



SOUTH ASIA DISTRIBUTION UTILITY NETWORK (DUN)

Month and Date	: February 20, 2023
Duration	: 45 mins in Hybrid mode
Venue	: Ministry of Power (MOP) conference room, New Delhi
Participants	: Distribution Utilities from India and South Asia (Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, and Sri Lanka) joining online

India's power distribution sector is playing a key role in accelerating India's development trajectory. Leading the sector reforms in South Asia with an aim to achieve 24/7 availability of reliable, quality, and affordable power, the growth in distribution infrastructure has resulted in increased power availability to 22 hours in rural areas and approximately 23.5 hours in urban areas. The nation has ambitious clean energy targets and has witnessed unprecedented growth in renewables that has kickstarted the next phase of evolution of the country's distribution utilities. India has already launched the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) with a key objective to strengthen distribution infrastructure, install 25 crore smart meters across the country, and build capacity of DISCOM professionals to reduce losses and become financially sustainable and operationally efficient.

From a broader perspective of the power supply chain, there are overlapping issues in the distribution sector among countries in South Asia. While the region has witnessed cooperation on creating generation assets to ensure both energy security and access for its burgeoning population, there is no organized collaboration yet related to power distribution. Discoms across South Asia are at varied stages of reforms and development yet experience common challenges and have similar priorities. Many countries prioritize new age technologies and solutions like smart grids, advanced metering infrastructure (AMI), distributed energy resources, storage, digitalization, and increased focus on customer service. Countries in the region especially, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka are dealing with similar issues in providing reliable and affordable energy access to their citizens. Given the strong need to modernize distribution utilities in the region to match the speed of evolution of the power sector, a South Asia-focused collaboration is the need of the hour.

Rising to the occasion, India's Power Finance Cooperation (PFC) – the nodal agency for implementing distribution sector reforms in the country— is launching the South Asia **Distribution Utilities Network (DUN)**. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is supporting this initiative. This regional platform intends to a) establish India's leadership in the South Asia b) enable knowledge sharing among distribution utilities in South Asia c) focus on distribution issues at the regional level d) enable utility to utility (U2U) connect and d) enable benefits through knowledge aggregation.

PFC and USAID are jointly launching DUN in New Delhi, India in presence of Hon'ble Cabinet Minister (Power, New & Renewable Energy), Government of India – Mr. R K Singh. The agenda for the program is appended below:



AGENDA

1100 – 1103 hours	Welcome address by PFC CMD – Mr. Ravinder Singh Dhillon
1103 – 1123 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remarks by Mr. Mapa Pathirana, Secretary to the Ministry of Power, Sri Lanka• Presentation by Mr. Ajwad Mustafa, Secretary – Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Technology, Maldives• Presentation by Mr. Bikash Dewan, Managing Director, Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd. (DPDC), Bangladesh• Presentation by Mr. Sonam Tobjey – Chief Executive Officer, Bhutan Power Corporation (BPC), Bhutan
1123 – 1128 hours	Remarks by USAID/India Mission Director – Ms. Veena Reddy
1128 – 1132 hours	Launch of South Asia Distribution Utility Network (DUN) and release of the white paper on DUN
1132– 1137 hours	Special remarks by Secretary, Ministry of Power – Mr. Alok Kumar
1137 – 1145 hours	Keynote Address by Hon'ble Cabinet Minister (Power, New & Renewable Energy) – Mr. R K Singh
1145 hours	Vote of Thanks by Joint Secretary, (Thermal and Coal, Distribution) – Mr. Piyush Singh

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