Projects, Energy & Infrastructure

Monthly update | March 2020

Sectoral Updates – Elevation Measures in light of Covid-19 Lockdown

- **Power & electricity**
- **Renewable energy**
- **Highways**

With the country going under unprecedented lockdown, the Government of India (**GoI**) is taking all efforts to ensure that lockdown causes minimum inconvenience to the citizens.

Power & Energy

- The Ministry of Power (**MoP**) is committed to provide round the clock electricity supply to all consumers. Showcasing foresight and a proactive mindset with reference to the lack of liquidity Discoms may face due to the lockdown, the MoP has put in place a three-pronged strategy as mentioned below:
  - Instructing all CPSU Generation/Transmission Companies to ensure there is no curtailment of supply to any Discom
  - Reducing the payment security mechanism that is maintained between the Discoms and Gencoms by 50% till June 30, 2020
  - Directing CERC to provide a moratorium of 3 months to Discoms to make payments to Gencoms and transmission licensees and ensuring no penal rates of late payment surcharge can be levied on Discoms
- While such directions have been issued in relation to CERC only, all State Governments are being urged to issue similar directions to their respective SERC.

Renewable Energy

- Ministry of New and Renewable Energy vide an office memorandum dated March 20, 2020 directed all Renewable Energy implementing agencies of the MNRE to treat delay on account of disruption of the supply chains due to spread of coronavirus in China or any other country, as a Force Majeure event.
- It has further directed that all implementing agencies should grant suitable extension of time for projects, based on evidence/documents produced by developers in support of their respective claims.

Highways

- Ministry of Home Affairs vide notification dated March 24, 2020 ordered all private and commercial establishments to be closed till April 15, 2020. In this regard, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (**MoRTH**) has asked NHAI to stop collecting tolls across all national highways.
- The step taken by MoRTH for containment of the epidemic may result in significant losses to tolls being operated by private players. It is expected that the government will have to compensate such private players since the epidemic can be classified as a Force Majeure event under the concession agreement that may have been executed between the parties.

STATUTORY UPDATES

- **Power & electricity**
  - Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Sharing of Revenue Derived from Utilization of Transmission Assets for Other Business) Regulations, 2020
- **Renewable energy**
  - Recommendations to CERC for incentivising Discoms for over-achieving RPOs
  - Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission Suo-motu Order on Policy Directives issued by the State of Rajasthan with regard to Solar/Wind/Solar-Wind Hybrid Power Generation in the State
- **Projects**
  - Draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
  - MoEFC amends EIA notification of 2006 to usher in significant alterations to the process of 'Scoping'
- **Mining**
  - Draft Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 2019
  - Parliament Passes the Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020

Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Sharing of Revenue Derived from Utilization of Transmission Assets for Other Business) Regulations, 2020

- Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (**CERC**) on February 17, 2020, notified CERC (Sharing of Revenue Derived from Utilization of Transmission Assets for Other Business) Regulations, 2020 (**Regulations**). The Regulations are applicable to the inter-state transmission licensees, whose transmission charges are determined by CERC under Section 62 of the Act or adopted by the Commission under Section 63 of the Act.
- **Objective of the Regulations:** A transmission licensee aiming to undertake '*Other Business*' shall give prior intimation or seek approval from CERC. These Regulations mandate that the transmission licensee is required to file petitions for seeking approval if other business is not a telecommunication business and intimation to the Commission for new businesses in telecommunication. The transmission licensee is required to furnish following details for seeking approval or intimation:
  - Nature of other business
  - Transmission assets utilized or proposed to be utilized for other business
  - Cost of such transmission assets utilized or proposed to be utilized
  - Revenue derived or estimated to be derived from other business
  - Underlying assumptions and justifications for estimated revenue
  - Impact, if any, of use of transmission assets for other business on inter-state transmission of electricity
  - Any other details required by CERC
- **Manner of sharing of revenue**: In case a transmission licensee engages in other businesses like telecommunication, an amount equal to 10% of the gross revenue from such business in a given financial year will be shared with long-term customers. However, in case other business is not telecommunication business, the sharing of revenue shall be decided by CERC on case-to-case basis based on transmission assets utilized for such other business.

Recommendations to CERC for incentivizing Discoms for Over-achieving RPOs

- It is crucial to encourage DISCOMs for Procuring renewable power beyond RPO to reduce carbon footprint in the economy. The Indian Wind Power Association (**IWPA**) has suggested amendment to CERC Renewable Energy Certificate (**REC**) Regulation dated December 30, 2014 for revising REC eligibility norms for the DISCOMs that have significantly overachieved Renewable Purchase Obligations (**RPO**).
- IWPA has suggested to provide REC multiplier for over-achievement of RPO between:
  - 1% -2% to 2 RECs for each MWh of renewable power procured
  - 3% - 4% to 3 RECs for each MWh of renewable power procured
  - 4% - 5% to 3 RECs for each MWh of renewable power procured (and so on)
- According to IWPA, the graded incentives are justifiable as the balancing cost increases with higher penetration of renewables. The balancing costs would be between INR 1500-3500/MWh, depending upon the percentage share of renewables in the energy mix.
- **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) views/recommendations:**
  - The proposed REC multiplier will help in reducing financial burden of DISCOMs by integrating higher share of renewables.
  - However, MNRE has recommended 2 RECs for each MWh of renewable power procured after achieving 2% more than the RPO of the corresponding year as reasonable incentive and for upto 2% over-achievement the existing provisions shall apply.
- CERC has been requested to revise third amendment to REC Regulations and incorporate that Discoms are eligible for 2 RECs for each MWh renewable power procured after achieving 2% more than RPO of corresponding year.

Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission Suo-motu Order on Policy Directives issued by the State of Rajasthan with regard to Solar/Wind/Solar-Wind Hybrid Power Generation in the State

- Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (**RERC**) has come out with a suo-moto order regarding the directives issued by the state government for its prospective solar/wind/wind-solar hybrid policies 2019. The order provides for a roadmap to DISCOMs with clarifications on how to implement various directions as provided in Policy Directives for banking of power, transmission and wheeling charges, power projects with storage systems and rooftop solar projects.

- **Banking of power**

  - The Policy Directive states that the banking of energy to be allowed at consumption end for captive consumption and third-party sale on yearly basis (under the existing regulations, banking was allowed only for the captive consumer) at 10 % charges in kind of banked energy. The banking year will be from April to March. However, no drawl of banked energy will be allowed at peak hours as determined by DISCOMs and unutilized banked energy will lapse at the end of the year.

  - In order to ensure that the burden arising from implementation of the Policy Directive cannot be passed on to the general consumers, the Commission has directed the DISCOMs to approach the state government for claiming financial support to make good the impact in their revenue consequential to the directions. (over and above the provisions of the existing Regulations)

- **Exemption in transmission and wheeling charges**

  - The Policy Directive provided exemption in transmission and wheeling charges for projects set up for captive or third-party sale within the state as follows:

Type of project	Exemption in transmission and wheeling charges	Duration from commissioning of project
Solar projects	50%	7 years
Solar power projects with a storage system and repowered wind projects	25%	7 years
Solar power projects set up for electric vehicle charging stations	100%	10 years

  - RERC has now directed the DISCOMs to claim subsidy as per Section 65 of the Act in line with the Commission's Tariff Regulations of 2019 and initiate the provisions of exemption in transmission and wheeling charges in respect to the said State Policy Directive.

- **Power projects with storage systems**

  - The Policy Directive stated that power up to 5% of RPO targets in MW (solar & non-solar combined) would be procured from solar projects with storage systems by Rajasthan DISCOMs at a tariff discovered through competitive bidding besides their RPO target. RERC through its suo moto Order has now directed the DISCOMs to implement the state government's policy for projects with storage systems.

- **Roof-top solar system**

  - The Policy Directive provided that under net metering, the DISCOMs will allow solar rooftop of up to 50% of the capacity of the distribution transformer. Further, benefits such as banking facility and payment of surplus energy by DISCOMs under net-metering applicable to domestic consumers will also apply to government buildings. The Directive further provided an enabling provision for Solar Rooftop Systems, that the same can be set up under the gross Metering Scheme as per the guidelines issued by the Government and the generated power to be supplied to DISCOMs at the tariff determined by RERC. The Capacity of 1 MW of Solar rooftop System will be allowed under this scheme.

  - RERC has accordingly noted that the existing RERC net metering regulations provide for a limit of 30% on the capacity of the distribution transformer for setting up a rooftop solar PV project. However, the Commission under the powers conferred under the Regulations 18 & 19 of the RERC Net- Metering Regulations, has increased the limit to 50% as stated in the Policy Directives. And the Commission emphasized that the limit of 50% should be adopted ensuring the technical feasibility and safety issues.

  - The Policy Directive provided an enabling provision for Solar Rooftop Systems, that the same can be set up under the Gross Metering Scheme as per the guidelines issued by the government and the generated power to be supplied to DISCOMs at the tariff determined by RERC (capacity of 1 MW of Solar rooftop System will be allowed under this scheme). RERC has now stated that state government should also consider prescribing appropriate guidelines as contemplated in the Policy directive. If required, DISCOMs may also file a petition for determination of Tariff for sale of the power generated from the solar Rooftop Systems and supplying power to DISCOMs under Gross Metering scheme envisaged under the Directive.

- Further, benefits such as banking facility and payment of surplus energy by DISCOMs under net-metering applicable to domestic consumers will also apply to government buildings.

▪ DISCOMs have been directed by RERC to give effect to the directives in view of directions given. In addition to submission of status of recovery of additional financial implications due to the government Policy Directives, DISCOMs are required to conduct an impact assessment study of these directives and furnish report to Commission after completion of one year.

Draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification (EIA Notification, 2020) issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)

▪ On March 13, 2020 MoEFCC published draft EIA Notification, 2020 that proposes to ease the process for businesses, do away with public hearings for many projects, ease rules for projects among other things. It also recognizes violations by those who start the projects without environment clearance '*under the regulations in the interest of environment'*.

▪ A new section '*Dealing with violation cases*' is introduced in draft notification as compared to EIA Notification, 2006, which contains procedure for dealing with non-compliance with conditions stipulated in the environmental clearance and provides that violations can be reported by project proponent themselves, by Government Authority, or by committee appraising the projects. The appraisal committee will assess whether the construction or expansion carried out in violation of the norms can '*run sustainably*' with '*environmental safeguards*'.

▪ Environmental authorities were earlier mandated to monitor projects for compliance with environmental norms every six months. It has now been proposed to relax the monitoring frequency to once a year.

MoEFC amends EIA notification of 2006 to usher in significant alterations to the process of 'Scoping'

▪ 'Scoping' refers to the process of determining detailed and comprehensive terms of reference addressing all relevant environmental concerns for the preparation of an EIA and environment management report with respect to the given project or activity for which the prior environmental clearance is being sought.

▪ MoEFC vide notification S.O 751 (E) published on February 19, 2020 has made certain amendments in the EIA Notification, 2006 in relation to 'Scoping'. It reinforces that projects listed under Category 'B2' of the schedule under the respective notification shall not require 'Scoping'.

▪ While the terms of reference for the projects or activities except for river valley and hydroelectric projects, issued by the concerned regulatory authority would have the validity of four years, the river valley and hydro-electric projects will have a validity of five years from the date of issue.

Draft Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 2019

▪ The Ministry of Labour and Employment has issued draft Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 2019 on February 21, 2020 (**Draft Regulations**), which propose to supersede the Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 1961 (**Mines Regulations 1961**).

▪ The Draft Regulations list down the duties and responsibilities of the owner, contractor, supplier, manufacturer and designer. The draft will be taken into consideration post expiry of three months from date of its publication.

▪ These Draft Regulations are intended to apply to every mine other than a coal or an oil mine.

- **Notice of opening:** The Draft Regulations aim to amend the provision relating to notice of opening of a mine and states that once the mine is opened, the owner, agent or manager is required to communicate the actual date of opening to not only the Chief Inspector and the Regional Inspector as per Mines Regulations 1961 but also to the District Magistrate.

- **Notice for dangerous occurrence or accident:** To ensure safety of the workers, draft proposes to categorize dangerous occurrence as a separate list of situations for which notice needs to be submitted by the owner, agent or manager.

- **Returns:** Mines Regulations 1961 mandated furnishing of quarterly and annual returns. However, the Draft Regulations mandates furnishing only annual returns.

Parliament Passes the Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020

- The Parliament passed The Mines and Mineral (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (**Amendment Bill**) for amendments in Mines & Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR **Act**) and The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 (**Coal Mines Act**). The salient features introduced in these Amendment Bill are as under: -
  - **Removal of restriction on end-use of coal**: In current scenario, companies procuring Schedule II and Schedule III coal mines through auctions can utilize the coal produced only for specified end-uses such as power generation and steel production. The Amendment Bill eliminates restriction on the utilization of coal mined by these companies. Companies will be allowed to carry out coal mining business for own consumption, sale or for any other purposes, as may be specified by the Central Government.
  - **Composite license for prospecting and mining:** In current scenario, for prospecting and mining of coal and lignite separate licenses are provided termed as prospecting license, and mining lease, respectively. Prospecting includes exploring, locating, or finding mineral deposit. The Amendment Bill provides for a new class of license, called prospecting license-cum-mining lease. This will be a composite license providing for both prospecting and mining activities.
  - **Eligibility for auction of coal and lignite blocks**: The Amendment Bill illuminates that the companies do not require any prior coal mining experience in India to participate in the auction of coal and lignite blocks. Also, the competitive bidding process for auction of coal and lignite blocks will not apply to mines considered for allotment to: (i) a government company or its joint venture for own consumption, sale or any other specified purpose; and (ii) a company that has been awarded a power project on the basis of a competitive bid for tariff.
  - **Non-exclusive reconnaissance permit holders to get other licenses**: In current scenario, the holders of non-exclusive reconnaissance permit for exploration/discovery of certain specified minerals are not eligible to obtain a prospecting license or mining lease. Reconnaissance means preliminary prospecting of a mineral by such surveys. The Amendment Bill stipulates that the holders of these permits may apply for a prospecting license-cum-mining lease or mining lease.
  - **Reallocation after termination of the allocations:** The Coal Mines Act provides for the termination of allotment orders of coal mines in certain cases. The Amendment Bill adds that such mines may be reallocated through auction or allotment as may be determined by the central government. The central government will appoint a designated custodian to manage these mines until they are reallocated.
  - **Prior approval from the central government:** Under the MMDR Act, state governments require prior approval of the central government for granting reconnaissance permit, prospecting license, or mining lease for coal and lignite. The Amendment Bill provides that prior approval of the central government will not be required in granting these licenses for coal and lignite, in certain cases. These include cases where: (i) the allocation has been done by the central government, and (ii) the mining block has been reserved to conserve a mineral.

  - **Advance action for auction:** Under the MMDR Act, mining leases for specified minerals (minerals other than coal, lignite, and atomic minerals) are auctioned on the expiry of the lease period. The Amendment Bill provides that state governments can take advance action for auction of a mining lease before its expiry.
  - **Transfer of statutory clearances to new bidders**: Presently, upon expiry, mining leases for specified minerals (minerals other than coal, lignite, and atomic minerals) can be transferred to new persons through auction. This new lessee is required to obtain statutory clearances before starting mining operations. The Amendment Bill provides that the various approvals, licenses, and clearances given to the previous lessee will be extended to the successful bidder for a period of two years. During this period, the new lessee will be allowed to continue mining operations. However, the new lessee must obtain all the required clearances within this two-year period.

Recent Judgements

- **Azure Sunrise Pvt Ltd v. Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd and Anr**
- **M/s Sudharkara Infratech Private Limited v. UPERC & Ors.**

Azure Sunrise Pvt Ltd v. Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd and Anr

APTEL Order dated February 28, 2020 in Appeal No. 340 of 2016

Background facts

- Azure Sunrise Private Limited (**Appellant**) filed an appeal against the order dated December 14, 2016 passed by the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (**State Commission**), wherein State Commission retrospectively reduced the approved extension time of 137 days granted by Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (**CESCOM**) to only 25 days, and further recorded the necessary consequences as per the terms of PPA.
- Since CESCOM had not signed the PPA on time the project was initially delayed by 137 days leaving appellant with only 228 days to carry out obligations as stipulated under the agreement. CESCOM agreed to extend the timelines to make up for this delay of 137 days.
- State Commission in its order after 12 months from the date of approval of the previous extension, reduced this extension to 25 days.
- Additionally, it had also received a letter from CESCOM seeking to revise the terms of the PPA and supplementary agreement to incorporate a revised tariff of INR 6.51kWh, down from the previously agreed tariff of INR 6.89 kWh. The Commission did not address this issue in its order while only reducing the extension period retrospectively.

Issues at hand

- Whether NTPC and the concerned DISCOMs should be directed to comply with the Order, including payment of Late Payment Surcharge (**LPS**)? Whether in the facts and circumstances of the case having approved the terms of the PPA, the State Commission is justified in reducing the extension of time of 137 days as approved by the Commission/Discom to mere 25 days?

Findings of the Commission

- The court observed that the central dispute between the two parties revolved around the State Commission's decision to revise and reduce the extension period retrospectively from 137 days to 25 and noted that there was no need for the Appellant to be penalized for the fault of the Respondent.
- It also noted that the State Commission only intervened in the time extension and not in the incorporation of the reduced tariff and stated that the order of the State Commission was not in line with the facts and circumstances presented before it and that neither the reduction in time extension nor the tariff reduction was justified.
- The court allowed the appeal by Appellant and set aside the order passed by State Commission.

Our viewpoint: This judgment comes as addition to earlier judgements of APTEL wherein it has been held that delay in execution of the PPA for pending approval (including that of any amendment) before the State Commission cannot be held against the developer or the generator.

M/s Sudharkara Infratech Private Limited Vs. UPERC & Ors.

APTEL Order in Appeal 319 of 2019

Background facts

- Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (**APTEL**) by virtue of its Order dated March 06, has set aside the Order dated June 12, 2019 passed by the Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission allowing premature encashment of performance bank guarantee and has provided certain steps to be followed for impleading and role of Electricity Regulatory Commission (**ERC**) in an appeal before APTEL.

Issue at hand

- Whether Commission can be impleaded as a party in an appeal assailing a decision rendered by the Commission in a dispute between two parties?

Findings of the Commission

- In appeals presented to APTEL under Section 111 of the Electricity Act, 2003, the ERC whose order is sought to be assailed shall not ordinarily be impleaded as a contesting party respondent; only such parties as were the disputants before the ERC shall be so shown in the fray.
- If propriety of the procedure adopted by the ERC is not challenged and the issues raised concern the merits of the contentions of the opposite disputant, the ERC may be shown as a respondent but be qualified by use of the expression 'proforma party'.
- In case the tariff order or an order passed suo motu by the ERC is sought to be assailed, there being no other disputant or identifiable objector and only ERC can be shown on the other side, the ERC may be impleaded as the solitary party respondent that is to be called upon to respond.
- If personal bias or misconduct is attributed to the Member(s) of the ERC, it will be incumbent on the Appellant to implead the Regulatory Commission as a respondent which is expected to come up and respond.
- In all such matters where the ERC is shown as a proforma party respondent, there shall be no obligation on the part of the Commission to appear in response to the notice on the appeal, its responsibility being restricted to making the relevant record available if and when called for.

Our viewpoint: APTEL by way of above directions has provided a way to regulate the appeals instituted before itself and has clearly stated that save for such exceptional situations, it is inappropriate to implead the ERC as a contesting party to the appeal, given the reason that by such prosecution ERC is put to unnecessary strain of engaging a legal representative to appear and defend its order. The participation of ERC at stage of an appeal must be considered on a case to case basis and such decision has to be taken up by the concerned ERC. However, ERC being the neutral adjudicatory body should not waste its resources and time or running the risk of being perceived as partisan.

Recent Developments

- Goa plans to revive inland waterway passenger ship service
- Airports Authority of India to raise USD 300 million
- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has offered a loan of INR 260 crore to Reliance Infrastructure subsidiary
- Government approves green highway projects in four states
- Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reins in defaulting power plants across India
- NTPC Limited's commercial capacity at an all-time high
- Renewable energy sector gets a welcome impetus with increase in solar tariffs
- ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel completes acquisition of Bhander power unit in Hazira
- Adani Enterprises wins INR 1546 crore project from NHAI

Goa plans to revive inland waterway passenger ship service

- The Government of Goa has proposed to revive the inland waterway passenger ship service connecting rural areas to cities in the coastal state.
- Currently, the state river navigation department runs boat services to ferry people on short routes. The proposed inland waterways will help in connecting destinations like Morjim in North Goa district.
- The project has a potential of reducing the road traffic by 30-40% and will be funded by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (**IWAI**) at an approximate cost of INR 10 crore.

Airports Authority of India to raise $300 million

- Airports Authority of India (**AAI**) is planning to raise close to USD 300 million (approximately INR 2,200 crore) via external commercial borrowing (**ECB**) mode during the next fiscal to fund its capex plans for doubling the passenger-handling capacity of 345 million passengers per annum.
- AAI would be spending INR 5,000 crore on capex for the next five years beginning this year, totaling INR 25,000 crore that will be invested in both greenfield and brownfield airport projects.
- Additionally, AAI will also get funds from the Government of India under Udaan scheme, which aims to make air travel affordable and widespread.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has offered a loan of INR 260 crore to Reliance Infrastructure subsidiary

- NHAI has approved a loan of INR 260 crore to PS Toll Road Private Limited (PS Toll), which is a subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure. The said loan has been extended to complete widening of the 140 km stretch of Bangalore-Pune highway even though PS Toll has not been meeting its milestones for the project.
- For delays in two project milestones, the company is required to pay the cost of the project on its own. In a scenario of such delay, the company is also charged a penalty of 0.1% of its bank guarantee, for each day of delay.
- While PS Toll has missed milestones, the NHAI has decided to extend the loan to PS Toll under NHAI’s One Time Fund Infusion Scheme (**OTFIS**), which aims to provide one-time financial assistance to revive the ‘incomplete and languishing’ national highways.

Government approves green highway projects in four states

- The cabinet has approved a proposal for construction of 780 km of green national highways at a cost of INR 7,660 crore.
- The project intends to rehabilitate and upgrade various national highways covering a total length of over 780 km in four states i.e. Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reins in defaulting power plants across India

- In a bid to ensure strict compliance with existing environment norms, CPCB has issued show cause notices under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to 14 coal-based plants that potentially face closure for flouting the norms in relation to failure of not implementing emission control equipment.
- It is presumed that the respective power plants were not ordering equipment due to monetary considerations as well as tariff uncertainty. Placing the environment first, CPCB clarified that projects which fail to comply with new emission norms by the specified deadlines would be considered non-complying and be liable for penal action including closure of the plant and imposition of environmental compensation.

NTPC Limited's commercial capacity at an all-time high

- According to its latest announcement on 2 March 2020, state owned NTPC, including its joint ventures and arms, has successfully overhauled its annual commercial capacity addition target of 5,290 MW for 2019-20.
- This tally of 5,290 MW also happens to be its largest recorded commercial capacity addition in a single year. With 3,970 MW of commercial capacity added by NTPC on a stand-alone basis, its joint ventures and subsidiaries added a further 1,320 MW in the current fiscal to take the cumulative present installed capacity of NTPC to 58,290 MW for the year 2019-2020.

Renewable energy sector gets a welcome impetus with increase in solar tariffs

- In an auction conducted by Gujarat's main distribution company, Gujarat Urja Vikas Limited, for 350 MW of solar capacity that witnessed lack of participation, it was Vena Energy, Juniper Energy and Tata Power that won 40MW, 190MW and 120MW at tariffs of INR 2.61, INR 2.63 and INR 2.64 per unit, respectively.
- This marked an important rise in solar tariffs that has now increased to INR 2.61 per unit, compared with the solar auction conducted by the MNRE's nodal agency Solar Energy Corporation of India in February 2020 where the lowest winning tariff was INR 2.50 per unit.
- Given this rise in solar tariff coupled with the MNRE direction that all state Discoms and central agencies should not prescribe a ceiling tariff in future wind and solar auctions, this is a favorable outcome for the Indian renewable energy sector.

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel completes acquisition of Bhander power unit in Hazira

- ArcelorMittal, the world's biggest steelmaker, had completed the acquisition of Essar Steel India Ltd in December last year, coupled with the announcement of the establishment of a joint venture with Nippon Steel Corporation called ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Ltd, that will own and operate Essar Steel India Ltd.
- In another key development, ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Ltd announced on March 3, 2020 that it has completed the acquisition of Bhander Power Plant situated in Hazira, Gujarat from Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company for an estimated amount of INR 500 crore.
- The Bhander Power Plant is a natural gas-based power plant that commenced its commercial operations in 2008 and has an installed capacity of 500 MW.

Adani Enterprises wins INR 1546 crore project from NHAI

- NHAI has awarded Adani Enterprises the project to build the NH-16 stretch in Andhra Pradesh.
- The project of six laning of Vijaywada Bypass from Gollapudi to Chinakkakani including major bridge across Krishna has been awarded on hybrid annuity mode. The project has been awarded under the Bharatmala Pariyojna which is a government funded roads and highways project, for a bid project cost of INR 1546 crore.

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