Five sun-powered mobile phone charging units in city

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Now, you can charge your smartphones on Bengaluru roads for free, that too in an eco-friendly manner. Five solar power-based mobile phone charging kiosks have come up across Bengaluru.

In a first-of-its-kind move, Samsung — the South Korean technology conglomerate, has set up kiosks on Chinmaya Mission Hospital Road (Indiranagar), Total Mall (Sarjapur), Sahakaranagar, Malleswaram and Vijayanagar.

Each of the kiosks is fitted on a 10-foot-tall pole fixture with a charging dock at four feet height. The poles have eight charging points that can be used to charge any phone with a micro USB charger slot. The kiosks run on a solar power capacity of 300 kilowatt. These can charge over 20 phones daily.

Asim Warsi, VP, (IT and Mobile), at the company, said, “The kiosks were installed three weeks back. Smartphone penetration is huge in Bengaluru. (It is also) a tech-savvy city, so we decided to start here. This is also a step from us towards the green initiative.”

The company said it planned to get feedback and response from users in Bengaluru to plan on how to scale the initiative further. The kiosks are unmanned and open 24 hours. In addition to the solar panel, there is a battery below the dock as well, which is pre-charged and comes in handy in case of low sunlight.

The company said it believes that the need to have an infrastructure to support smartphone users is important. Warsi, said despite the availability of portable and wireless chargers and power banks, customers wanting to use kiosks indicated there was a need for the same.

The kiosks are placed near company showrooms and the charging is done free of cost.

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Free solar mobile phone charging points

Staff Reporter

BENGALURU: In a move to resolve the battery-drain issue with smartphones, Samsung is offering free mobile charging facilities outside some of its stores. This facility is powered by solar energy. The company said that it will incur very less maintenance cost for running the facility, which has been set up at Samsung Cafe outlets on CMH Road in Indiranagar, Total Mall on Sarjapura Road, Sahakarnagar, Malleswaram and Vijayanagar.

Asim Warsi, Vice President, Marketing, IT & Mobile at Samsung India, said, “This is a pilot project. It is the first such initiative by Samsung.

Any smartphone user can avail the facility.”
Bengaluru: Bengalureans have begun feeling the pinch of power cuts, just a day after BBMP polls results. On Wednesday, several parts of the city went without power supply during peak hours.

Bescom help line personnel confirmed they were flooded with calls about power outages. "A notification was put out earlier. There has been a shortage of power," said an official.

Recently, power minister DK Shivakumar said the state is facing a shortage of 3000 MW. Load shedding had begun in most parts of the state, only Bengaluru had been spared because of the polls. With the election process ending, power cuts were expected to begin anytime.

Areas in East Bengaluru such as Dodda Banaswadi, AK Colony, Ex-servicemen's Colony, Arjaneeya temple, Bhuvanagiri, OMRR Layout, Wireless Quarters, BSNL Exchange, Bhuvanagiri Ground, Chandramma Layout, Green Park Layout, Bachannna Layout, HR Mill, Meghanapalya, Wheeler Road, Cleveland Town and Coles Road were the worst hit on Wednesday.

DS Rajasekar, president, Citizens' Action Forum, said, "Bescom is aware of the poor rainfall scenario and should have planned for this much ahead. The situation would be the same in other states too, but rampant power cuts is not seen anywhere apart from Karnataka. The government must work on buying power and production through alternative sources of energy," he said.

Niranjan Deshmukh, a techie from Fraser Town, told TNM that he had to rush back to his office in Manyata Tech Park as he could not work from home. "My work got affected as power supply didn't resume at home for hours together. I ended up missing a crucial meeting with my onsite clients. Is power cut the only solution if there is shortage of supply?" asked an angry Deshmukh.

The scenario is likely to remain the same on Thursday and the rest of the week. However, Bescom said in its press release that the power cut was due to maintenance work.

There will be no power from 10am to 5pm on Thursday at Infantry Road, Union Street, Ghausia Hospital, Haines Road, Tank Road, Osborne Road, St John's Road, Rukmini Colony, Annaswamy Mudaliar Road, Osborne Road, Kodhandarana Layout, Narayan Reddy Colony, Vijaya Bank Colony Challakere village, Yash Enclave.

Irritated by No Bailout, NTPC for DBT Route to Pay Power Subsidy to poor

ENS Economic Bureau

New Delhi: In an attempt to help the state power diseos from rising power dues, the state-run NTPC chairman Arup Roy Choudhury on Wednesday said that states should use Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for providing financial aid or subsidy to poor using power.

"All these bonds, (loan) write off all the crutches that government provide, do not help. The states have to get their act together," Choudhury said.

Under the DBT, the government transfers the subsidy on cooking gas or cereals or other benefits like pension or scholarships, directly into beneficiaries' bank account.

In the present scenario, the power distribution companies cumulative debt is over ₹3 lakh crore and the Centre has given clear indication that it will not act like a bailout bank for them.

"(states) have to distribute and collect money. They have to look at the reasons why cost of power is increasing. They have to see how they are going to disburse the doles they want to. You cannot do that by hitting the discoms financially."

The tripartite pact among NTPC, states and Centre provides security regarding payment of dues by states to NTPC. In the event of non-payment of dues, the money is deducted from the central allocations to them and paid to NTPC.

"Our average cost of energy is less than ₹3 per unit. There is no state that will not line up to buy power at ₹3 per unit. It is a win-win situation for us. I look at it very positively. If the pact is extended by the government then it is for the benefit of the Centre and if it is not, then we are free of regulation and free to sell power," he said.
The BBMP elections are over, and yes, you guessed it, power cuts are back. With a bang! With the monsoon playing truant, Energy Minister D.K. Shivakumar has said the only solution before the government is to buy power. But here’s the thing — this is a matter of some urgency. Apart from the hardship caused to thousands in the city, it sends out the wrong message to investors arriving for the GIM this October.

Let’s radically transform the energy sector, set up micro-power generation projects and harvest rainwater to better effect. AMIT S. UPADHYE reports

A day after Bengaluru elected BJP to run the Corporation, a power outage was reported in most of the areas. Uttarahalli, Indiranagar and parts of Banerghatta Road witnessed more than three power cuts during morning hours without any intimation. Though the Bescom officials pointed out that such power outages will be solved by September-end once the ongoing upgradation work is over, meanwhile the residents are having a tough time coping with repeated power outages.

Govt pulls the plug

- Providing uninterrupted power is the biggest challenge for the newly-elected Corporation.

The experts suggest that the newly elected local government body must come up with measures which could save power instead of using excess power unnecessarily. For instance, many cities have taken up measures to ensure power consumption is minimized in urban areas, thus helping the power-supplying agency to manage the available power.

- Government’s knee-jerk reactions

The experts are questioning the state’s motive in inviting domestic and global investors to the Global Investors’ Meet in November without having any long-term solution for improving the power situation in the state. “When there isn’t enough power, how can the industries survive? Uninterrupted power supply is the basic need for any industry. But the situation in Bengaluru and other places in the state is such that the current industries are finding it difficult to survive. We have failed in areas like energy, resources and investments at the same time. The short-term solutions that the government comes up with are not sufficient to address the power needs of the state. Whenever the government has purchased power at a higher cost it is always followed by kickbacks,” said an energy expert.

The energy experts are suggesting that the government must seriously invest in creating solar power units in each district so that the local requirements can be met to a large extent and pressure on the grid is minimized.
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States like Gujarat, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu are doing well by harnessing solar power, but Karnataka is lagging behind. Mr. M G Prabhakar suggested that the government can start by building solar plants in five districts.

Experts point out that the central government has withdrawn the subsidy of 30% on rooftop solar installations, after which the project may slow down. The Bescom officials say that in the next two months there will be over 100 solar rooftop installations in Bengaluru alone, and there are also queries from outside Bengaluru for the same. However, the experts are skeptical about the current trend as they are looking at larger solar plants like the ones in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The short term solutions in solving the power issues will not help. The government must take up large solar projects in each district which could add about 700-800 kW of energy to the state grid in the next few years.

-M.G. PRABHAKAR, FORMER CHAIRMAN, FKCCI ENERGY COMMITTEE

We have a deficit of about 4,000 MW of energy. We are purchasing 1,000 MW immediately to streamline the current power situation in Bengaluru, in the next 18 months the state will do well on the energy production front.

-D.K. SHIVAKUMAR, ENERGY MINISTER

Along with short-term measures such as popularizing rooftop solar power units and providing incentives for energy-efficient models, the state must draw up a road map to ensure enough power is produced in the years to come.

-BHARATH RAJAI, WORLD RESOURCE INSTITUTE

Karnataka. The view that we need more plants some have called for a dedicated plant for Bengaluru is simply mistaken. We have enough plants; we need to make them work as they were supposed to.

It would also help if the state took the future-facing step of moving all...
Mumbai: State-run power and NTPC may tap private sector to hire new CMD

Tata Power MD Sardana, Punj Lloyd CEO JP Chalasani & Adani Power COO Jayadeb Nanda are in the reckoning

Creating such a new company would be a drag on govt treasury, says banking secy

EKN Economic Bureau

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry has turned out the Power Ministry's proposal to set up a new asset reconstruction company (ARC) for dealing with bad debts in the power sector.

"Creating a new 'super' asset reconstruction company is not a good way of dealing with non-performing assets, and banks should instead take haircuts on their loans and sell them to such companies that are already existing," banking secretary Hasmukh Adhia said. He added that creating such a new company would be a drag on the government treasury.

The idea behind setting up a specialised power sector ARC was to better understand the reasons for projects being stalled and come up with effective solutions to revive them.

"We have tried it in the past when IDBI as an institution was converted into bank, its ₹9,000 crore of debt was hived off to a separate trust and we have recovered only ₹4,500 crore," Adhia said.

Another reason why a new ARC will not work is because it will not have any experience of lending and even recovery, he said.

The government had proposed to set up a special asset reconstruction company (ARC) for dealing with non-performing assets in the power sector. The idea was to attract private sector expertise to manage the bad debt problem in the power sector.

However, the Finance Ministry has turned down the proposal, saying a new ARC would not be effective in dealing with non-performing assets, and banks should instead take haircuts on their loans and sell them to existing ARC companies.

The government had earlier proposed setting up an ARC in the power sector to deal with non-performing assets, but the idea was turned down by the Finance Ministry.

A new ARC would not be effective in dealing with non-performing assets, and banks should instead take haircuts on their loans and sell them to existing ARC companies, the Finance Ministry said.

Commenting on the proposal for a new ARC for power sector, banking secretary Hasmukh Adhia said, "We have tried it in the past when IDBI as an institution was converted into bank, its ₹9,000 crore of debt was hived off to a separate trust and we have recovered only ₹4,500 crore."

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