



Shri R.K. Singh launches 'Saubhagya' Web-Portal – a Platform for Monitoring Universal Household Electrification

Saubhagya Web-portal has wider scope for ensuring transparency and accelerating household electrification in rural as well as urban areas in the country

Power Minister directs NTPC to mix Crop Residue with Coal, upto 10%, for all its Thermal Power Plants to reduce its burning and hence Air Pollution

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Shri R.K. Singh, Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, launched the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – 'Saubhagya' Web Portal here today. The portal can be accessed at <http://saubhagya.gov.in>.

Addressing the media during the event, Shri Singh said that the Saubhagya Dashboard is a platform for monitoring household electrification progress, which would disseminate information on Household Electrification Status (State, District, village-wise), Household Progress on live basis, State-wise Target vs Achievement, Monthly Electrification Progress, etc.

The Minister said that achieving electrification of 4 crore households is a big challenge, nevertheless the Government is committed to achieve this target by December 2018, with the cooperation of all the States. This would, in turn, bring about a huge improvement in the Quality of Life of the Citizens of India. The Government is bringing a change in the Power ecosystem in the Country by pushing towards mandatory metering of all new electrical connections through pre-paid or smart meters. This would make paying of electricity bills viable for the poor, reduce power losses and increase compliance in paying electricity bills, Shri Singh said.

Talking about the Saubhagya Portal, the Minister said that through this online platform every State would feed in the current status of progress of electrification works, hence enabling the creation of a system of accountability for the State utility/ DISCOM and help in increasing their viability. Further, Seven States including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Mizoram, Nagaland, Chhattisgarh and Assam have given their requirements to the Power Ministry for funds under the Saubhagya Scheme, which would be released soon for aiding the respective electrification works, Shri Singh added.

The Saubhagya web-portal has a feature on village electrification camps and in line with that, DISCOMs will organize camps in villages/cluster of villages for facilitating on-the-spot filling up of application forms and to complete requisite documentation to expedite release of electricity connections to households, Shri Singh informed. Further, all States have been asked to announce the schedules of the village camps to be held and hence create awareness among the people about the one-stop facility for getting electricity connections.

DISCOMs/ State Power Department will also adopt the innovative mechanism through dedicated web-portal/Mobile App for collection/consolidation of data in electronic form including collection of application form for obtaining electricity connections. The details of consumers viz., Name and Mobile number/Bank account/Driving License/Voter ID etc., as available, would be collected by the DISCOMs.

On the sidelines of the Saubhagya Web portal launch, Shri Singh also informed that the Ministry has directed NTPC to mix straw/ crop residue pellets with coal, upto 10%, for power generation in all of its Thermal Power Plants. This step would reduce crop residue burning in agriculture dominated States like Punjab, Haryana etc. and hence reduce air pollution that is currently being experienced. The Minister further said that this step would give the farmers a monetary return of Rs. 5500/ tonne of crop residue and hence create a market for it. The infrastructure for sourcing the crop residue from farmers is being set up and NTPC would soon be issuing tenders in this regard. The Ministry is in talks with all State Governments to make this step mandatory for all the Thermal Power Plants in their jurisdiction, Shri Singh added.

BACKGROUND OF SAUBHAGYA SCHEME

‘Saubhagya’ scheme was launched by Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on 25th September, 2017 with an outlay of Rs. 16,320 Crores including Budgetary Support of Rs. 12,320 Crores. Under Saubhagya scheme, all willing households in rural areas and poor families in urban areas are given free electricity connections. There are around 4 Crore un-electrified households in the country and they are targeted for providing electricity connections by December 2018.

Till recently, the focus of electrification has been on village electrification through creation of village electricity infrastructure for all households and providing free electricity connections to poor household families in rural areas. Now, Saubhagya has come into existence for providing free electricity connections to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas.

Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC) is the Nodal Agency for the operationalization of the scheme throughout the country. Union Ministry of Power with the support of the States is taking all concerted efforts to fulfill the dream of Hon’ble Prime Minister of seeing Electrified, Bright and Vibrant India with all households having access to electricity connections.

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