

Discoms, procedural delays, lack of awareness dragging rooftop solar growth, says RK Singh

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As the calendar year draws to a close, the rooftop solar segment will see a huge shortfall in capacity addition against the 2022 target due to a host of factors that hampered the growth.

As on October 30, 2022, the rooftop solar achieved a total capacity of 7.2 GW against the capacity addition target of 40 GW.

In June 2015, the government set an ambitious target of 175 GW for grid-connected capacity addition for renewables (excluding the large hydro category) to be achieved by the end of 2022. The target for the solar sector was 100 GW, comprising 60 GW of ground-mounted projects and 40 GW of rooftop capacity.

The ground-mounted solar

capacity is inching closer to its target.

MAJOR REASONS

"The major reasons for the shortfall of rooftop solar installations include apprehension of possible revenue loss by Discoms, delay in getting approvals from different agencies, delay in installation of net/gross meters by Discoms, lack of uniform regulations, lack of awareness among the prospective beneficiaries," RK Singh, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy, informed the Rajya Sabha.

In the first 9-months of this calendar year, the rooftop solar segment added 1.2 GW of new capacity, down 11 per cent compared to the year-ago period.

SUPPLY ISSUES

"We are seeing rooftop solar installations trending down as



RK Singh, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy

costs have risen. The market is struggling with supply issues because of ALMM (approved list of models and manufacturers), and installers are finding it a tough environment to operate in overall," according to Raj Prabhu, CEO of Mercom Capital Group.

However, industry analysts pointed out that the rooftop solar market, the residential category in particular, may see

good growth going forward in view of a simplified subsidy scheme, easier options to buy rooftop systems from any registered suppliers, and growing awareness to save power costs.

WIND POWER LAGS

Meanwhile, the wind power sector will also be missing its capacity addition target. The segment's total installed capacity stood at about 42 GW as of October 30 this year. The capacity target fixed for the wind sector is 60 GW.

"The reasons for shortfall in achieving the target, include the shift from feed-in Tariff (FIT) to bidding route, Covid-19 pandemic, and supply chain disruption," said Singh. He added that 11.7 GW worth of wind power capacity projects are at various stages of implementation. Also, bids for 1,700 MW capacity of wind power projects have been issued.