiversity by planting trees andencouraging wildflowers to grow."

The latest assessment comes weeks before world leaders assemble in the Scottish city of Glasgow for the Conference of Parties (CoP-26) Summit to pave the way forward in the fight against climate change as most countries remain behind in achieving Paris Agreement goals.

India committed to curtailing carbon emission in Antarctic atmosphere: Minister

ETEnergyWorld, 06/10/2021

India is committed to curtailing carbon emissions in the Antarctic atmosphere and comprehensive protection of its environment and designation as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Monday.

He was addressing an international conference commemorating the signing of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty in 1991. The treaty which came into force in 1998, designates Antarctica as a "natural reserve, devoted to peace and science".

Singh said that India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to curtailing carbon emissions in the Antarctic atmosphere.

India has already adopted the green energy initiative by experimenting with the feasibility of wind energy production and installed moderate output of Wind Energy Generators on an experimental basis, he said.

"The choice of Combined Heat and Power for Bharati station to reduce carbon emissions in the Antarctic also promotes India's pledge to protect the environment," said the Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences.

India has two active research stations: Maitri (commissioned in 1989) at Schirmacher Hills, and Bharati (commissioned in 2012) at Larsemann Hills in Antarctica. The country has successfully launched 40 annual scientific expeditions to Antarctica to date.

Noting that India is looking forward to contributing to the evolving Climate Change Response Work Programme of the Committee for Environmental Protection, he said climate-induced carbon dioxide

uptake by polar oceans causing acidification that destroys marine environments and ecosystems, gradually affecting fisheries and propelling disastrous biome shifts is one of the challenges for the next 30 years.

Singh reiterated that India also anticipates tourism growth and illegal unreported and unregulated fishing as potential issues.

Govt proposes changes to Forest Conservation Act

The Indian Express, 06/10/2021

The Centre has proposed an amendment to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, to liberalise forest laws. The amendment proposed by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) also puts in place stringent norms for forest conservation by increasing penal provisions for offenses and maintaining "pristine forests" where no non-forestry activity will be allowed under any circumstances.

The ministry sent all states a copy of the proposed amendments on October 2, seeking their objections and suggestions within 15 days. Sources said a draft proposal will be drawn and placed before Parliament once these suggestions have been taken into consideration.

According to the proposal, deemed forests listed by state governments up to 1996 will continue to be considered forest land. Land that was acquired by the Railways and the road ministries before 1980, but on which forests came up, will no longer be considered forests.

The Forest (Conservation) Act (FCA) was promulgated in 1980. Before the 1996 Supreme Court judgement in TN Godavarman Thirumulpad versus Union of India and Others, forest land was only that as was defined by the 1927 Forest Act. But the court included all areas which are recorded as 'forest' in any government record, irrespective of ownership, recognition and classification. However, the ministry's concept note points out, "Identification of such land is subjective and arbitrary to some extent…Considering any private area as forest would restrict the right of an individual to use his/her own land for any non-forestry activity."

"This is particularly problematic in the case of railways and roads. There is land that these ministries own but they cannot use it without permission from the MoEFCC. And these permissions can take anywhere between 2-4 years, thus causing delays," said environment secretary RP Gupta. He said that even plantations carried out along roads fall under the category of deemed forests, thus "cutting off access to road amenities like petrol pumps…This makes the road useless. So, we removed this provision in the amendment."

The proposal also says that the amendment would "reduce the flow from foreign exchange for import of wood and wood derivatives to the tune of approximately Rs 45,000 crore" by encouraging plantations and afforestation.

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