

CEO Roundtable on Power Distribution under the draft National Electricity Policy

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A CEO Roundtable on Power Distribution was convened under the draft National Electricity Policy, 2026 (NEP 2026) at the Bharat Electricity Summit 2026, focusing on reforms required to strengthen the distribution segment and ensure financial sustainability of DISCOMs in line with India's long-term development goals.



CEOs and senior leadership of leading power sector organizations participated in the meeting chaired by Shri Pankaj Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Power. The participants welcomed the draft National Electricity Policy, 2026, and appreciated its comprehensive and forward-looking approach to addressing emerging challenges in the sector. They noted that the Policy provides a clear strategic direction for strengthening the power sector in the context of India's transition towards sustained high economic growth. The industry leaders also emphasized that the proposed measures, particularly in the distribution segment, would play a critical role in enhancing financial viability, improving service quality, and enabling the integration of new and evolving technologies.

Deliberations highlighted that electricity supply must keep pace with the aspirations of *Viksit Bharat @ 2047*, which envisages a USD 30 trillion economy and energy independence. The draft NEP 2026 targets increasing per capita electricity consumption to 2,000 kWh by 2030 and over 4,000 kWh by 2047. These goals align with India's climate commitments to reduce emissions intensity by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, necessitating a decisive shift towards low-carbon energy sources.

The Policy outlines a comprehensive framework to address sectoral challenges while promoting competition, enhancing grid resilience for integrating higher shares of variable renewable energy, and enabling consumer-centric service delivery through demand-side interventions.

A key focus of NEP 2026 is the financial sustainability of the distribution sector. Strategies include optimization of power procurement through advance planning, reduction of Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses, and strengthening of corporate governance mechanisms. The Policy

envisages achieving single-digit AT&C losses through phased rollout of smart meters with prepayment functionality, beginning with government, commercial, and industrial consumers, alongside regular energy audits and improved accounting practices.

To enhance efficiency and accountability, the draft Policy proposes the introduction of shared distribution networks, eliminating duplication of infrastructure. It further emphasizes GIS-based asset mapping, consumer indexing, and system automation to improve operational efficiency and service delivery.

Recognizing the growing role of distributed energy resources, the Policy recommends the establishment of a Distribution System Operator (DSO) to facilitate integration of distributed renewables, energy storage systems, and Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) technologies. This would enable optimal utilization of resources through local energy markets, improve consumer participation, and ensure secure grid operations.

The draft Policy also prioritizes strengthening quality and reliability of supply through measures such as optimal network redundancy at specified voltage levels and stricter enforcement of service standards. redundancy at the distribution transformer level is proposed for all cities with a population exceeding 10 lakh by 2032. Additionally, underground cabling in congested urban areas is recommended. Ensuring universal access to electricity, with particular emphasis on border areas, remains a key objective.

The Roundtable underscored the urgency of sustained reforms in the distribution sector to ensure financial viability of DISCOMs and to support India's broader economic and energy transition goals under the vision of *Viksit Bharat @ 2047*

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