

Centre issues guidelines for feeder-level solarisation under PM-KUSUM Scheme

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By TIOL News Service

NEW DELHI, DEC 04, 2020: THE

Ministry of New and Renewable (MNRE) today issued guidelines for implementation of feeder-level solarisation under the PM-KUSUM scheme after consulting with state governments.

The Cabinet approved the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mayabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) scheme of harnessing solar energy in February 2019.

The scheme has three components – Component A is installation of decentralized ground mounted grid connected renewable power plants, Component B is installation of standalone solar powered agriculture pumps and Component C is solarisation of grid-connected agriculture pumps.

“The objective of Component-C of PM-KUSUM Scheme is to provide reliable day-time power to farmers, enhancing their income by purchasing surplus solar power and thus incentivising them for saving water,” the ministry stated.

After consultation, the ministry said it has also decided to include feeder-level solarisation wherein instead of putting solar panels at each individual pump, a single solar power plant can be installed to power the agriculture feeders.

The grid connected agriculture pumps can be solarised with central and state subsidy of 30% each and farmer's contribution of 40%, the MNRE said. The solar capacity allowed is upto two times of the pump capacity in kilowatt (kW) and surplus power will be purchased by the distribution company (DISCOM).

The DISCOM or power department will be the implementing agency for feeder level solarisation in their respective areas, the guidelines state. However, states may appoint any other expert agency to help the DISCOM.

The state may also choose to install feeder level solar power plant of capacity higher than capacity required for supplying power to agriculture feeder. The additional solar power generated can be redirected to nearby rural and urban grids or stored for supplying power later in the day.

The ministry said for installation of feeder level solar power plant, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of 30% (50% in case of northeastern states, hilly states/union territories, and islands) will be provided by the government and the balance will be met through loans from NABARD/PFC/REC.

The MNRE said that they plan to solarise 4 lakh grid-connected pumps by 2020-21 and 50% are through feeder level solarisation.