

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF POWER
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.123
ANSWERED ON 02.02.2023**

CASES OF THEFT OF POWER

123. SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL:

**Will the Minister of POWER
be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the cases of theft of power reported in various parts of the country;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to stop the theft of power;**
- (c) whether the Government proposes to introduce an advanced meter to address the issue of theft of power;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and**
- (e) the details of the theft of power by the commercial consumers during the last three years?**

A N S W E R

THE MINISTER OF POWER AND NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY

(SHRI R.K. SINGH)

(a) & (b) : The Government is aware of the cases of theft of power, as reported by the distribution licensees, in various parts of the country. The measures taken by the Government of India, to control the theft of power are as follows:

(i) There are specific provisions in the Electricity Act 2003 (Section 126 and Sections 135 to 140) relating to theft and unauthorized use of electricity, including stringent penal provisions and speedy trial for such offences by Special Courts;

(ii) Ministry of Power launched Reforms-based and Results-linked, Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), to improve the operational efficiencies and financial sustainability of all DISCOMs/ Power Departments. This Scheme aims to reduce the Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses, which includes impact of power theft also, on pan-India basis, in the range of 12-15% by 2024-25. The scheme includes the provisions for funding for loss reduction measures, up-gradation of distribution infrastructure including IT interventions, installation of pre-paid Smart Meters in the country, which would facilitate in the reduction of AT&C losses.

(c) & (d) : The RDSS, with an outlay of Rs. 3,03,758 crore and estimated GBS from Central Government of Rs. 97,631 crore for the duration of 5 years i.e. from (FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26), has been formulated with the objective of improving the quality and reliability of power supply to the consumers.

Prepaid Smart Metering is a critical intervention envisaged under the RDSS, with an estimated outlay of ~Rs 1,50,000 Cr with ~GBS of 23,000 Cr and 25 crore prepaid Smart Meters are targeted to be installed during the Scheme period. Along with the prepaid Smart Metering for consumers, system metering at feeder and DT level with communicating feature along with associated Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) would be implemented, thereby facilitating the Discoms for automatic measurement of energy flows, at all levels, as well as energy accounting and auditing without any human interference. Smart Metering is to be done in PPP mode so that the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) can be enforced for proper energy accounting for identification of defaulting consumers theft prone pockets, instances of meter tampering.

Under this scheme, advanced Information and Communication Technology (ICT) like Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML) would be leveraged to analyse data generated through Smart Meters and Information Technology/Operational Technology (IT/OT) devices including System Meters to detect the theft cases and to prepare actionable MIS from system generated energy accounting reports, so as to enable the DISCOMs to take informed decisions on power theft along with loss reduction, demand forecasting, asset management etc.

At present, under the RDSS, ~20.46 crore prepaid Smart Meters, ~54.12 lakh numbers of DT Meters and ~1.98 lakh numbers of Feeder Meters have been sanctioned across 28 States/46 Discoms, with a total sanctioned cost of Rs. 1,35,001.72 Cr and GBS of Rs. 24,908.7 Cr.

(e) : The commercial losses due to power theft, billing efficiency, collection efficiency are part of the AT&C losses. The Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has published a report titled “Performance of State Power Utilities”, wherein the details of Billing Efficiency, Collection Efficiency and AT&C loss % for the year FY from 2018-19 to 2020-21 are given below:

Parameter	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-2022 (Provisional)
Billing Efficiency (%)	83.90	85.41	84.07	85.75
Collection Efficiency (%)	93.39	92.80	92.40	97.16
AT&C loss %	21.64	20.73	22.32	16.68
