

Cabinet approves Continuation of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV Applications Programme - Phase III

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)

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Posted On: 06 JUN 2018 3:16PM by PIB Delhi

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for implementation of Phase-III of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV (Photo Voltaic) Application Programme to achieve additional 118 MWp(Mega Watt peak) off-grid solar PV capacity by 2020.

Phase-III of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV Application Programme covers following components:

- i) **Solar Street Lights:** 3,00,000 numbers of solar street lights will be installed throughout the country with special emphasis on areas where there is no facility for street lighting systems through grid power, North Eastern States and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts.
- ii) **Stand-alone Solar Power Plants:** Solar power plants of individual size up to 25 kWp(kilo Watt peak) will be promoted in areas where grid power has not reached or is not reliable. This component is mainly aimed at providing electricity to schools, hostels, panchayats, police stations and other public service institutions. The aggregated capacity of solar power plants would be 100 MWp.
- iii) **Solar Study Lamps:** 25,00,000 numbers of solar study lamps will be provided in North Eastern States and LWE affected districts.

For solar street lights and solar power plants, financial support up to 30% of the benchmark cost of the system will be provided except for NE States, Hill States and Island UTs where up to 90% of the benchmark cost will be provided. For solar study lamps only 15% of the lamp cost to be borne by beneficiary student and balance will be provided as financial support as such systems will be provided to school going children in backward and remote areas.

The total project of the three components included under the phase-III is Rs. 1895 crore of which Rs. 637 crore will be provided as central financial assistance.

The off-grid solar systems will also open better livelihood opportunities for beneficiaries in rural and remote areas thereby increasing self-employment in such areas. It is estimated that, besides increasing self-employment, the implementation of Phase-III is likely to generate employment opportunity equivalent to 8.67 lakh man-days for skilled and unskilled workers.

Off-grid and Decentralized Solar PV Applications Programme has high impact in the rural and remote areas of the country where grid power has either not reached or is not reliable. During the Phase-III, the programme is likely to benefit 40 lakh rural households. In addition, the off-grid solar power plants proposed in the programme to provide electricity to schools, hostels, panchayats, police stations and other public service institutions will help communities at large and also help in increasing participation of women in education, social and livelihood activities.

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