

Tender for solar-thermal power storage by FY25 end

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IN A FIRST, the state-run Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) is planning to float a tender for a concentrated solar thermal power storage project with a capacity of 500 megawatt (MW) by the end of this financial year, chairman and managing director R P Gupta said on Wednesday.

The move comes amidst the government's increased focus on energy storage capacity of the country as it targets to address the intermittency issue of renewable energy sources.

"We are planning to come out with a tender for solar thermal power storage by the end of this financial year," Gupta said adding that the projects might need incentives at the beginning stages. The details of the tender are yet to be finalised.

He also expressed confidence that prices of storage services to be found via bidding will be at par with other round-the-clock storage solutions compared to earlier similar small-scale projects where the prices have been too high.

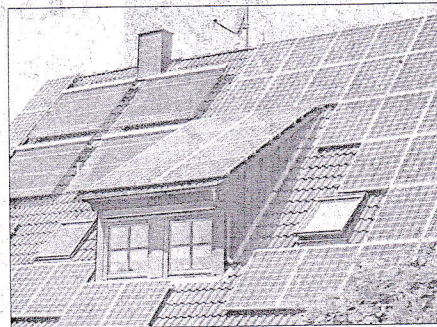
The chairman explained that the tendered projects would be based on concentrated solar technology where steam would be generated through heat and would help in running turbines providing a round-the-clock energy solution.

The developments in enhancing the country's energy storage capacity also comes amid the need to stabilise the grid while optimising the use of renewable energy. Last year, the government, in a similar move, announced a battery energy storage system (BESS)

500-MW CAPACITY TENDER

■ The tender will be floated by SECI for a concentrated solar thermal power storage project with a capacity of 500 MW

■ The move comes amidst the government's increased focus on energy storage capacity



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"A lot of new developments have taken place and prices are bound to come down. Energy storage has a big role in stabilising the grid, enhancing reliability and optimising use of RE. From energy access and availability, the Indian electric sector is now focusing on stabilising it," said Jishnu Barua, chairperson of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission.

Other than BESS, the govern-

ment has been proactively involved in boosting pump storage projects across the country. The levelised cost from PSPs (pumped hydro storage plants) is around ₹4.7 per unit compared to that from BESS at around ₹6.6 per unit.

To meet the target of 425 GW installed RE capacity, along with 19 GW of PSP and 42 GW of BESS capacity by 2030, CareEdge Ratings had estimated an incremental debt financing of ₹14 trillion.

As the demand for power continues to rise annually at an average of 6-7%, the grid is facing challenges on the operations side and regulations, noted Ghanshyam Prasad, Chairperson, Central Electricity Authority.