

Dedicated Transmission – A menace

The enactment of the Electricity Act, 2003 brought out many enabling provisions and installation of dedicated transmission lines by generating companies or captive generating plants (CPP) is one of them. This provision has enabled generating companies and CPPs to establish connectivity with sub-stations or the load centre by laying dedicated transmission lines.

Power being concurrent subject; both States as well as Center have a role in framing policies and implementation of the same. Traditionally, the transmission of electricity within the State is under the purview of the State owned companies, which were subsequently notified as State Transmission Utilities (STU) for intra-State transmission system and Central Transmission Utility (CTU) for inter-State transmission system. While the Government of India (GoI) has taken certain initiatives towards strengthening the inter-State transmission system through private sector participation, many states which own a large chunk of transmission and sub-transmission systems are lagging behind. It is obvious that the development / strengthening of transmission system have to be accomplished in a coordinated manner and in sync with capacity addition in power generation.

Though, EA provides for generating companies to set up a (small) dedicated transmission lines to establish connectivity between the generating station and the nearest grid point for further evacuation of power using intra/ inter-State grid, the IPPs are resorting to set up large transmission lines for dedicated use. Perhaps, due to lack of initiative on the part of STU/ CTU, the generating companies are compelled to set up a large transmission lines for dedicated use. In recent times, one of the upcoming IPP in Gujarat has succeeded in winning the bid for supply of power to one of the State in North India. It is understood that the subject IPP is laying dedicated HVDC line between the generating plant and the grid sub-station of the concerned State in North India. On the one hand, India is heading for '**ONE NATION ONE GRID**' concept and on the other hand, inter region dedicated transmission system are being conceived just because the Act allows for such dedicated transmission lines.

In an integrated grid, it is well known that the power is supplied on displacement basis by using the transmission system in most optimal manner. Would it therefore be advisable to allow such dedicated power corridors to be built, which are spanning over a distance of thousand of kilometers?

The Act also provides for open access for such power transfer and therefore, it is to be seen whether, dedicated transmission lines of such high capacity would provide a cost effective solution.

Moreover, due to scarcity of land, need of the hour is to strengthen/ lay regional transmission system which would cater to large number of users, thereby, lowering the tariff to ultimate consumers.

Also, expecting cooperation from non beneficiary states for installation of dedicated transmission lines through their States would be a far cry.

In light of the above, it is necessary for all the stakeholders to review the concept of Dedicated Transmission Lines and help develop & operate the transmission system in a cost effective & efficient manner.

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