



Amendments to the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Power has notified amendments to the [Electricity \(Rights of Consumers\) Rules, 2020](#), to accelerate the installation of [Rooftop Solar Projects](#) and empower consumers - with provisions on connections in residential societies and solving complaints on meter readings.

What are the Major Amendments in Electricity Rules, 2020?

- **Easier and Faster installation of Rooftop Solar Systems:**
 - Exemption has been given for the requirement of technical feasibility study, for systems up to a capacity of 10 kW.
 - For systems of **capacity higher than 10 kW**, the timeline for completing the feasibility study has been reduced from **20 to 15 days**.
 - **A technical feasibility study** typically involves assessing factors such as site suitability, structural integrity of the building, available sunlight exposure, electrical infrastructure compatibility, and potential obstacles or challenges that may affect the **installation and operation of the solar panels**.
 - It is mandated that the distribution system strengthening necessary for rooftop solar PV systems up to 5 kW capacity will be done by the **distribution company at its own cost**.
 - Further, the timeline for the distribution licensee to commission [Rooftop Solar PV](#) systems has been reduced from **30 to 15 days**.
- **Separate Connections for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:**
 - Consumers can obtain separate electricity connections for charging their [Electric Vehicles \(EVs\)](#).
 - This aligns with India's goal of reducing carbon emissions and reaching [Net Zero by the year 2070](#).
 - The time period for obtaining a new electricity connection has been reduced from **7 to 3 days** in metropolitan areas, from **15 to 7 days in other municipal areas**, and from **30 to 15 days in rural areas**.
 - However, **in rural areas with hilly terrain**, the time period for new connections or for modifications in **existing connections will remain thirty days**.
- **Additional Rights for Consumers in Residential Colonies and Flats:**
 - Owners residing in co-operative group housing societies, multi-storied buildings, residential colonies, etc., will have the option to choose from the distribution licensee either individual connections for everyone or a **single-point connection for the whole premises**.
 - The exercise of the option will be based on a **transparent ballot to be conducted by the Distribution Company**.
 - Parity has also been brought in the tariff charged to consumers who get electricity supplied through single-point connection and to those who avail of individual connections.
 - Metering, billing, and collection **will be done separately for:**
 - Individual electricity consumption sourced from the distribution licensee
 - Individual consumption of backup power supplied by the residential association

- Electricity consumption for common areas of such residential associations, which is sourced from the distribution licensee.
- **Mandatory Additional Meter in cases of Complaints:**
 - In cases where **consumers raise complaints about meter reading** not aligning with their actual electricity consumption, the distribution licensee is now required to install **an additional meter within five days** from the date of receipt of the complaint.
 - This **additional meter will be used to verify the consumption** for a minimum period of three months, thus reassuring consumers and ensuring accuracy in billing.

What are the Other Government Initiatives for Solar Energy?

- [National Solar Mission](#)
- [Solar Park Scheme](#)
- [Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan \(PM-KUSUM\)](#)
- [International Solar Alliance](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Consider the following statements: (2016)

1. The International Solar Alliance was launched at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2015.
2. The Alliance includes all the member countries of the United Nations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (a)

Mains:

Q. India has immense potential of solar energy though there are regional variations in its developments. Elaborate. (2020)