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(भारत सरकार)

Government of India

(विद्युत मंत्रालय)

Ministry of Power

Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rafi Marg,
New Delhi, 5th September, 2023.

To
All Additional Chief Secretaries / Principal Secretaries of Power
All Power Utilities (Generating Companies, Distribution Companies)

Subject: Steps to be taken to effectively meet the electricity demand of the Consumers.

Sir,

The electricity demand has touched record levels. It went upto 241 GW on 01.09.2023.

The maximum demand has been occurring during the solar hours. This is being met with support of the available solar and wind generation capacity. When the demand touched 241 GW; the shortfall was only 0.1 percent. The demand has touched record levels even during non-solar hours. It touched 218.4 GW on 01.09.2023. The growth of around 23% in peak demand met in August, 2023 was one of the highest in the world. In August, 2023, for 7 days, the daily energy consumption was more than 5 BU/day and on 16 days the maximum demand was more than 220 GW.

Some of the States were not able to meet their demand. Overall, the demand not met during non-solar hours crossed 10 GW and during August, the total energy shortage was of the order of 700 MU. It is noticed that the bulk of the shortfall in meeting the demand has been in the non-solar hours – when the shortfall ranged from 6000 MW to 9000 MW. During the solar hours, the demand was met – even when the demand was 241 GW, the shortfall was only 0.1 percent.

In order to cater to high demand situation, all available resources in the grid are being harnessed. All the coal fired units have been kept on bar after 15th August, 2023 (barring approx. 30-32 GW capacity under planned and forced outage). It is pertinent to mention that entire onus of meeting non- solar hours demand falls upon the coal fired generation.

The monsoon this year has been below normal till date and the projections for September are also not encouraging. This has resulted in depleted reservoir levels especially in Southern region leading to sub-optimal hydro generation. The maximum hydro generation achieved this year has been less than 40 GW as against 45 GW last year. Similar trend is visible in wind generation also, which is historically higher from June to September. Against the installed capacity of 43.9 GW, variable wind power output is down to only 2-3 GW. It is anticipated that with withdrawal of monsoon in September-October period, the hydro and wind generation would further deplete.

Gas based generation is also on lower side due to gas availability issues and a maximum generation of around 8.7 GW was observed against the total installed capacity of 25 GW.

To meet the increased demand, Ministry of Power has taken the following steps:-

- (i) Measures have been taken to ensure the maximum availability of the generation capacity. The non-priority maintenance work of the plants is being deferred.
- (ii) Monitoring and Coordination with Ministries of Coal and Railways on a regular basis for increasing the production and dispatch of coal as much as possible.
- (iii) All GENCOS (Central/State and IPPs) have been asked to ensure import of Coal for blending purposes so that there is no load shedding. An advisory dated 01.09.2023 has already been issued by MOP.
- (iv) All GENCOs have been asked to maximize the coal production at captive mines to supplement the coal supply from domestic coal companies (CIL and SCCL).
- (v) Additional arrangement for gas, for running gas based stations, from GAIL with tenders for advance procurement of generation has been planned, during upcoming high power demand months.
- (vi) The Electricity Amendment Rule, 2022 has been notified on 29th December 2022 which mandate preparation of resource adequacy plan so as to successfully meet the power demand of the consumers.
- (vii) Imported Coal Based (ICB) plants have been issued statutory directions under Section 11 of Electricity Act to stock coal and generate power during high demand period. This has now been extended upto October 2023.
- (viii) Reservoir level of Hydro Stations is being monitored for optimum utilization of water. All hydro plants have been instructed to operate in consultation with RLDCS / SLDCs to optimize water utilization.

In order to ensure availability of electricity to all consumers and to meet the anticipated growth in demand the State Governments, Generating companies and Distribution licensees are advised to urgently take the following steps:

- (i) The agriculture load may be shifted to solar hours.
- (ii) Expedite completion of all planned maintenance of the generating stations.
- (iii) Defer the planned maintenance of other generating units to the extent possible to be scheduled in the low demand period. RPCs, SLDCs and RLDCs to coordinate and monitor the same.
- (iv) All efforts to be made to bring back the units under forced outage as quickly as possible. Advance action may be taken to ensure availability of all spares etc.

- (v) A number of stations are running at partial load, meaning that the units which are operating are not generating at their full capacity. Thermal capacity to the extent of around 12 GW-14 GW is not available due to this. Reasons quoted by power plants were poor quality of coal/ sticky coal, issues in ash ponds and some minor issues which requires urgent attention. Generating companies need to ensure that the actions are taken to make full availability of the generating units. All the GENCOs need to import coal as per direction/advisory issued by MoP dated 01.09.2023.
- (vi) Where the states do not schedule any power under the PPA; that power must be offered in the power exchange so that the needy states are able to avail this to meet their demand.
- (vii) States may ensure that all gas based power plants with whom they have PPAs must be brought in to use, during high demand days and non-solar hours. Gas based units of CPSUs has already been instructed to supply full capacity. States may also like to tie up with such capacities to ensure their availability. UP and Tamil Nadu had done this recently.
- (viii) Expeditious commissioning of new units of thermal, solar, wind etc

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Yours faithfully

(Piyush Singh)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India

Copy to:

1. The Chairperson, CEA
2. Secretary, CERC/FOR, New Delhi.
3. Secretary (Energy/Power) All State Governments/UTs.
4. All State Electricity Regulatory Commission

Copy for information to:

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister of Power &NRE, APS to Hon'ble MoSP
2. Sr. PPS to Secretary (Power)
3. All Additional Secretaries/Joint Secretaries/EA/CE, Ministry of Power
4. All Directors/Deputy Secretaries, Ministry of Power.