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ELECTRICITY (RIGHTS OF CONSUMERS) RULES, 2020

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "REPORT ON LEGAL EDUCATION IN INDIA". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "POLITY AND GOVERNANCE" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Amendments to the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 have been approved by the Indian government. These regulations encourage prosumer generation of renewable energy and address issues including billing, complaints, compensation, and new connection timelines.

SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS TO THE ELECTRICITY (RIGHTS OF CONSUMERS) RULES, 2020

• REVOLUTIONISING ROOFTOP SOLAR SYSTEMS DEPLOYMENT

1. **Streamlined Setup:** Initiatives have been enacted to expedite the installation of Rooftop Solar PV systems, fostering rapid deployment and simplifying the process for prosumers.
2. **Feasibility Exemption:** Systems under 10 kW are now exempt from the technical feasibility study requirement, while for capacities exceeding 10 kW, the feasibility study deadline has been reduced from twenty to fifteen days.
3. **Mandated Distribution Reinforcement:** Distribution companies are mandated to strengthen the distribution system for rooftop solar PV systems up to 5 kW capacity at their own expense.
4. **Cutting-Edge Commissioning:** The commissioning timeline for distribution licensees to install Rooftop Solar PV systems has been halved, decreasing from thirty days to fifteen days.

• EMPOWERING ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

1. **Individual EV Connections:** Consumers can now acquire separate electricity connections dedicated to charging their Electric Vehicles, aligning with the national agenda of achieving Net Zero by 2070.
2. **Expeditious Connection Acquisition:** The timeframes for obtaining new electricity connections have been significantly reduced across metropolitan, municipal, and rural areas, accelerating the shift towards sustainable energy practices.

• CONSUMER-CENTRIC INNOVATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL SPACES

1. **Elevated Consumer Empowerment:** Rules have been amended to provide consumers in residential colonies and flats with enhanced choices and transparency in metering and billing.
2. **Diverse Ownership Options:** Residents in cooperative housing societies and multi-storied buildings now have the flexibility to choose between individual connections for each unit or a single-point connection for the entire premises.

3. **Segmented Metering and Billing:** The metering, billing, and collection processes have been compartmentalised for individual electricity consumption, backup power, and common area electricity consumption, ensuring greater accuracy and transparency.

- **SWIFT SOLUTIONS THROUGH ADDITIONAL METER INSTALLATION**

1. **Prompt Complaint Resolution:** In instances where consumers dispute meter readings, distribution licensees are mandated to install an **additional meter within five days of receiving the complaint**. This supplementary meter validates consumption for a minimum of three months, ensuring precise billing and consumer reassurance.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SOLAR SYSTEMS

The solar rooftop landscape encompasses various systems designed to harness renewable energy efficiently. These systems cater to diverse needs and preferences, offering a range of options for users. Below, we delve into the types of solar rooftop systems, each contributing uniquely to sustainable energy solutions.

PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ROOFTOP SYSTEMS:

Overview: PV systems are the most common solar rooftop installations, converting sunlight into electricity using solar cells.

Functionality: Solar panels composed of photovoltaic cells capture sunlight and convert it into direct current (DC) electricity, subsequently transformed into usable alternating current (AC) through inverters.

SOLAR THERMAL ROOFTOP SYSTEMS:

Overview: In contrast to PV systems, solar thermal rooftop installations focus on harnessing sunlight for heat rather than electricity.

Functionality: These systems utilise solar collectors to absorb sunlight, generating heat that can be utilised for various applications such as space heating or hot water production.

BUILDING-INTEGRATED PHOTOVOLTAICS (BIPV):

Overview: BIPV seamlessly integrates solar panels into the building structure, serving the dual purpose of generating electricity and acting as building materials.

Functionality: Solar elements, such as solar shingles or solar glass, replace traditional building materials, providing both aesthetic appeal and sustainable energy generation.

OFF-GRID SOLAR ROOFTOP SYSTEMS:

Overview: Off-grid systems are designed to function independently of the utility grid, making them suitable for remote locations or areas with unreliable power sources.

Functionality: These systems typically include battery storage to store excess energy generated during peak sunlight hours for later use when sunlight is limited or unavailable.

GRID-TIED SOLAR ROOFTOP SYSTEMS:

Overview: Grid-tied systems connect to the local utility grid, allowing users to both consume solar-generated electricity and draw power from the grid when needed.

Functionality: Excess energy produced by the system can be fed back into the grid, often resulting in net metering benefits for the user.

HYBRID SOLAR ROOFTOP SYSTEMS:

Overview: Hybrid systems combine solar panels with other renewable energy sources or backup power systems to enhance energy reliability.

Functionality: Integrating components like wind turbines or backup generators, hybrid systems offer a comprehensive and sustainable solution, ensuring a continuous power supply.

KEY MEASURES TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE THE WIDESPREAD USE OF SOLAR PANELS

National Solar Mission (NSM):

NSM encompasses various schemes and incentives, including the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission, promoting both grid-connected and off-grid solar applications.

Solar Rooftop Subsidy Scheme:

To promote solar power generation at the individual consumer level, the government introduced subsidies for rooftop solar installations.

Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects:

Objective: Facilitate large-scale solar power generation by establishing solar parks and ultra mega solar power projects across the country.

Key Features: These projects provide the necessary infrastructure, reducing land acquisition challenges for developers and attracting investments for the rapid deployment of solar panels.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM):

Commencing in 2019, PM-KUSUM aims to assist farmers in the establishment of solar power facilities on their unproductive or unused lands. This initiative encompasses features such as the deployment of independent solar pumps, the conversion of existing grid-tied agricultural pumps to solar power, and the encouragement of decentralised solar energy generation.

Mains practice question

Q1. How are Indian Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) grappling with the challenges of ensuring reliable and uninterrupted power supply to consumers across diverse regions?

Himanshu Mishra

NINTH EDITION OF 'RAISINA DIALOGUE' : INDIA EMERGING AS A GREAT POWER AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL

SOURCE - THE HINDU AND PIB.

GENERAL STUDIES - PAPER - 2 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA, INDIA AND GREECE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP, RAISINA DIALOGUE, INDIA -

MIDDLE EAST – EUROPE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR, BALTIC – NORDIC FORUM, G-7 OR BRICS -10, G-20 GROUPS

WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- **Recently, the ninth edition of the three-day 'Raisina Dialogue' was organized in New Delhi from 21 to 23 February 2024 in India.**
- The 9th edition of Raisina Dialogue was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi in New Delhi. In which the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis was the chief guest in this inaugural session.
- Raisina Dialogue is a major conference organized by India on geopolitics and geo-economics.
- Raisina Dialogue is committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the international community.
- The main theme of this edition will be organized in 2024 – '**Chaturanga : Struggle, Rivalry, Cooperation, Creation**'.
- The three-day Raisina Dialogue held in India was attended by representatives of more than 100 countries, including Foreign Ministers, Defense Ministers and Finance Ministers, former Heads of State and Government, military commanders, academicians, journalists and scholars.
- In this meeting, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said that – "**India is a great power at the global level and is also an important ally for global peace and security**".
- He also said that – "**India is an emerging power in the G-20 organization and a leading and important country in fighting the threats posed by climate change**".
- He urged Indian Prime Minister Modi to further strengthen the mutual partnership between India and Greece.
- Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis inaugurated the event. **Connectivity projects like India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor** Talked about the importance of **Global governance, inequality at the apex of the UN Security Council and the need for reform were also discussed.**
- Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said that – "**Today is a time to celebrate the partnership between the two countries because it is a partnership between two countries that share the same values and this partnership is the relationship between the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy**".
- Raisina Dialogue also on India's role in hosting the G-20 in the year 2023 and its successful discharge by India. InMentioned again and again. Due to the meeting of G-20 Foreign Ministers in Brazil, five permanent

members of the Security Council, important G-7 or BRICS-10 There was no presence of any senior minister level from the countries.

- A large ministerial delegation from Central and Eastern Europe was present, including all ministers from the Baltic-Nordic Forum. This made possible a new diplomatic engagement for the government which is seeking trade agreements and investment relations with this part of Europe. This segment is often overlooked, but it is economically competitive.



MAIN TOPICS OF THE NINTH EDITION OF RAISINA DIALOGUE 2024 :

Following are the six main topics of the ninth edition of Raisina Dialogue 2024 –

1. **Peace with the Planet: Investment and Innovation.**
2. **Defending Democracy: Society and Sovereignty.**
3. **War and Peace: Arsenals and Contradictions.**
4. **Tech Frontiers: Regulations and Realities.**
5. **Decolonization and inclusion of multilateral institutions.**
6. **The post-2030 agenda: people and progress.**



INTRODUCTION TO RAISINA DIALOGUE :

- The headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs of India is located in the South Block of Raisina Hill in New Delhi. Therefore, this meeting was named after Raisina Hill located in New Delhi, India Known as '**Raisina Dialogue**'.

IMPORTANCE OF RAISINA DIALOGUE :



- In India, Raisina Dialogue was started in New Delhi in the year 2016.
- It is an annual conference organized to discuss Geo – Political and Geo – Economic issues. **It is jointly conducted by the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF).**
- It is a multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral meeting involving policy-makers and decision-makers, stakeholders from different countries, politicians, journalists, senior officials and representatives of industry and business.
- Under this, foreign, defense and finance ministers of different countries are included.
- **Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in India was established in the year 1990. Whose headquarters is located in New Delhi, which functions as an 'independent think tank'.**

MAIN OBJECTIVE OF RAISINA DIALOGUE :



- The main objective of the Raisina Dialogue is to explore possibilities and opportunities for Asian integration as well as better coordination with Asia with the rest of the world.
- Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference that is a platform to commit to address the challenging issues facing the global community.
- Global leaders from across policy, business, media and civil society from around the world are invited annually to the Raisina Dialogue to discuss a wide range of international policy issues.

BENEFITS TO INDIA FROM RAISINA DIALOGUE :

- The Raisina Dialogue provides a platform for the government to articulate its position on various situations and issues of international relations.
- Raisina Dialogue increases the diplomatic capacity of the Government of India.

CONCLUSION / PATH TO SOLUTION :



- There was a lack of diversity in the context of foreign policy due to the non-participation of various other countries in the discussions on foreign policy at the Raisina Dialogue, but a large part of the discussions at this meeting focused on global conflicts.
- The heavily attended gathering of dignitaries from Europe focused attention on Russia's war in Ukraine, and panels on military and naval strategy also focused on the need to counter China's aggressive expansionist policies.
- There was no attempt at balance in the discussions held at the "Raisina Dialogue" because neither Russia nor China were invited to the meeting.
- There was minimal attendance from Southeast Asia, Latin America, and even South Asia (except Nepal and Bhutan).
- Panels on democracy naturally avoided lively debates within India about declining freedoms, but the absence of non-governmental civil society organizations from these discussions created a narrow view of the challenges facing democracies around the world. .
- There was also no significant discussion of the Israeli war in Gaza. This does not just mean a lack of diversity in the discussions on this unique forum for foreign policy thinking of India, but it also reflects the views of India's External Affairs Minister S. This diminishes the significance of Jaishankar's otherwise well-founded comment that the Raisina Dialogue – **'Made in India' edition of 'Global Public Square'** has been made.
- Both India and Greece naturally have a similar outlook on global challenges. As India strengthens its reach abroad, Greece has emerged as a favorable destination country for India.

- India's day-by-day growing interest and active engagement in the Mediterranean region is an important aspect of India's continued growth at the diplomatic level, which will serve as a pillar for India-Greece mutual diplomatic and trade partnership. .
- India is already investing heavily in Greece's infrastructure. These also include the construction of a new airport. Therefore, bilateral trade between India and Greece is continuously increasing.
- The Prime Minister of Greece said that India is the fastest growing economy in the world. Greece has achieved the fastest growth rate of any European country over the years. Therefore, mutual investment between India and Greece is a major objective of our bilateral relations.
- Mr Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Indian External Affairs Minister Subramaniam Jaishankar also addressed the Raisina Dialogue meeting. He said that as two civilizational countries, India and Greece have a special responsibility to contribute to the development of the existing global order.
- Except for Southeast Asia, Latin America, and even countries in South Asia – such as Nepal and Bhutan, other countries had minimal presence. A larger presence of South Asian countries in this meeting would have brought out a more diverse approach and would have also revealed the pressures they are facing due to the said conflicts and efforts would have been made to solve those problems through the Raisina Dialogue as much as possible. .

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding Raisina Dialogue.

1. Raisina Dialogue is a quadrennial meeting programme. Which is organized every four years in New Delhi.
2. The main theme of this edition organized in the year 2024 - ' Chaturanga: Struggle, Rivalry, Cooperation, Creation 'Is.
3. In India, Raisina Dialogue was started in New Delhi in the year 2016.
4. Raisina Dialogue is jointly organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Defense Ministry, Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation of India.

Which of the above statement / statements is/are correct?

- (A) Only 1 and 4
 (B) Only 2 and 3
 (C) Only 1 and 3
 (D) Only 2 and 4

Answer - (B)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :

- Q.1. Highlighting the main theme of the ninth edition of Raisina Dialogue, discuss how Raisina Dialogue is relevant in the context of changing Geo- diplomatic and strategic relations at the global level ?**

Akhilesh Kumar Shrivastava