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With four months to go for the elections, Dikshit is trying to woo the voters but the public is not a fool.

VIJAY GOEL, Delhi BJP chief, on the power subsidy

htmetro

Poll sop? Tariff revision likely after state elections

POWER SUBSIDY BJP terms subsidy a pre-election stunt, AAP promises cheaper power if it wins assembly elections

HT Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Within hours of the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) revising the power tariff for 2013-14, Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit on Friday announced subsidies to offset the hike.

But sources said the tariffs could be revised again once the assembly elections are over.

The Delhi elections looming ahead seem to have achieved what scores of demonstrations and submissions to the power regulator could not achieve in the past four years. And this is probably the first time power bills will come down, albeit by a small margin.

Explaining the reason behind the meagre increase, Sudhakar said: "The power distribution companies are in a surplus for the current year due to the past tariff revisions and the 8% surcharge. However, the accumulated deficit in their coffers needs to come down. So we had to increase the rates marginally."

The DERC has increased the tariff by 5% for all three power distribution companies, integrating the existing power purchase cost adjustment charges (PPCA) surcharge with the tariff hike. This means, for BSES consumers, the hike in tariff will be 0.5%.

For those falling under Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited's (TPDDL) jurisdiction, the hike will be 2% as it has a PPAC. Electricity rates in the New Delhi area will go up by 4%.

The power commission has also introduced a new slab for those consuming more elec-



■ This is the first time your bills will come down. HT FILE PHOTO

	FIXED CHARGES	ENERGY CHARGES		
		Existing	New	Subsidised
DOMESTIC				
0-200 units	₹40	₹3.70	₹3.90	₹2.70
201-400 units	₹40	₹5.50	₹5.80	₹5.50
401-800 units	₹40	₹6.50	₹6.80	
Above 800	₹40	₹7.00		
COMMERCIAL				
Up to 10 kw	₹100	₹7.60	₹7.90	
Between 10kw-100kw	₹115	₹7.25	₹7.60	
DMRC	₹125	₹5	₹5.50	

■ Those consuming between 0-200 units pay about ₹700 (depending on discom) and will continue to pay so

■ Those consuming 400 units who pay approximately ₹2,195 will now pay approximately ₹1,771

tricity (401 and 800 units). According to DERC, the three discoms still have a total gap of ₹2140.78 crore which will be met in the next few years.

However, the BJP termed the announcement of the subsidy a poll gimmick. "This is nothing but a poll sop. The money for the subsidy is also come from the consumers' pockets and will all go to the power discoms. If Sheila Dikshit is so concerned about the consumers, why did she take four years to announce

this subsidy for the middle-class?" said Vijay Goel, BJP state president.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) called the tariff hike an additional burden on the common man. Its statement said that the chief minister has not shown any sensitivity to the letters by almost 10 lakh Delhiites on the power tariff issue.

The party also reiterated its promise of providing cheaper power if it formed the government after the assembly elections.

Subsidy an election gimmick: RWAs

HT Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government's decision to provide power subsidy to families that consume up to 400 units a month evoked a mixed response from Delhiites. Some praised the government while others attributed the move to the upcoming elections.

"This is nothing but a political gimmick as the elections are round the corner. The government is trying to divert the people's attention from the previous tariff hikes. Since there is no subsidy for those who consume more than 400 units, it won't affect my bills," said BS Bohra, resident, East Delhi RWA.

Rajiv Kakaria from the Greater Kailash RWA said, "The subsidy has been provided only because this is an election year. I wonder why public hearings are conducted since the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) doesn't pay any heed to our problems."

"The facts we placed before the DERC proved that the power discoms have been making huge profits since 2009 and so tariffs must be reduced and such subsidies are not required," he said.

Naveen Kumar, president, Rajouri Garden RWA, felt the subsidies should be provided to those who consume more than 400 units so that a majority of Delhiites are covered.

Others felt the subsidy was just a temporary respite and would be removed after the

voxpath

It is evident that Dikshit is sensitive only to the demands of the power companies, but not Delhi's citizens.

AAP statement

What is the guarantee that this (the subsidy) is not a temporary solution to a big problem? It is quite possible that the government will change its mind and withdraw it after the elections.

Vijay Arora, Lajpat Nagar RWA

The subsidy has been provided only because this is an election year. Why are public hearings held since the DERC doesn't pay any heed to our problems?

Rajiv Kakaria, GK RWA

elections. "What is the guarantee that this is not a temporary solution to a big problem? It is quite possible that the government will change its mind and withdraw it after the elections," said Vijay Arora, member of Lajpat Nagar RWA.

MK Mohanty, president, Delhi Citizen's Front, Rohini, argued that the constant process of hiking tariffs and then giving subsidy should not exist in the first place. "I praise the government for this initiative but we need a permanent solution to the problem," he said.

School bus conductor sexually assaults 4-yr-old in Ghaziabad

HT Correspondent

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GHAZIABAD: In a shocking case, a four-year-old nursery student of a prominent Noida school was sexually assaulted by the conductor of a bus that ferries schoolchildren, in Vaishali, on Thursday. The accused, Ajay Kumar, was arrested soon after a complaint was filed by the parents of the boy.

The 19-year-old accused — also known as Kalua — hails from Badaun in Uttar Pradesh. According to the police, the bus used to transport minor children from Vaishali, Vasundhara

and Indirapuram.

The victim's father said his son was 'inconsolable' when he reached home. The boy told his mother that the conductor took him to the rear seat of the bus and indulged in 'indecent acts'.

However, the police said the Kumar "indulged in aggravated sexual assault on the minor".

"The accused has been booked under Section 8 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act of Indian penal code for aggravated sexual assault. If convicted, the accused could be sentenced up to five-year imprisonment,"

said Upendra Yadav, the SHO of Indirapuram police station.

Meanwhile, the school authorities said they don't have any information about the accused or the vehicle, as the conveyance was arranged by parents.

"The bus was arranged by the parents and the school doesn't have any control over private bus operators. The parents should be very careful while availing services of private transporters," said a school management official.

The police said they are trying to find out the whereabouts of the bus owner.

CBI, VIGILANCE DEPT RAID TRADE TAX OFFICE

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), along with Delhi government's vigilance department, carried out a surprise search at the Trade Tax Office of the state government in the city on suspicions that undervalued challans were being issued to goods vehicles by officials.

"We checked ledgers and challans on the spot," said a CBI source. The search, carried out at the Trade Tax Office at ITO, created a flutter among the staff.

When contacted, a CBI spokesperson termed the exercise as a "routine check" to ensure that there was no under-valuation going on at the tax office.

Classified Ads on Page 28

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A Mini Ratna Schedule 'A' CPSE

Parking rate in Delhi should be 60 times higher, say global experts

Ritam Halder

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NEW DELHI: Parking rates in the Capital are shockingly low and should be 60 times more than the current charges, international experts feel.

Paul Barter, a global parking expert formerly associated with the National University Singapore (NUS), feels Delhiites should be paying at least ₹60 per hour to park their vehicles.

In contrast, the three municipal corporations charge ₹10 for 10 hours and ₹20 for 24 hours.

Barter said parking is a luxury in India and subsidising luxury is not only stupid, but also criminal. He was speaking on the sidelines of an orientation workshop on parking policy, jointly organised by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The GIZ is an international enterprise owned by the German government.

"I used my parking cost spreadsheet to make an estimate using assumptions like a modest 10% internal rate of return after 15 years, land price of ₹100,000 per sq. m, and five-storey building with construction cost per ECS of US\$6,500 (₹4,33,000)."

"The result shows the rate needs to be about ₹60 per hour, though the ball park figure is between ₹30-60," Barter told HT.

Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director for research

ARE YOU PAYING ENOUGH FOR PARKING?

Around 74 lakh cars are part of Delhi's vehicular traffic. Every day, 1,350 cars are added. What encourages them is the fact that Delhi's civic agencies charge very low rates for parking.

PARKING CHARGES DELHI

Current parking rates in the three corporations' areas:

- ₹ 10 for 10 hours
- ₹ 20 for 24 hours
- Proposed rates rejected by all three corporations
- ₹ 10 for 30 mins
- ₹ 20 for an hour

NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Old rates

- ₹ 10 for first two hours
- ₹ 10 for every hr after that

Revised rates not yet implemented

- One hour: ₹ 20
- two hours: ₹ 40
- three hours: ₹ 60
- four hours: ₹ 80
- five-10 hours: ₹ 100

The above parking rates belong to government agencies. Private parking lots are not included in this. 1\$ (US) = ₹59 >>



■ A chaotic parking lot in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar. ARJIT SEN/HT

MUMBAI

- 0-1 hr: ₹ 15
- 1-3: ₹ 20
- 3-6: ₹ 30
- 6-12: ₹ 55
- 12+: ₹ 65

BENGALURU

Free parking on road in corporation areas

KOLKATA

₹ 10 per hour

AVERAGE PARKING CHARGES IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL CITIES (Dollars per hour)

- Seoul - 7.86
- Tokyo - 2.58
- Singapore - 1.9
- Hong Kong - 1.46
- Beijing - 1.32
- Kuala Lumpur - 0.41
- Delhi - 0.021

and advocacy, CSE, said users need to pay for the parking services. "Say a multi-level parking lot is constructed for ₹80 crore. To recover that, ₹40-50 per hour is required. Add to it land value and opportunity cost, it becomes ₹60 per hour," she said.

The experts said community management of residential parking spaces is the way forward.

"The idea should be community management: your problem, you do it. Empowering residents will do wonders and

people will take ownership and the management will be much more effective," Barter said.

Echoing his views, Roychowdhury said RWAs should be given responsible to monitor parking space inside the societies.

OWNERS INVOLVED

DDA approves new land-pooling policy

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on Friday approved its new 'land pooling' policy that promises to radically change the way land is acquired and developed in the Capital.

Named 'policy on public-private-partnership in land assembly and development in Delhi', it will allow the entry of the private sector in this sector. The DDA, which acquires land, will provide a chunk of the developed land back to the owner instead of compensation. "Acquiring land has become

TWO CATEGORIES

Using the land you get back

2 to 20 hectares (43%-residential, 3%-commercial, 2%-public, semi-public use)

Above 20 hectare (53%-residential, 5%-commercial, 2%-public, semi-public use)

very difficult in Delhi in the past two decades. The new policy will involve the owner in land development," said a senior DDA official.

In the authority's meeting chaired by Delhi Lt-Governor, the policy was approved and would be now sent to the Union urban development ministry for a final notification. The final policy has been shaped after taking into account suggestions and objections it had invited from the general public.

The Master Plan of Delhi 2021 envisages development of about 20,000-24,000 hectares of land for accommodating an additional population of 48 lakh by 2021.

The policy will allow consolidation of the private land by its owners through pooling and

surrendering it to the DDA. There are two categories for land pooling (see box).

But there's a rider: The developed land the owners will get back has to be used as per norms. For instance, of the 60% of land above 20 hectares they get back, 53% has to be used for residential purposes. Of the 48% that will be returned in the 0-20 hectare category, 43% is meant for residential use.

Land owners have to hand over 50% of the economically weaker section units to DDA and rest can be disposed of to service personnel working for the group housing societies.

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