# THE ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

A Bill to further amend the Electricity Act, 2003

Be it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy First Year of the Republic of India as follows:---

# Short title and commencement

- (1) This Act may be called the Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2021.
- (2) It shall come into force on such date, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

# Amendment of Section 1

 In sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (hereinafter referred as "the principal Act"), the words "except the State of Jammu and Kashmir" shall be omitted.

#### Amendment of Section 2

- In section 2 of the principal Act:
- (i) for clause (3), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

""area of supply" means the area within which a distribution company is registered with the Appropriate Commissionale supply electricity:

Provided that the area within a Municipal Council or a Municipal Corporation as defined in Article 2430 of the Constitution of India or a revenue district shall be the purmoun area of supply":

- (ii) after clause (15) the following new clause shall be inserted, namely:—
  "(15a) "Cross border trade of electricity" means transactions involving import or export of electricity between India and any other country and
  - import or export of electricity between india and any other country and includes transactions between two other countries that involve the use of the transmission lines of India; :
- (iii) for clause (17), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

"distribution company" means a company or body corporate or association or body of individuals, whether incorporated or not, or artificial juridical person, registered under section 24B for the purpose of supply of electricity through its own distribution system or using the distribution system of other distribution companies to the consumers in its area of supply;".

#### Amendment of heading of Pari IV

 For the heading of Part IV of the principal Act, the following heading such be substituted, namely:-

# "Part IV- Licensing and Registration".

Amendment of Section 12 In section 12 of the principal Act, clause (b) shall be deleted and clause
 shall be renumbered as clause (b).

Amendment of Section 14

In section 14 of the principal Act,-

- clause (b) namely "to distribute electricity as a distribution licensee; or" shall be omitted;
- (ii) in the first proviso, the words "or supply" shall be omitted;
- (iii) in the third proviso, the words "or distributes electricity" shall be omitted:
- (iv) the sixth to eighth provisos shall be omitted;
- (v) in the ninth proviso, the words "distribution licensee" shall be substituted with the words "distribution company".

Insertion of new Sections 24A-24D

- After section 24 of the principal Act, the following sections shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "24A. Distribution company.- (1) Any company which fulfills the prescribed qualifications and has registered itself with the Appropriate Commission may supply electricity to consumers in its area of supply either using its own of subprison system or using the distribution system of another distribution company provided that it complies with the provisions of this Act and the rules and regulation made there under.
  - (2) Any reference to include or to merch a distribution licensee in this Act and the rules and regulations thate thereunder shall be construed to mean a reference to a distribution company and any reference to a distribution licensee shall be construed to mean registration for distribution.
  - 24B. Registration for distribution of electricity.—(1) Any person who meets the cligibility editoria prescribed to operate as a distribution company, may commerce operations in an area of supply after registration with the Appropriate Commission or deemed registration in terms of fourth proviso to sub-section (2), unless any deficiency in the application has been intimated to the applicant or the application has been rejected by the Appropriate Commission:

Provided that where an Appropriate Government distributes electricity, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, it shall be deemed to be a distribution company under this Act, and shall not be required to register under this Act:

Provided also that two or more distribution companies may register to distribute electricity in the same area:

Provided also that a distribution company may propose to undertake distribution of electricity for a specified area through another person and such person shall not be required to register separately:

Provided also that where a person intends to generate and distribute electricity in a rural area to be notified by the State Government, such person shall not require any registration for such generation and distribution of electricity, but shall comply with the measures which may be specified by the Authority under section 53:

Provided also that a distribution licensee functioning on or before the commencement of the Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2020 shall be deemed to have been registered as a distribution company and authorized to supply electricity under the Act,

(2) The Appropriate Commission, on receipt of an application complete in all respects regarding the specified qualifications from a person, in such form, manner and accompanied with such fees, as prescribed by the Central Government, shall, within a period of 60 days, issue a registration certificate if the person meets the eligibility criteria prescribed by the Government:

Provided that an application for registration may be rejected only on the ground that it does not give complete information to establish that applicant fulfills the qualifications prescribed for registration:

Provided also that the Appropriate Commission shall intimate a deficiency, if any, in the application to be rectified by the applicant before rejecting such application:

Provided also that an application can be rejected only after hearing the applicant P

Provided also that if no order is passed by the Appropriate Commission within 60 days, the registration shall be deemed to have been granted:

Provided also that for adequate reasons to be recorded in writing and after hearing, the Appropriate Commission may extend the period of 60 days by an additional period of 15 days.

- (3) In the case of an application concerning an area including the whole or any part of any cantonment, aerodrome, fortress, arsenal, dockyard or camp or of any building or place in the occupation of the Government for defence purposes, the Appropriate Commission shall ascertain that there is no objection from the Central Government to the grant of the registration.
- (4) A registration shall continue to be in force unless cancelled in accordance with the provisions of this Act.
- 24C. Conditions of registration.- The State Commission may specify terms and conditions for supply which shall apply to all distribution companies and such conditions shall be deemed to be the conditions of registration.
- 24D. Amendment and cancellation of registration.- (1) The State

Commission, after making an enquiry, may amend or cancel the registration, if it is satisfied that:

- the distribution company has made willful and prolonged default in doing anything required of it or under this Act or the rules or regulations made thereunder; or
- the distribution company is not eligible as per the qualification criteria prescribed for registration; or
- (c) the distribution company within the period fixed in this behalf, or any longer period which the State Commission may have granted, has failed to:-
  - show that it is in a position to fully and efficiently discharge the duties and obligations imposed on it under the Act and the rules and regulations made thereunder;
  - (ii) make the deposit of Comish the registration fees, as presented by the Central Government.

Provided that the registration shall be convelled unless the State Commission has given to the distribution company at least three months' notice, in writing, stating the grounds on which it is proposed to cancel the registration, and has considered any objections by the distribution company within the period provided in the notice.

- 2) The State Commission may, instead of cancelling a registration under sub-section (1), permit it to remain in force subject to such further terms and conditions or appendment as it thinks fit to impose, which shall become binding upon and be observed by the distribution company and shall be deemed to be conditions of the registration, while making suitable arrangements to secure supply to the consumers of such distribution company.
- (3) Where the State Commission cancels a registration under this section, it shall serve a notice of cancellation upon the distribution company and fix a date on which the cancellation shall take effect.
- (4) Any vesting or sale of utility of the distribution company shall be in accordance with the procedure provided under sections 20, 21 and 22, as the case may be.".
- In section 26 of the principal Act,
  - i) for sub-section (2), the following shall be substituted, namely, :-
    - "(2) The constitution of the National Load Despatch Centre shall be such as may be prescribed by the Central Government.";

- ii) after sub-section (3), the following sub-sections shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(4) The National Load Despatch Centre shall -
    - (a)be the apex body to ensure integrated operation of the power system in the country;
    - (b) be responsible for optimum scheduling and despatch of electricity in the country across different States and regions in accordance with the contracts entered into with the licensees or the generating companies;
    - (c) monitor grid operations and ensure grid security of the electricity grid and for this purpose give directions as necessary to Regional Load Despatch Centre or State Load Despatch Centre, as the case may be;
    - (d) exercise supervision and control over the inter-regional and inter-state transmission network; and
    - (e) have overall authority for carrying out real time operations of the national grid.
  - (5) The National Load Despatch Centre may give such directions and exercise such supervision and control over the power system as may be required for the safety and security of the national grid, for ensuring the stability of grid operation and for achieving maximum economy and efficiency in the operation of the power system throughout the country.
  - (6) The National Load Despatch Centre may give the directions directly or through the Regional or State Despatch Centre concerned.
  - (7) Every Regional Load Despatch Centre, State Load Despatch Centre, licensee, generating company, generating station, sub-station and any other person connected with the operation of the power system shall comply with the directions issued by the National Load Despatch Centre."
- In section 28 of the principal Act, the following proviso shall be inserted in clause (a) of sub-section (3), namely :—

"Provided that no electricity shall be scheduled or despatched under such contract unless adequate security of payment, as agreed upon by the parties to the contract, has been provided.".

 In section 32 of the principal Act, the following proviso shall be inserted in clause (a) of sub-section (2), namely:—

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"Provided that no electricity shall be scheduled or despatched under such contract unless adequate security of payment, as agreed upon by the parties to the contract, has been provided.".

Insertion of new sub Section 4A and 4B in section 42

- After subsection 4 of section 42 of the principal Act, the following subsections shall be inserted, namely;-
- "(4a) A distribution company shall provide non-discriminatory access of its distribution system to all distribution companies registered within the same area of supply, subject to payment of wheeling charges and the regulations specified by the State Commission."
- "(4b) In case any complaint is filed before the Appropriate Commission by any person or if that Commission is satisfied that a distribution company has knowingly failed to provide access of its distribution system to another distribution company from using its distribution network, the Appropriate Commission may, after giving the distribution company an opportunity of being heard in the matter, issue such directions as it considers necessary."

Insertion of new Section 47

- 12. In section 47 of the Armoipal Act, the following shall be substituted for sub-section (5), namely:
  - pursuance of clause (a) of sub-cutton (b) in case of supply of electricity through a pre-payment meter."
- 13. After section 40 of the principal Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely:—

Insertion of new Section 49 A

"49A. Cross Border Trade of Electricity. - (1) The Central Government may prescribe rules and issue guidelines for allowing and facilitating cross border trade of electricity in accordance with the provisions of this Act:

Provided that the guidelines governing Cross Border Trade of Electricity issued prior to the notification of Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2020 shall be deemed to have been issued under this Act.

(2) The Central Commission may make regulations consistent with the provisions of the Act and the rules and the guidelines made thereunder for cross border trade of electricity;

Provided that the regulations issued prior to the notification of Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2020 shall be deemed to have been made under this Act."

14. After section 59 of the principal Act, the following section 59A shall be

inserted, namely:-

"59A. Rights and Duties of Consumers.- The Central Government may, after consultation with the State Government, distribution companies, prescribe the rights and duties of consumers.".

Assertion of new Section 60 A

- After section 60 of the principal Act, the following section 60A shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "60A. Management of power purchase, cross subsidy, etc.— (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Act, on the registration of more than one distribution company in an area of supply, the power from the existing power purchase agreements with the existing distribution company, as on the date of registration of another distribution company, shall be shared among all the distribution companies in the area of supply as per the arrangements specified by the State Commission in accommission the accommission that the rules, if any, prescribed by the Central Coverantent."

Provides that the State Commission shall review the sharing of power from the existing power purchase agree points periodically:

Provided further that a distribution adaptany may enter into additional power purchase agreements after meeting the commitments of the existing tower purchase agreements for meet any additional requirement of power vertical sharing with other distribution companies.

(2) On the registration of more than one distribution company in an area of supply, a universal service obligation fund to be managed by a Government company or entity, designated by the State Government, shall be created. Any surplus with a distribution company on account of cross subsidy or cross subsidy surcharge or additional surcharge shall be deposited into such fund to fund deficits in the area of supply."

Insertion of new Section 63

- Section 63 of the principal Act shall be numbered as sub-section (1) thereof and after sub-section (1) as so numbered, the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:—
  - "(2) The Appropriate Commission shall, after receipt of application complete in all respects, adopt the tariff so determined under sub-section (1), not later than ninety days from the date of application:

Provided that, if the tariff is not decided by the Appropriate Commission, on expiry of ninety days from receipt of such application, the proposed tariff shall be deemed to have been adopted.".

Amendment of Section 64 17. In section 64 of the principal Act,-

- (i) Sub-section (1) shall be substituted by the following, namely:—
  - "(1) An application for determination of tariff under section 62 shall be made by a generating company or licensee in such manner and accompanied by such fee, as may be determined by regulations:

Provided that if an application is not made by a distribution licensee in time, the State Commission shall not later than 30 days of the last date specified in the regulations, initiate proceedings for determination of tariff and call for such information, details and documents as may be required for such determination with the objective of determining the tariff before the beginning of the financial year.";

(ii) in sub-section (3), in the opening portion, for the words "one hundred and twenty days from receipt of an application", the words "ninety days from receipt of application or initiation of proceedings, as the case may be," shall be substituted.

Amendment of Section 76

- 18. In section 76 o three" appearing in clause
- (a) in sub-section

- 19. In section 7
  - i) sub-section sunned by following
    - "(1) The Chairperson of the Central Compulssion shall be a person of ability, integrity and standing, having adequate knowledge of and experience in the power sector, or, is or has been Secretary or Additional Secretary for a total of at least two years in the Ministry or Department of the Central Covernment dealing with power sector,";
  - ii) sub-section (2) shall be substituted by the following, namely:-
    - "(2) The Members, other than the Chairperson, of the Central Commission shall be persons of ability, integrity and standing, having adequate knowledge of and experience in the fields of engineering, law, economics, commerce, finance, public policy / administration or, management and shall be appointed in the following manner, namely:-
      - (a) one person having qualifications and experience in the field of engineering with specialisation in generation, transmission or distribution of electricity:
      - (b) one person having qualifications and experience in the field of finance:
      - (c) one person, who is or has been a District Judge for at least two years; and

(d) one person having qualifications and experience in the field of economics, commerce, public policy/ public administration or management.".

#### Amendment of Section 78

- 20. In section 78 of the principal Act, -
  - i) in clause (a) of sub-section (1), for the words "Planning Commission", the words "Niti Aayog" shall be substituted;
  - ii) in subsection (9), after the word "vacancy", the word, "other than that
    of the Chairperson of the Selection Committee" shall be inserted;
  - iii) the proviso shall be omitted;

- In section 79 of the principal Act,
  - i) in the title after the word "Function", the word "and Duties" shall be inserted.
  - ii) for clause (f) in (ab-section (1), the following shall be substituted, namely:—
    - "(f) to administe upon disputes including matters regarding performance of obligations under a contract related to sale, purchase or transmission of electricity, involving generating companies or liceusee in regard to matters connected with clauses (a) to (d) of sub-section (1) and to refer any dispute for arbitration;
  - iii) after clause (f) in sub-region (4), the following shall be inserted, namely:-
    - "(fa) to adjudicate upon disputes involving National Load Despatch Centre or Regional Load Despatch Centre in regard to matters connected with section 26, section 28 and section 29;";
  - iv) after clause (j) in sub-section (1), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:-
    - "(ja) registration of a distribution company for supplying electricity in more than one state;".
  - v) In clause (k) of sub-section (1), after the clause "under this Act" the clause "or as may be prescribed by the Central Government" may be added.
  - vi) After clause (k) in sub-section (1), the following proviso shall be inserted, namely:-

"Provided that a Bench of the Central Commission consisting of the Member appointed under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 77 and at most one more Member, as may be nominated by the Chairperson, shall discharge the functions given in clauses (f) and (fa). ";

22. In section 82 of the principal Act,-

Amendment of Section 82

- i) sub-section (4) shall be substituted by the following, namely:—
   "(4) The State Commission shall consist of a Chairperson and three other Members.";
- after sub-section (5), the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(6) If any State Commission is unable to perform its functions on account of vacancies, the Central Government may, in consultation with the State Government concerned, entrust its functions to any other State Commissional Transcription, as it deems proper.".

- 23. In section \$4 of the principal Act.
  - i) sub-section (1) shall be substituted by following, namely:-
    - "(1) The Chairperson of the State Commission shall be a person of ability, integrity and stapeing, having adequate knowledge of and experience in the power sector, or is or has been a Chief Secretary or equivalent for at least one year in the State Government and has experience of a least two years in power sector.";
  - ii) sub-section (%) shall be substituted by the following, namely:-
    - "(2) The Members, other than the Chairperson, of the State Commission shall be persons of ability, integrity and standing, having adequate knowledge of and experience in the fields of engineering, law, economics, commerce, finance, public policy / public administration or, management and shall be appointed in the following manner, namely:-
      - (a) one person having qualifications and experience in the field of engineering with specialisation in generation, transmission or distribution of electricity;
      - (b) one person having qualifications and experience in the field of finance, economics, commerce, public policy / public administration or management;
      - (c) a serving District Judge to be appointed on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned.".
- 24. In section 85 of the principal Act, -

- i) clause (c) of sub-section (1) shall be substituted by the following, namely:-
- ii) in subsection (6), after the word "vacancy", the word, "other than that
  of the Chairperson of the Selection Committee" shall be inserted;
- In section 86 of the principal Act,—

Amendment to section 86

- in the title after the word "Function", the word "and duties" shall be inserted.
- ii) in clause (e) of sub-section (1), after the words "a distribution licensee", the words ", as may be prescribed by the Central Government from time to time" shall be inserted;
- iii) for clause (f) in seo-section (1) of section 86 of the principal Act, the following shall be substituted, namely:
  - "(f) to adjudicate upon disputes including matters regarding performance of obligations under a contract related to sale, purchase or transmission of referenced in arbitration;";
- iv) after clause (f) in sub-section (f), the following shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(fa) to adjudicate upon disputes involving State Load Despatch Centre in regard to matters connected with section 32 and section 33":
- v) after clause (j) in sub-section (1), the following clause (ja) shall be added, namely:-
  - "(ja) registration of a distribution company for supplying electricity, suspension, amendment and cancellation of registration of a distribution company and specifying conditions of registration;
  - (jb) issue directions or guidelines or regulations to secure consumer choice and an efficient, coordinated and economical use of distribution system, where there are more than one distribution companies in an area of supply; ".
- vi) In clause (k) in sub-section (1), after the words "under this Act" the words " or as may be prescribed by the Central Government." shall be added:

vii) in subsection (1), the following proviso shall be inserted, namely:-

"Provided that a Bench of the State Commission consisting of the Member appointed under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 84 and at most one more Member, as may be nominated by the Chairperson, shall discharge the functions given in clauses (f) and (fa).":

## Amendment of Section 89

- In section 89 of the principal Act, the following sub-section shall be inserted after sub-section (5), namely:—
  - "(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the term, salary, allowances and other terms and conditions of Members appointed under sub-section (2) (c) of section 85 shall be governed by their service rules.".

## Amendment of Section 90

- In subsection (2) of section 90 of the principal Act.
  - i) following new statises shall be reserved after clause (f), namely:-
    - "(g) has colored the provisions of the act or the rules made
    - (h) has been grossly regiment in performing one or more functions assigned to himsor the Commission under the Act or rules made thereunder."
  - ii) In first proviso, for the words "clauses (d), (e) and (f)" in second line shall be substituted by the words "clauses (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h)"

- 28. In section 91 of the principal Act, the following sub-sections shall be inserted after sub-section (1), namely:—
  - "(1A) The Appropriate Commission shall establish a monitoring cell with sufficient number of officers and employees, with the approval of the Appropriate Government, specifically for the purpose of ascertaining the compliance by the licensees, generating companies and the distribution companies of the provisions of the Act and the rules and regulations made thereunder and the directions and orders issued by it.
  - (1B) The monitoring cell shall ascertain the status of compliance by the licensees, generating companies and the distribution companies of the provisions of the Act and the rules and regulations made thereunder and the directions and orders issued by the Appropriate Commission, as may be required by the Appropriate Commission, and submit reports thereof to the Appropriate Commission.".

Amendment of Section 94

- 29. In section 94 of the principal Act, the following sub-sections shall be inserted after sub-section (3), namely:—
  - "(4) An order made by the Bench of the Central Commission under subsection (1) of section 79 or the Bench of the State Commission under subsection (1) of section 86, shall be executable as a decree of civil court and, for this purpose the Bench of the Central Commission or the State Commission, as the case may be, shall have all the powers of a civil court including but not limited to powers of attachment and sale of property, arrest and detention in prison and appointment of a receiver.
  - (5) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (4), the Bench referred to in sub-section (4) may transmit an order made by the Appropriate Commission to a civil court having local jurisdiction and such civil court shall execute the order as if it were a decree made by that court."

Amendment of Section 112 30. In sub-section (1) of section 112 of the principal Act, for the words "three other Members", the words "such number of other Members, not less than seven, as may be presented by the Central Government" shall be substituted.

Amendment of Section 142 31. Section 142 effthe principal set shall be substituted by the following, namely:—

"142. Penalty for contravention of the provisions of the Act

- (1) In case any complaint is filed before the Appropriate Commission by any person or if that Commission is satisfied that any person has contravened any of the provisions of this Act or the rules made thereunder, the Appropriate Commission may after giving such person an opportunity of being heard in the matter, by order in writing, direct that, without prejudice to any other penalty to which he may be liable under this Act, such person shall pay, by way of penalty, which shall not exceed one crore rupees for each contravention and in case of a continuing failure with an additional penalty which may extend to six lakh rupees for every day during which the failure continues after contravention of the first such direction.
- (2) In case any complaint is filed before the Appropriate Commission by any person or if that Commission is satisfied that any person has contravened any direction or order issued by the Commission, the Appropriate Commission may after giving such person an opportunity of being heard in the matter, by order in writing, direct that, without prejudice to any other penalty to which he may be liable under this Act, such person shall pay, by way of penalty, which shall not exceed ten lakh rupees for each contravention and in case of a continuing failure with an additional penalty which may extend to sixty thousand rupees

for every day during which the failure continues after contravention of the first such direction.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1) and subsection (2), in case any complaint is filed before the Appropriate Commission by any person or if that Commission is satisfied that any person, with effect from such date as may be notified by the Central Government, has not purchased power from renewable sources of energy as specified by it using its powers under the Act, the Appropriate Commission shall after giving such person an opportunity of being heard in the matter, by order in writing, direct that, without prejudice to any other penalty to which he may be liable under this Act, such person shall pay, by way of penalty, a sum calculated at the rate of not less than twenty-five paisa per kilowatt-hour and not more than fifty paisa per kilowatt-hour for the shortfall in purchase in the first year of default, at a rate of not less than fifty paisa per kilowatt-hour and not more than one rupee per kilowatt-hour for the shortfall in purchase in the second successive wear of default and at the rate of not and not more than two rupees per kilowatt-hour the shonfall in p continuing after the second year."

Amendment of Section 146 32. In section 146 of the principal Act, for the word "lakh", the word "crore" and for the words "five housand rupees". He words "one lakh rupees" shall be substituted.

Amendment of Section 176

- 33. In sub-section (2) of section 1/6 of the principal Act,-
- (i) After clause (c), the following clauses (ca) and (cb) shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(ca) eligibility criteria to operate as a distribution company under section 24B;
  - (cb) manner, mode and payment of fees for registration of distribution companies under section 24B;".
- (ii) After clause (d), the following clause (da) shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(da) rights and duties of consumers under section 59A;".
- (iii) After clause (i), the following clause (ia) shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(ia) quantum of purchase of electricity under clause (e) of subsection (1) of section 86;".
- 34. In section 178 of the principal Act,-

Amendment of Section 178

i) for sub-section (1), the following shall be substituted, namely:-

- "(1) The Central Commission may, by notification, make regulations in respect of the functions assigned to it in the Act.".
- (ii) In sub-section (2) of section 178 of the principal Act,
  - i) after clause (a), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:-
    - "(aa) Cross border trade of electricity, if any, under sub section (2) of section 6A;";
  - ii) clauses (ze) shall be omitted.
- In section 181 of the principal Act,

- i) for sub-section (1), the following shall be substituted, namely:-
  - "(1) The State Commissions that dynotrication, make regulations in respect of the functions assigned to it in 96 Act."
- ii) In sub-section (2) of section 181 of the principal Wat:-
- (i) After clause (d), the following clause (div) shall be inserted,
  - "(da) conditions of registration under section 240 "
- (ii) After clause (n), the following clause (na) shall be inserted, namely:-
  - "(na) setting up and management of universal service obligation fund under sub-section (2) of section 60A;".