Consumers upfront in tale of two reforms in Andhra

AFFORDABLE SUPPLY
-Chandrababu Naidu, after his first failed attempt during 1999-2004, pledges to keep tariffs unchanged for all consumer categories now

Ashwin K Swain

Andhra Pradesh’s (AP) power sector is going through a second phase of reforms. While the first phase (1999-2001) was widely seen as focused on privatisation and distribution, this time the goal is to ensure affordable and reliable power supply for all. Under this scheme, the state government has been focusing on reducing tariffs and issuing subsidies for all consumer categories, with transparent pricing and service. As a result, the state government has taken steps to improve quality, reliability, and service levels.

-A today, there is a strong Central government push to raise retail tariffs to reduce the reliance on subsidies for maintaining affordability. This is particularly challenging in states with high costs of power generation, such as Andhra Pradesh.

In his return to power in 2014, Andhra Pradesh’s (AP) electricity sector has a major role to play in the state’s development. The sector is crucial to the state’s industrial growth and economic prosperity, with a significant share in the state’s GDP. The state government has been focusing on improving the quality of service, reducing tariffs, and increasing power consumption.

A coal yard in front of a power plant in Krishnapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

There are early signs of progress. The state has achieved 7 GW of installed capacity, with 64% of the state’s total generation capacity. To complement this, the state has initiated the first solar power plant in India and allocated over 100 MW of power to distribution companies. The state has also set up a target of 150 MW of solar power by 2022. However, the state’s energy efficiency policies remain a concern, with the state’s per capita electricity consumption and the state’s electricity consumption per capita being lower than the national average.

-Andhra Pradesh has introduced energy efficiency standards for newly installed power plants and has launched a scheme to promote energy-efficient appliances and lighting. The state has also initiated a scheme to promote the use of renewable energy, such as solar and wind power, and has set up a target of 150 MW of solar power by 2022. The state has also introduced a scheme to promote energy-efficient appliances and lighting.

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