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Summary of Deliberations and Recommendations

1st Annual Conference

Electricity Distribution Industry *(EDICON)* 2026

21 - 22 January 2026 | SCOPE Auditorium, New Delhi, India
All India Discoms Association (AIDA), CBIP Building, Malcha Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, 110 021

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Electricity Distribution Industry (*EDICON*) 2026

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'Conference Report – EDICON 2026'

Executive Summary

The EDICON 2026, organized by the All India DISCOMs Association (AIDA) on January 21–22, 2026, Scope Complex, New Delhi, served as a definitive turning point for India's power landscape, signaling the sector's evolution into a modernized, digitally resilient network. The conference has been delivered keeping in view the following objectives:

- To disseminate and showcase the work done by AIDA in the year 2025.
- To connect with all relevant stakeholders for identifying the possible action areas for improvement in the performance of distribution utilities.
- To recognize the innovative work being done by the discoms for inspiring other members to also innovate and excel.
- To deliberate and recommend on the contemporary issues relevant to distribution utilities.

The conference was inaugurated by Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister of Power, Government of India, as the Chief Guest of this landmark session that celebrated AIDA's first year of transformative advocacy. A centerpiece of the inaugural was the release of AIDA's annual report, *"India Discoms: 2025"*. This publication provides a comprehensive outlook on the sector, detailing distribution companies' efforts to enhance reliability and efficiency while addressing persistent structural hurdles. It features critical insights from thirteen eminent leaders, while outlining pivotal policy shifts such as the Roadmap for Digitization in DISCOMs, Behavioral Demand Response (TPDDL case study), Data Management & Data Governance in Electric Utilities, related to DISCOMs. To commemorate this inaugural year, the *'AIDA Annual Awards 2025'* recognized 12 standout DISCOMs across six categories, including honors for improved revenue recovery in a rural area, best use of smart meter data, improved consumer satisfaction in digital payment, innovation in energy transition & RE integration, agricultural feeder solarization and change management for improved consumer service *(Annexure)*. The vision of self-reliant DISCOMs was formalized through a landmark MoU with IIM Lucknow to launch a specialized Executive MBA Program for DISCOM Officers, ensuring that the industry is equipped with a pool of future-ready leaders.

The core of the conference was structured around seven intensive technical sessions designed to address the sector's most pressing structural and operational hurdles. Day one focused on the

foundational "Business of Distribution," with sessions dedicated to ensuring viability of DISCOMs & cost-reflective tariffs, leveraging Smart Meter & Data analytics, and navigating the technical challenges of Renewable Energy Integration and key interventions for improving supply reliability. Day two shifted the focus toward Renewable Consumption Obligations for DISCOMs, featuring deep dives into scaling up Demand Response programs to manage peak loads, and a concluding session on the Capacity Building of DISCOMs personnel to handle the transition to a high-tech grid.

A major outcome of these deliberations was the strategic emphasis on evolving the DISCOM's role from a passive distributor to a "Platform Orchestrator" capable of managing bidirectional power flows from EVs and rooftop solar through Advanced Distribution Management Systems (ADMS). EDICON 2026 solidified AIDA's role as the collective voice of DISCOMs driving India toward a consumer-centric, financially solvent, and carbon-neutral energy future.

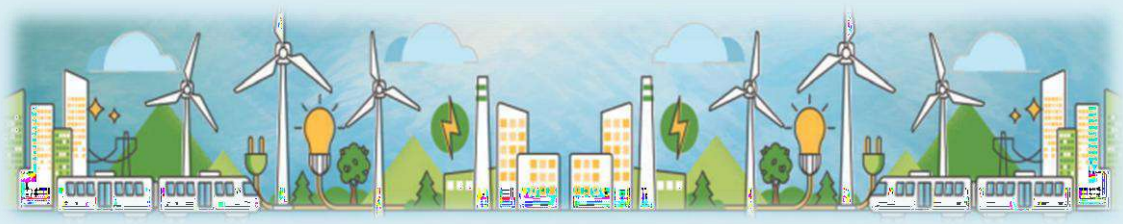
Key Takeaways of the Session

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Day 1 – 21st January, 2026</th></tr>
<tr><td>Session 1</td><td>Viability of DISCOMs & Cost-Reflective Tariff

1) Financial Restoration: Accelerating sustainability through targeted subsidy delivery and reduced dependency is critical. Managing the ₹7.53 lakh crore borrowing burden requires expediting the liquidation of regulatory assets to restore balance sheets and improve creditworthiness. Political support will remain critical to the success of reforms with clear KPIs.
2) Technological & Operational Scaling: Scaling up Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) is essential, focusing on AMI-enabled revenue protection, smart metering, and feeder-level energy accounting. These tools, supported by organizational restructuring and strengthened MIS, are the primary interventions against AT&C losses.
3) Regulatory & Tariff Reform: Long-term viability depends on cost-reflective tariffs and regulatory harmony. This includes ensuring timely filings, full power purchase cost pass-throughs (FPPA compliance), and rationalizing cross-subsidies to align state actions with National Policy. Improving the data quality is critical for effective regulations.
4) Institutional Excellence: Fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration is key to driving sector-wide growth. By leveraging AIDA platforms with initiatives like Annual Awards, peer learning webinars, and international study tours, DISCOMs can adopt global best practices to achieve sustained excellence.
5) AIDA should take up study and analysis of tariff orders of all SERCs every year.
6) There is a need to study the ultimate cost of RE at system level.</td></tr>
</table>

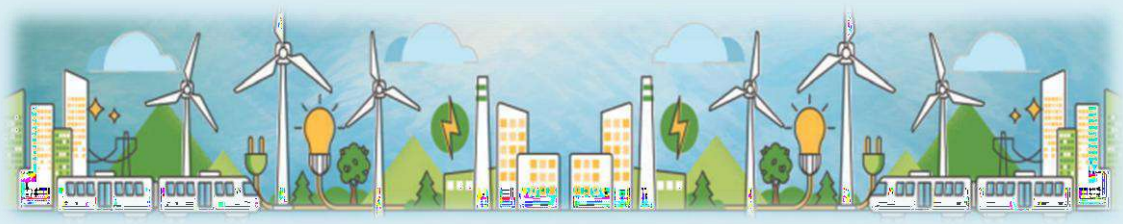
Session 2	**Leveraging Smart Meter Data** 1) Foundation of Digitalization: Smart meters are the non-negotiable backbone for DISCOMs. Beyond basic data collection, they are driving a financial turnaround; for example, Bihar saw a shift from a ₹300 crore loss in FY21 to a profit exceeding ₹2,000 crore in FY25 by leveraging smart prepaid meters to boost billing efficiency from 75% to nearly 87%. 2) Precision Operational Efficiency: The true value of meter data lies in pinpointing high-loss feeders and Distribution Transformers (DTRs). This granular analysis is essential for reducing the national AT&C loss average toward the 12–15% target (down from 16.1% in FY24), enabling predictive maintenance and evidence-based load forecasting. 3) The "Data-Action" Gap: A critical challenge was identified: while India has crossed the milestone of 5 crore smart meter installations, currently only 10–12% of this data is utilized for analytics. Actionable 'data-pallets' must be made available to field staff. Closing this gap is the next frontier for DISCOM capacity building. 4) The India Energy Stack (IES): The IES is the proposed blueprint for Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). It aims to create a unified, interoperable energy grid much like UPI did for finance ensuring that data from different vendors can be integrated to support Time-of-Day (ToD) tariffs and peer-to-peer energy trading. 5) Customer Empowerment & Experience: Digital maturity must translate into consumer convenience through simplified billing and real-time apps. Emerging technologies like energy disaggregation (appliance-level monitoring) allow customers to track "behind-the-meter" usage, improving satisfaction and reducing the trust deficit. 6) Shift to Outcome-Driven Results: Success must be measured by outcomes (reduced financial gaps and improved reliability) rather than outputs (number of meters installed). Early signs are promising, with DISCOMs recording a collective PAT of ₹2,701 crore in FY25, signaling the beginning of a technology-led recovery. 7) Preparation of long-term digitalization roadmap, development of IT cadre, and capacity building of staff and AMISP is necessary for success.
Session 3	**Challenges in Renewable Energy Integration** 1) Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Pumped Storage Plants (PSP) are expected to operate in dual-cycle mode for about 90–100 days annually, with single-cycle operation during the remaining period. Hence market-based storage products must be introduced.

	2) Greater emphasis is needed on increasing intrastate generation to enhance grid reliability and reduce dependency on inter-state power flows. 3) Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE), including rooftop solar, should be scaled up within states to address rising costs and evacuation constraints. 4) The STELLAR tool can be effectively used for renewable energy scenario analysis and planning. RPOs should be state specific. 5) Improved visibility of rooftop solar capacity up to the SLDC/ utility level is essential for better forecasting and system operations. 6) Mandating at least two hours of storage with DRE/RTS generation can support grid stability and flexibility. **7)** Localized reactive power compensation should be strengthened to improve voltage management and overall grid performance. Impact of power flows on state level transmission networks in RE rich states should be probably assessed for appropriate regulatory interventions. 8) There is urgent need to resist and phase out net metering, banking and must run states. 9) Tightening of DSM regime for RE has become critical. Introduction of 5-minute scheduling should be expedited.
Session 4	**Renewable Consumption Obligations** 1) GIS mapping of Network and Consumer Indexing needs to be fast-paced in Discoms. 2) Reliable & Affordable Power is the essence of economic growth of Discoms, State & Country. Discoms should be assisted to draw medium- and long-term roadmap for improving reliability. 3) Need-based, capex-bound planning with focus on LT network strengthening, ageing asset replacement, transformer/conductor constraints, and selective N-1 redundancy while balancing reliability cost and tariffs. 4) Shift to preventive, predictive & prescriptive maintenance using AI, sensors, DT monitoring, health-index based asset management, and condition-based maintenance to reduce failures and SAIDI/SAIFI. 5) Network automation & protection coordination through ADMS, feeder automation, self-healing schemes, standardised SOPs, and proper protection settings (11 kV–DT coordination, ~100 ms selectivity) to enable <1-hour restoration. 6) Digitisation with end-to-end data integrity completion of GIS mapping, consumer indexing, smart/DT metering, and reliable SCADA–DMS data to support planning, fault isolation, and operational decision-making.



	7) Last-mile reliability, skills & resilience focus, LT upgrades, consumer-level switchgear standardisation, structured workforce training, and climate-resilient infrastructure to meet consumer expectations. 8) There is a need to reduce bid interval and period for gate closure to facilitate timely procurement. **9)** Network upgrades should keep in view the need to enhance resilience
Day 2 – 22nd January, 2026	
Session 5	**Improving Reliability of Supply** 1) Shift to Consumption and "Buyout" Flexibility: Compliance has moved from procurement to actual consumption. DISCOMs now have three equal pathways to meet targets: direct RE consumption, purchasing RECs, or opting for the RCO Buyout (set by CERC at ₹347/MWh for FY 2025–26), which provides a cost-predictable "third way" to fulfill obligations. 2) Surging Penalty Pressures: While the buyout price offers a market-linked out, failing to use any compliance route triggers penalties under the Energy Conservation Act that are ten times higher than preceding penalty (ceiling of ₹3.72/kWh). This creates a massive financial gap between "paying to comply" (buyout) and "paying for failure" (penalty). States should be given flexibility in setting RPO trajectory. Also, the compliance should be based on contracted capacity as generation of RE is not uncontrollable. 3) Tariff and Accounting Mismatch: A major hurdle is the lack of Time-of-Day (ToD) linkage in RCO calculations. This makes it difficult to account for RE in retail tariffs accurately, as generation patterns rarely align with real-time consumption, leading to potential financial imbalances for utilities. 4) Storage Costs and Grid Limitations: Meeting rising RCO targets (targeting 43.33% by 2030) necessitates heavy investment in storage infrastructure. This adds significant costs, and the conventional grid faces "curtailment" risks because it can only handle a limited influx of intermittent renewable power. 5) Rooftop and DRE Measurement Gaps: The rise of Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) and P2P trading is changing RCO dynamics, yet utilities currently lack a "gross calculation" for rooftop solar. Most systems only measure exported energy, ignoring self-consumed energy, which leaves a large portion of actual green consumption unaccounted.
Session 6	**Scaling Up Demand Response** 1) Demand Response Is Essential, Not Optional: with structurally rising electricity demand, energy efficiency and demand response must complement supply

	expansion to ensure affordability and system sustainability. Initially, regulatory target for demand response may be required to accelerate its adoption. 2) One Unit Saved or Shifted is One Unit Generated: Load shifting and peak reduction are as valuable as new generation, directly lowering peak power costs and improving tariff economics. 3) Demand Response Delivers Reliability and Cost Benefits: DR supports grid stability during emergencies and reduces peak procurement costs in normal operations making it both a reliability and cost-optimization tool. 4) Customers Will Participate When Trust, Feedback, and Recognition Exist: Rapid scaling, reduced incentives, fast feedback, and social recognition show that customer engagement depends more on trust, visibility, and pride than on cash incentives. 5) Technology Enables Scalable, Zero-Cost Capacity: Smart meters, analytics, and real-time M&V enable large-scale DR, delivering "zero-cost, zero-emission generation" while positioning customers as active grid partners.
Session 7	**Capacity Building of DISCOMs Personnel** 1) Cultivating Tech-Savvy Leadership: Transformation requires "transformational leadership" prepared for new utility verticals. Programs like GUVNL's Leadership Development utilize sandbox-based learning to foster a problem-solving approach and create an exceptional talent pool. 2) Addressing Digital and Technical Skill Gaps: As sectors go digital, workforce upskilling must prioritize emerging technologies like AI, smart grids, and AR/VR-based maintenance, alongside critical specialized areas like cybersecurity and system operator certification. Use of AR/ VR increases employee engagement. 3) Mandatory and Specialized Training Frameworks: Institutional training is becoming more structured, with NPTI leading mandatory foundation programs for recruits and specialized training under national schemes like RDSS and Mission Samarth. Similar induction courses for various entry levels in Discoms need to be prepared. 4) Beyond Technical Proficiency: Effective capacity building must balance technical training with financial, commercial, and regulatory expertise. Strengthening soft skills for consumer interaction and data-driven decision-making is essential for modern, consumer-oriented utilities. 5) Strategic Institutional Partnerships: To bridge specialized knowledge gaps, DISCOMs are leveraging partnerships with apex bodies like NPTI, academic institutions like IITs/IIMs, and industry leaders to ensure managerial agility in a future-ready network.



	6) Knowledge of AI/ ML: wish the rapid expansion of the smart meters, SCADA and ERP, Discoms are in possession of huge quantum of data. Data analytics with the help of AI/ML has become a need of the hour.

Introduction

The Distribution Sector has been the Achilles' heels of India's power sector and is currently undergoing a massive transformation, shifting from a legacy of chronic financial stress toward an agile, flexible, resilient and modernized, digitally enabled grid. As of early 2026, the sector has made significant strides under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), successfully reducing Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses from over 22% in 2021 to approximately 15% in FY2025[1]. This turnaround is driven by the aggressive rollout of smart prepaid meters with over 4.10 crore units installed by the start of the FY 2026 [2] and a strict enforcement of the Late Payment Surcharge (LPS) Rules, which has slashed legacy dues from nearly ₹1.39 lakh crore to under ₹5,000 crore[3].Despite these operational gains, the sector faces persistent structural hurdles, including a continued reliance on state subsidies and the "political economy" of non-cost-reflective tariffs. To achieve the national goal of 24x7 reliable power and integrate a rapidly expanding renewable energy base (targeting 500 GW by 2030), the focus has shifted toward deep-tech solutions like AI-driven demand forecasting, feeder segregation for agriculture, and the transition of DISCOMs into consumer-centric, financially viable entities.

About AIDA:

The All India DISCOMs Association (AIDA) is a non-profit society that brings together electricity distribution utilities across India to promote policy and regulatory advocacy, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and collaborative solutions to sectoral challenges. AIDA was launched on 14 November 2024 by the Hon'ble Union Minister of Power, Shri Manohar Lal, during the Distribution Utility Meet 2024 in Lucknow, and was registered as a society in December 2024. Within a short span, it has emerged as a national platform representing the collective voice of DISCOMs, currently comprising 55 member utilities, and is committed to enhancing distribution performance for the benefit of electricity consumers. This foundational year was marked by the first General Body Meeting held during ISUW 2025, which established a strategic vision for AIDA's role in India's energy transition under the leadership of President Shri Lokesh Chandra, CMD, MSEDCL, and is President, AIDA, Dr. Ashish Kumar Goel, Chairman, Uttar Pradesh Power

[1]https://www.pfcindia.co.in/ensite/DocumentRepository/ckfinder/files/Operations/Performance_Reports_of_State_Power_Utilities/Report%20on%20Performance%20of%20Power%20Utilities%202024-25.pdf

[2] https://rdss.powermin.gov.in/mis-report

[3] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2226928&reg=3&lang=2

Corporation Ltd. (UPPCL) and General Secretary, AIDA and Shri Alok Kumar, Director General, AIDA. The Executive Council of AIDA has ten other members – two Discom MDs from each of the five regions of the country. The association's governance is further strengthened by an Executive Council that meets timely to provide strategic direction across five geographical regions, supported by AIDA secretariat, and a now fully functional website that serves as a digital knowledge hub for all member. It is working tirelessly for effective policy and regulatory advocacy, capacity building in discoms, and collaboration for sharing best practices and standardization of equipment specification for better quality and competitive prices. AIDA aims at world class distribution performance for larger welfare of common electricity consumers.

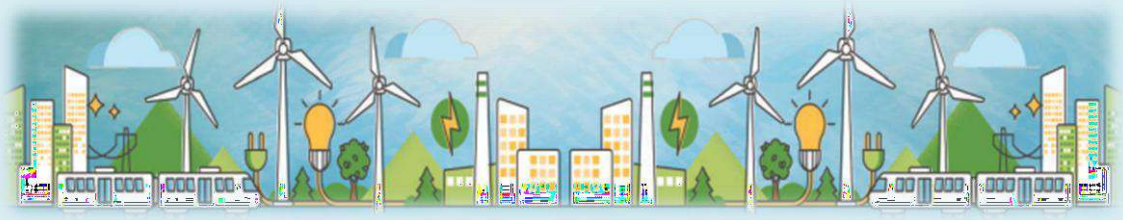
Year In Review:

In its inaugural year, AIDA has already cultivated a formidable network of partners having nine Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs), with national and international institutions of importance which includes Power Foundation of India (PFI), Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE), National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), National Power Training Institute (NPTI), Regulatory Assistance Project (RAP), Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow (IIML), Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) and Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP India), Further, membership with Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) and the Utilities for Net Zero Alliance (UNEZA), AIDA is intensifying its focus on DISCOM connectivity and efficiency.

AIDA is currently spearheading several strategic studies and collaborative projects aimed at sector-wide improvement. In partnership with the Prayas (Energy Group), the Association is working to strengthen the load research and demand forecasting capabilities of DISCOMs, on demand response with AEEE. AIDA is working to design and implement aggregator lead demand flexibility program. Furthermore, in collaboration with Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC), AIDA is analyzing the dynamics of tariff and true-up mechanisms, utilizing insights from SERC FY 2025-26 tariff orders and regulations[4]. It evaluates seven critical parameters: power purchase costs, regulatory assets, FPPAS, tariff subsidies, O&M norms, prior period adjustments, and cross-subsidies to ensure cost-reflective tariffs that bolster the financial viability of utilities. Supplementing these efforts are an in-house study on the Average Billing Rate. These advocacies are supported by in house studies and inputs received from the Discoms through detail discussions in the AIDA committee meetings.

Despite its recent founding, AIDA has already delivered substantial financial and regulatory relief for the sector, most notably by proposing the expeditious passing the benefits of GST reduction on solar and wind equipment from 12% to 5%, which is expected to lower renewable tariffs by 9–14

[4] https://aida-india.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/AIDA-REC-Study-Report.pdf



paise per unit[5]. AIDA's consultative advocacy, based on inputs from 11 DISCOMs led to key revisions in the Renewable Consumption Obligation (RCO) notification, introducing, rationalization of DRE obligations for urban Discoms, enhanced RTS recognition with an increased generation multiplier from 3.5 to 4.0 kWh/kW/day, exclusion of OA and captive consumption from total demand, and removal of restrictive hydro cut-off dates. These interventions are expected to yield a significant reduction in renewable tariffs, providing much-needed fiscal space for utilities and direct relief to our consumers. Furthermore, a specific committee for standardizing Distribution Transformer specifications finalized DTR specification and furnished the same to CEA for publication.

In addition, the AIDA Secretariat has taken the initiative to provide legal briefs to support the member discoms on various important matters. These briefs help keep them informed about evolving rules and regulations, enabling member utilities to effectively present their cases before regulatory authorities. AIDA secretariat also prepared 22 legal briefs to support DISCOMs in dealing with litigation and regulatory positioning on important orders and judgments. such as doctrine of frustration & force majeure in power contracts, change in law (CIL) under electricity act, 2003, policy directions under sections 107/108, section 11 government directives to generators, payment for power without valid contracts, interest on late payment surcharge (LPS), parallel operation charges (POC), additional tariff in section 63 projects, cost-reflective tariffs & regulatory asset liquidation, regulation of distribution franchisees, GST reduction on renewables & coal discom claims, etc. AIDA's consultative advocacy, based on inputs from 11 DISCOMs led to key revisions in the Renewable Consumption Obligation (RCO) notification, introducing, rationalization of DRE obligations for urban Discoms, enhanced RTS recognition with an increased generation multiplier from 3.5 to 4.0 kWh/kW/day, exclusion of OA and captive consumption from total demand, and removal of restrictive hydro cut-off dates. These interventions are expected to yield a significant reduction in renewable tariffs, providing much-needed fiscal space for utilities and direct relief to our consumers. Furthermore, a specific committee for standardizing Distribution Transformer specifications finalized DTR specification and furnished the same to CEA for publication.

Capacity building has been one of the core pillars of AIDA, A specialized Leadership and Strategic Management program for the senior level officers, in collaboration with NPTI was held on 22-24 December, 2025 attended by 30 DISCOM officers. Monthly experience-sharing webinars have further strengthened peer learning, with topics like Smart Meter Data Analytics, Mukhya Mantri Vahini Yojana 2.0 (MSKVY), Human Resource Member Management, Change Management for Consumer Service, etc. By presenting policymakers with well-researched, collective viewpoints from both distribution utilities and consumers, the Association ensures balanced regulatory decision-making. International exposure for utility managers through study tours to Asia Clean

[5] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2167486&reg=3&lang=2

Energy Forum (ACEF), Manila, ENLIT ASIA, Bangkok and recently to the 16th session of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Abu Dhabi-UAE, 2026 marked the beginning of a structured global learning initiative, allowing senior delegates to study global best practices.

AIDA partnered with countries premier academic institutions like IIM Lucknow and IIT Delhi, to develop specialized management and data analytics programs. AIDA is also working with IGNOU to redesign the ACPDM program, ensuring a curriculum that reflects modern techno-commercial-regulatory needs. Looking forward, the association has engaged TERI to develop a roadmap for a Resource and Knowledge Centre (RKC), envisioned as a permanent Centre of Excellence. Through these combined initiatives AIDA has successfully positioned itself as an indispensable catalyst for a world-class, consumer-centric power distribution ecosystem in India.

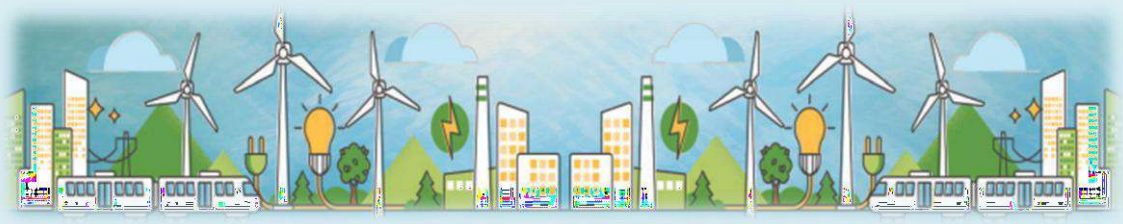
AIDA also actively engages in policy and regulatory advocacy with MoP, MNRE, CERC, and CEA. It also works on standardizing equipment and procurement processes. Following detailed discussions with AIDA committees, manufacturers, and CEA, commonly agreed specifications for distribution transformers have been finalized paving the way for national rate contracts and enabling utilities to procure cost-effective, high-quality equipment.

The launch of the AIDA Annual Awards received an encouraging response, with the enthusiastic participation by 27 utilities through more than 75 entries for the first AIDA annual awards speaks in itself on the positive vibes among Discoms to innovate and come together. The AIDA Secretariat received 78 nominations from 29 DISCOMs across the six categories. The nominations were evaluated by an independent Jury comprising eminent experts from the power sector and 12 awards were distributed (Gold and Silver each for six categories).

These achievements in 2025 have strengthened AIDA's resolve to expand its initiatives in 2026. High-priority plans include empowering utility engineers in the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning through collaborations with IIT Delhi and NASEO, as well as the launch of the AIDA- Resource and Knowledge Centre, envisioned as a transformative platform to accelerate the adoption of new technologies and data analytics across distribution utilities.

Electricity Distribution Industry Conference (EDICON) 2026

The ***'EDICON 2026***' was organized by the All India Discoms Association (AIDA) on 21st and 22nd January 2026. Over the course of two days, a diverse group of policymakers, regulators, and DISCOM executives met with industry experts and technology providers. The forum served as a collaborative platform to address the primary challenges and emerging prospects within India's power distribution landscape.



Inaugural

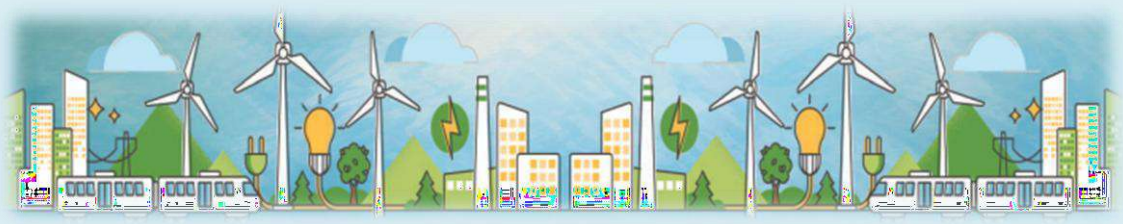
The conference commenced with an Inaugural Session that set the tone for two days of intensive deliberations. The proceedings began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, followed by a welcome address from Shri Alok Kumar, Director General of the All India Discoms Association (AIDA). He extended a warm welcome to the guests of honour, dignitaries, participants, and sponsors, while expressing gratitude to the event's supporters, including the Ministry of Power, ISGF, TPDDL, and BSES. Shri Kumar emphasized that AIDA is privileged to provide a collaborative platform for 53 utilities to unite and address shared challenges.

Following the welcome address, Shri Lokesh Chandra, President of AIDA, delivered the opening address, outlining the Association's formation and its mission to ensure the voice of DISCOMs is accurately reflected in policy to bridge the gap between research and reality. He lauded AIDA's inaugural achievements, specifically the signing of nine Memorandum of Association (MoUs) of national and international significance and successful advocacy for benefits of GST rate reductions and RCO compliance. Central to his vision is the professionalization of the sector through capacity-building partnerships with NPTI and IIM Lucknow, alongside a technological roadmap centred on

AI/ML and data analytics to improve DISCOM reliability and consumer experience in alignment with Ministry of Power objectives.

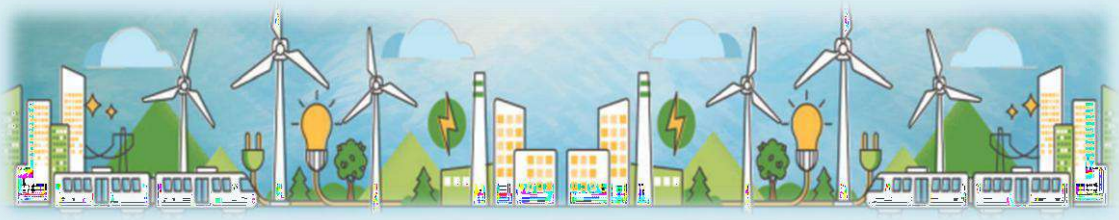
Addressing systemic challenges, Shri Chandra noted that while initiatives like the Saubhagya Yojana and various arrears recovery schemes were successful, they faced sustainability issues. He proposed that making agricultural feeder solarization compulsory could provide a viable path for cost recovery and resolve the problem of arrear dues. Furthermore, he pointed that in the implementation of the PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, while it targets consumers using under 300 units, the benefits are currently being skewed toward larger consumer categories. Finally, he raised concerns regarding supply chain inefficiencies, specifically sub-optimal coal allocation and the need to ensure benefits from Inter-plant Transfers (IPT) reach end-users. To alleviate the financial pressure on the industrial sector, he suggested a strategic shift: transitioning the entire cross-subsidy burden away from industry through 100% agricultural solarization and off-grid solar solutions. He requested for support of Ministry of Power for proposed RKC, studies and capacity building.

The inaugural session was graced by the Hon'ble Chief Guest, Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister of Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, who delivered a landmark address on India's transition toward a sustainable and financially viable energy landscape. He highly commended the work of being done by AIDA and emphasized that all remaining Discoms be also encouraged to join AIDA. He highlighted the nation's significant progress in reaching its more than 50% target from 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity target by 2030, marking a pivotal shift in the renewable energy trajectory. Central to his speech was the historic financial turnaround of the electricity sector, which recorded an unprecedented ₹2,700 crore net profits, a feat attributed to the drastic reduction in Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses from 22% to 15%, regular implementation of schemes, better financial and technical controls. The Minister lauded the proactive efforts of states such as Bihar, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Madhya Pradesh, noting that the implementation of the Late Payment Surcharge (LPS) and large-scale Viability Gap Funding (VGF) schemes have fundamentally restored the feasibility of power projects and the overall financial health of Distribution Companies (Discoms). He said that level of satisfaction is the face of power sector.



Driving the roadmap for structural evolution, the Hon'ble Minister emphasized the necessity of cost-reflective tariffs and the timely payment of subsidies from state benefits reach consumers without creating fiscal backlogs. To tackle the legacy issue of government dues, he suggested a "top-down" adoption of prepaid smart meters, starting with the residences of government officials, citing Haryana's 5% incentive model as an initiative for consumer-friendly digitalization. He underscored that the proposed amendments to Electricity Act, 2003, aim to resolve the burden of "free power" by prioritizing category wise profitability and reduced cross-subsidies. Emphasizing that electricity is an economic commodity, he recommended light handed regulation because over regulation by SERCs was leading to financial losses to utilities. Sector should be run on sound business principles. Amidst these pacing reforms, he emphasized that AIDA's role is recognized as a vital intermediary, ensuring the "lubrication" of the sector to maintain a balance between financial sustainability, supply reliability, and a deeply consumer-centric distribution framework. He assured that Ministry will extend full support if Discoms work hard for improving efficiency and consumer satisfaction.

Following the Hon'ble Minister's address, the special keynote address was delivered by Shri Pankaj Agrawal, Secretary, Ministry of Power, who emphasized that energy forms the backbone of Viksit Bharat. At the end of the electricity value chain stand the distribution companies (Discoms), which are ultimately citizen-centric institutions. For the sector to remain sustainable, Discoms must be financially viable.

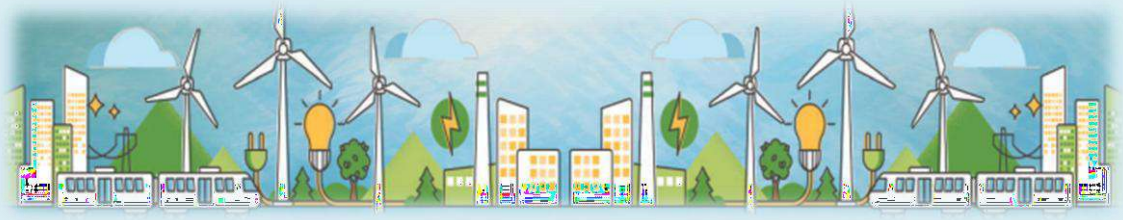


He highlighted that the challenges faced by Discoms require a collective and coordinated approach. Their concerns must be reflected coherently in commercial and regulatory policy frameworks. He appreciated the importance of role being played by AIDA. It is also supporting the commercial and regulatory interventions by Discoms very ably. Fragmented viewpoints, he noted, weaken sectoral reforms. One example of a successful collective mechanism of AIDA is the RCO framework. He stressed the need to evolve mechanisms that balance political cycles with tariff cycles. Electricity is often perceived as a public service rather than a commercial good, leading to repeated state government takeovers of legacy debts and continued subsidies. While these measures provide short-term relief, they create long-term dependency and a perpetual fiscal burden, ultimately discouraging fresh investments in the sector.

On the quality of electricity supply, he underlined that both duration and reliability remain concerns for consumers. Referring to the National Electricity Policy targets for 2030, he mentioned the goal of providing N-1 reliability at the feeder level for over 10 lakh consumers and extending similar N-1 reliability standards to nearly one crore consumer base at the distribution transformers. This step is aimed at ensuring uninterrupted and resilient power supply. To enable dependable demand forecasting, DSO should be introduced to have visibility of behind the meter capacity which has now included 27 GW. Capacity building was identified as another critical pillar. He proposed a standardized entry-level program for sector officials, tailored to their engineering or managerial orientation. Institutions like AIDA could design and deliver such programs and become a “finishing school” to equip professionals with sector-specific knowledge, enabling them to contribute effectively from the outset.

Addressing cost efficiency, he noted that “Window-II” for coal procurement is open and transparent, with auction premiums remaining below 5% over the past six months (with Energy Charge Rate around ₹3.5/kWh). He called for rapid rationalization of coal sourcing strategies. Power procurement costs, he suggested, can be optimized through localized resource adequacy planning rather than a one-size-fits-all model. He also suggested that RA plan should have an unconstrained scenario. RE should be mixed with storage to reach a least cost solution. States should adopt tailored, cost-effective approaches suited to their specific conditions. He observed that India’s average tariff of power supply to industries stands at about $105/MWh, which reduces to $95/MWh after adjusting for cross-subsidies still significantly higher than global benchmarks such as China, Vietnam and Thailand, where costs range between $60–80/MWh. This gap underscores the need for systemic optimization. Also, the solarization of agriculture should be prioritized without waiting for government subsidy.

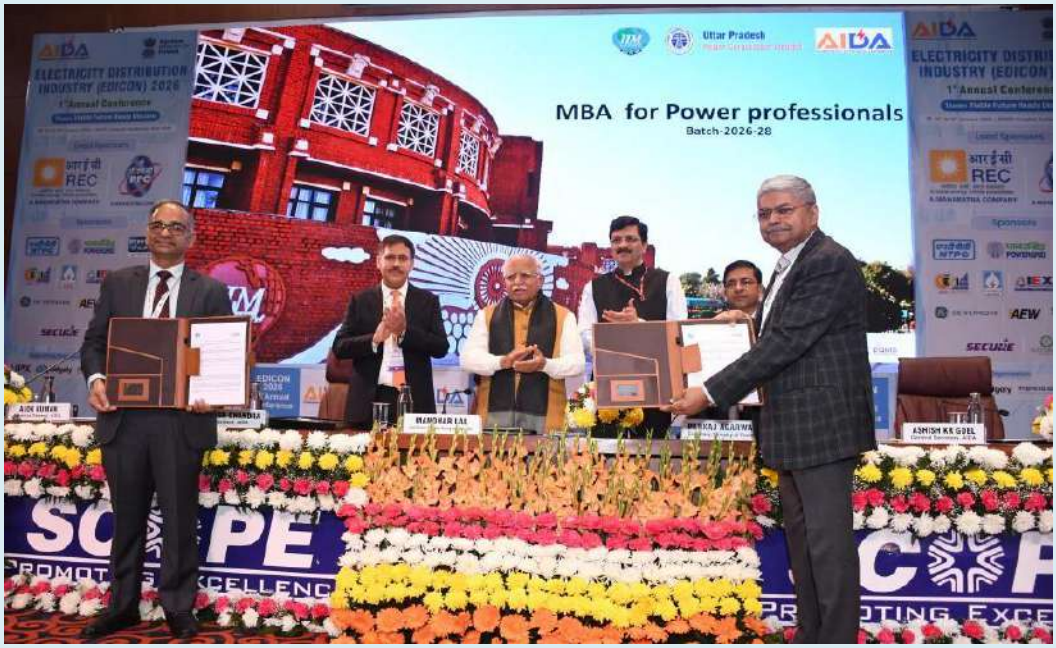
On renewable energy integration, he noted that while renewable tariffs are increasingly becoming affordable, transmission-related costs such as ISTS (Inter-State Transmission) charges are rising at a double-digit CAGR. A phased tapering of ISTS charge waivers has already begun, with a move towards a partial or full waiver regime over the next three years. He advised AIDA to pay focused



attention to this area and contribute to more balanced decision taking Discoms. He also pointed out the principal-agent challenges in intra-state transmission, where Discoms often remain dependent on the State Transmission Utility (STU) instead of independently driving network development based on state requirements. This should be taken up by Discoms pro-actively to adequately add 220 kV/ 132 kV lines for reducing 33 kV losses. They should also effectively intervene in RPCs.

Finally, he emphasized the importance of leveraging data analytics to drive operational efficiencies and deliver measurable benefits. He emphasized on the need of full utilization of data from smart meters in order to realize maximum benefit from the huge investments being made. It will also add delight to consumers. Simplified, transparent, and demand-based tariffs, coupled with improved forecasting, are essential for enhancing customer satisfaction. He concluded with a powerful reminder, *"Regulation should not become a regulatory burden."*

The inaugural session of EDICON 2026 concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks proposed by Dr. Ashish Kumar Goel, General Secretary of AIDA, who highlighted the association's deepening influence in the sector and its established network of 53 member utilities. Dr. Goel expressed gratitude to the participants for their proactive role in policy advocacy and recognized the vital contributions of IIM Lucknow for their specialized MBA capacity-building program. He further acknowledged the support of various national and international institutions assisting AIDA in its research and strategic initiatives, marking a successful end to the session centered on collaboration and institutional growth.

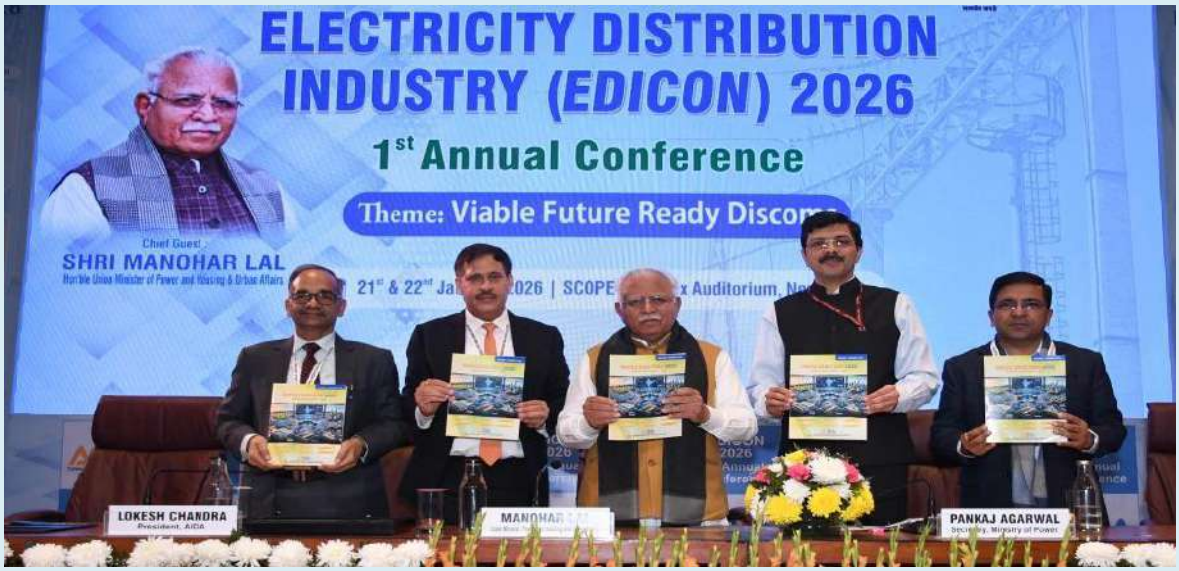


Key highlights of the session included screening of the AIDA Corporate Film, the inaugural of first annual publication of AIDA, 'India Discoms: 2025'[6]. This publication provides a comprehensive outlook on the sector, detailing efforts to enhance reliability and efficiency while outlining pivotal policy shifts such as the Roadmap for Digitization, Behavioral Demand Response, and Data Management & Governance, etc. (*Annexure I- enclosed*)

-Launch of a landmark MoU with IIM Lucknow for an Executive MBA Program for DISCOM Officers, ensuring the workforce can lead a future defined by AI-driven forecasting and Virtual Power Plants.

-To commemorate this inaugural year, the AIDA Annual Awards 2025 recognized 12 standout DISCOMs across six categories (Gold and Silver) (*Annexure II- enclosed*):

- Highest improvement in rural revenue recovery through innovative field interventions.
- Best use of smart meter data for advanced analytics beyond basic billing.
- Highest improvement in consumer satisfaction driven by digital payment adoption.
- Innovation in Energy Transition and renewable integration.
- Agricultural feeder solarization success.
- Effective change management to overhaul consumer services.



[6] https://aida-india.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/aida-annual-publication-2025-17-01-2026-final-for-print.pdf

The conference featured **seven intensive technical sessions** over two days, the details are discussed later in the report. All the presentations made during these sessions can be accessed at website of AIDA.

Day 1 – 21st January, 2026	
Conference Inauguration – Inaugural Session	
Session 1	Viability of DISCOMs & Cost-Reflective Tariff
Session 2	Leveraging Smart Meter Data
Session 3	Challenges in Renewable Energy Integration
Session 4	Renewable Consumption Obligations
Day 2 – 22nd January, 2026	
Session 5	Improving Reliability of Supply
Session 6	Scaling Up Demand Response
Session 7	Capacity Building of DISCOMs Personnel

Technical Sessions

Session 1: Viability of DISCOMs and Cost-Reflective Tariff

The financial viability of DISCOMs serves as the essential foundation of India's power sector, yet it remains under pressure from tariffs that do not fully reflect the cost of supply, persistent technical and commercial losses, and chronic working-capital shortages. To secure a reliable and sustainable energy future, the sector must prioritize the implementation of cost-reflective tariffs and the enforcement of strict financial discipline, particularly as the rapid integration of renewable energy introduces new complexities and system costs. This transition requires a multi-pronged approach: streamlining regulatory processes to prevent the buildup of regulatory assets, adopting advanced technologies like AI/ML and smart metering to enhance data quality, and optimizing power purchase costs to alleviate operational stress. Ultimately, achieving future-ready status depends on balancing these economic reforms with modern forecasting tools to ensure that DISCOMs remain financially resilient while meeting the evolving demands of a green energy grid.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Smt. Parminder Chopra, Chairperson & Managing Director, Power Finance Corporation (PFC)***
- ***Co-Chair: Shri P. Ravi Kumar, Chairperson, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission***

- ***Moderator: Ms. Valli Natarajan, Executive Director, Rural Electrification Corporation limited (REC)***
- ***Panelists included Shri Moez Cherif (India Energy Lead, World Bank), Shri Shambhu Kumar (MD, PuVVNL), Shri Sanjay Goyal (CMD, MeECL), and Dr. S. K. Chatterjee (Chief Regulatory Affairs, CERC).***

The Session featured three insightful presentations, delivered by:

- Shri V. Packirisamy, Executive Director, PFC

The PFC presentation provided a candid look at the power distribution sector's performance in FY24, revealing a mix of marginal improvements and persistent systemic pressure. While operational metrics showed a collection efficiency of 96.5%, billing efficiency of 87%, and AT&C losses at 16.1%, these gains were offset by deepening financial vulnerabilities. Specifically, the sector's reliance on subsidies climbed to 20.2% of revenue, a significant jump from 17% in FY22, while total borrowings surged to ₹7.53 lakh crore. This structural stress is further reflected in the health of individual utilities, with 24 reporting negative net worth and 29 posting PAT losses, signaling that the road to financial sustainability remains steep.

- Shri Moez Cherif, India Energy Lead, World Bank

The World Bank's presentation focused on Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) as a strategic blueprint for revitalizing the operational and financial health of distribution utilities. Central to this approach is a combination of organizational restructuring, the modernization of Management Information Systems (MIS), and the deployment of Revenue Protection Programs (RPP) powered by Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). By highlighting the CEMIG (Brazil) case study, the discussion underscored the critical need for sustained investment in the rehabilitation and technological upgradation of existing networks to ensure long-term grid resilience and commercial viability.

- Shri S. N. Kalita, Director (Regulatory Affairs), AIDA

AIDA presented a summary of the study report titled *"Analysis of Tariff Orders and True-Up Orders Issued by SERCs for DISCOMs*[7]*,"* which evaluates the alignment of state regulatory practices with the Tariff Policy 2016 and recent Ministry of Power amendments across seven key parameters: power purchase costs, regulatory assets, FPPAs, tariff subsidies, O&M norms, prior-period adjustments, and cross-subsidies. By examining these factors across seven different states, the report identifies critical compliance gaps—such as inconsistent loss trajectories and undervalued carrying costs—providing DISCOMs with a data-driven roadmap

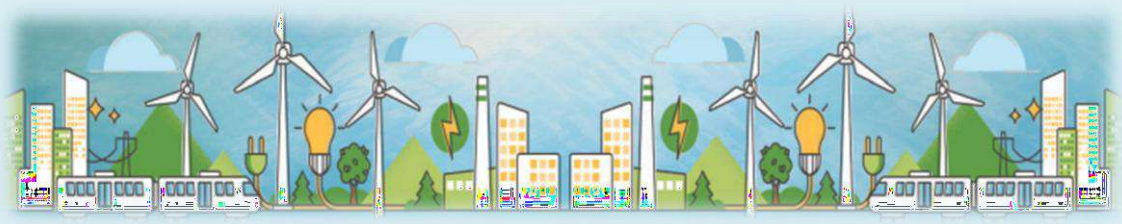
to advocate for more cost-reflective tariffs and standardized regulatory treatments. Ultimately, this study empowers utilities to strengthen their future financial resilience by ensuring timely cost pass-throughs, reducing the burden of regulatory assets, and adopting best-in-class operational benchmarks identified in the analysis.

Highlights from the Study:

1. Cost Disallowances: The report observes that most SERCs use distribution loss targets instead of RDSS-aligned AT&C loss trajectories, leading to significant disallowances that weaken DISCOMs financial health.
2. Carrying Costs: Although most states allow carrying costs for Regulatory Assets, the approved rates often fall below the base LPS (Late Payment Surcharge) rate, creating a persistent financial gap for utilities.
3. Automatic Adjustments: While 5 out of 7 jurisdictions have implemented automatic FPPAS (Fuel and Power Purchase Price Adjustment) for timely cost recovery, the design and rigor vary significantly, with Assam and Madhya Pradesh noted for their comprehensive models.
4. Tariff Transparency: All reviewed states have begun notifying subsidy-independent, full-cost tariffs, allowing for greater transparency and targeted government support.
5. ACS-ARR Gap: Nationally, this gap narrowed to approximately ₹0.06/kWh in FY 2024-25, though structural stress remains due to nearly ₹7.53 lakh crore in total sector borrowings.

Key Takeaways:

1. Financial Restoration: Accelerating sustainability through targeted subsidy delivery and reduced dependency is critical. Managing the ₹7.53 lakh crore borrowing burden requires expediting the liquidation of regulatory assets to restore balance sheets and improve creditworthiness. Political support will remain critical to the success of reforms with clear KPIs.
2. Technological & Operational Scaling: Scaling up Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) is essential, focusing on AMI-enabled revenue protection, smart metering, and feeder-level energy accounting. These tools, supported by organizational restructuring and strengthened MIS, are the primary interventions against AT&C losses.
3. Regulatory & Tariff Reform: Long-term viability depends on cost-reflective tariffs and regulatory harmony. This includes ensuring timely filings, full power purchase cost pass-throughs (FPPA compliance), and rationalizing cross-subsidies to align state actions with National Policy. Improving the data quality is critical for effective regulations.
4. Institutional Excellence: Fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration is key to driving sector-wide growth. By leveraging AIDA platforms with initiatives like Annual



Awards, peer learning webinars, and international study tours, DISCOMs can adopt global best practices to achieve sustained excellence.

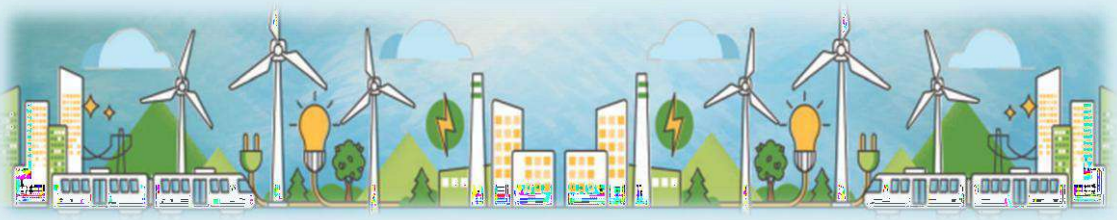
5. AIDA should take up study and analysis of tariff orders of all SERCs every year.
6. There is a need to study the ultimate cost of RE at system level.

Session 2: Leveraging Smart Meters and Data Analytics

Smart meters provide real-time, accurate data on consumer usage, load patterns, and power quality. By providing real-time, high-fidelity data on consumption patterns, load profiles, and power quality, smart meters serve as the critical backbone for digital and future-ready power distribution. Integrating this technology allows DISCOMs to drastically reduce AT&C losses through automated theft and tamper detection such as identifying magnetic interference or bypass events directly enhancing revenue streams while empowering consumers with transparent usage insights. Beyond basic billing, this granular data enables sophisticated load and demand forecasting, facilitating Time-of-Day (ToD) tariffs and demand-side management to shift consumption toward periods of high renewable availability. Furthermore, smart metering accelerates outage detection via "last-gasp" signals, ensuring a more resilient grid that supports the long-term goal of a sustainable, 24/7 carbon-free energy future.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, CMD, Energy Department, Government of Bihar***
- ***Moderator: Shri Reji Kumar Pillai, President, India Smart Grid Forum (ISGF)***
- ***Panelists included Ms. Shalu Agrawal (Director Programs, CEEW), Ms. Swetha Ravi Kumar (ED, FSR Global), Shri Samuel Paul N (MD, KESCO), Shri Gautam Aggarwal***



(CRO, Bidgely Technologies) Shri Sunil Singhvi (Secure Meters) and Shri Pranav Tayal, Director (MoP).

Discussions highlighted the role of smart meters and analytics in AT&C loss reduction, revenue enhancement, load forecasting, demand response, network planning and consumer empowerment.

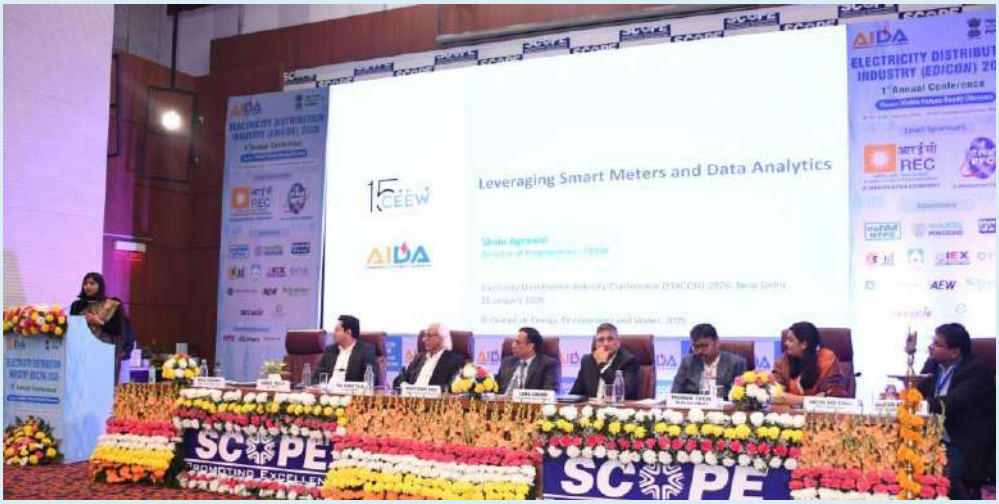
This session featured three insightful presentations, delivered by:

- Ms. Swetha Ravi Kumar, Executive Director, Florence School of Regulation- Global

The presentation from the Florence School of Regulation-Global highlighted a significant "data-action gap" in the current smart metering landscape, noting that while nearly 5 crore smart meters have been deployed, only 10–12% of the resulting data is actually being utilized for analytics. To address this, the session discussed the India Energy Stack (IES) as a strategic blueprint for digital public infrastructure within the power sector, designed to unlock the full potential of grid data. Furthermore, a preview of the DISCOM digital readiness survey was shared, aiming to evaluate and accelerate the ability of utilities to transition from basic meter deployment to sophisticated, data-driven operational management.

- Ms. Shalu Agrawal, Director, Programs, CEEW

The presentation on leveraging smart meters and data analytics emphasized on bridging the gap between hardware deployment and tangible utility benefits. It highlighted that while smart meters are the cornerstone of a modern grid, their true value remains locked without a shift toward integrated data analysis and strategic consumer outreach. Drawing on real-world case examples, the discussion emphasized the urgent need to build internal institutional capacity to scale advanced analytics. Crucially, CEEW advocated for a paradigm shift in how success is measured: moving away from output-based KPIs (simply counting the number of meters installed) toward outcome-driven results, such as measurable reductions in AT&C losses, improved peak load management, and enhanced consumer satisfaction.

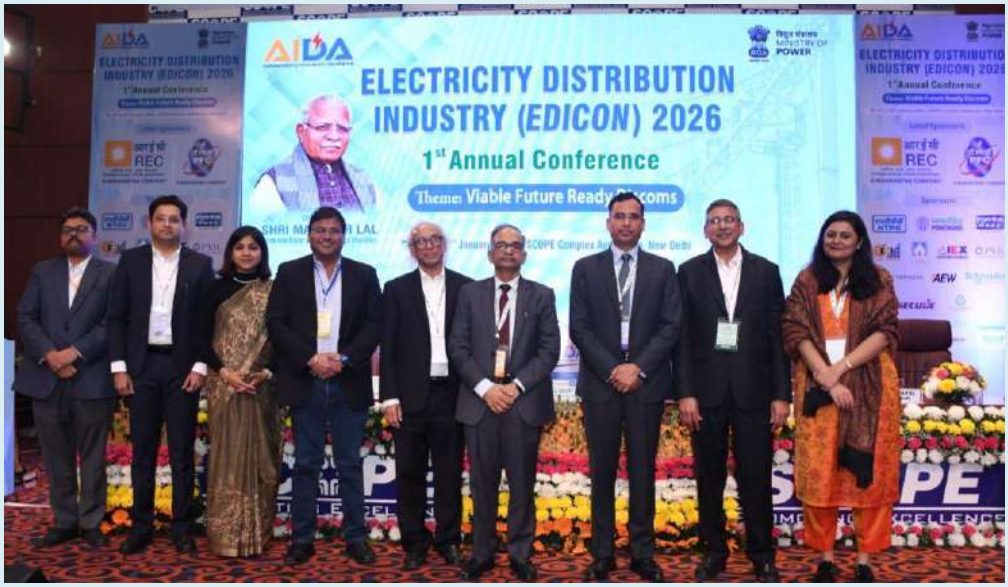


Key Takeaways:

1. Foundation of Digitalization: Smart meters are the non-negotiable backbone for DISCOMs. Beyond basic data collection, they are driving a financial turnaround; for example, Bihar saw a shift from a ₹300 crore loss in FY21 to a profit exceeding ₹2,000 crore in FY25 by leveraging smart prepaid meters to boost billing efficiency from 75% to nearly 87%.
2. Precision Operational Efficiency: The true value of meter data lies in pinpointing high-loss feeders and Distribution Transformers (DTRs). This granular analysis is essential for reducing the national AT&C loss average toward the 12–15% target (down from 16.1% in FY24), enabling predictive maintenance and evidence-based load forecasting.
3. The "Data-Action" Gap: A critical challenge was identified: while India has crossed the milestone of 5 crore smart meter installations, currently only 10–12% of this data is utilized for analytics. Actionable ‘data-pallets’ must be made available to field staff. Closing this gap is the next frontier for DISCOM capacity building.
4. The India Energy Stack (IES): The IES is the proposed blueprint for Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). It aims to create a unified, interoperable energy grid much like UPI did for finance ensuring that data from different vendors can be integrated to support Time-of-Day (ToD) tariffs and peer-to-peer energy trading.
5. Customer Empowerment & Experience: Digital maturity must translate into consumer convenience through simplified billing and real-time apps. Emerging technologies like energy disaggregation (appliance-level monitoring) allow customers to track "behind-the-meter" usage, improving satisfaction and reducing the trust deficit.
6. Shift to Outcome-Driven Results: Success must be measured by outcomes (reduced financial gaps and improved reliability) rather than outputs (number of meters

installed). Early signs are promising, with DISCOMs recording a collective PAT of ₹2,701 crore in FY25, signaling the beginning of a technology-led recovery.

7. Preparation of long-term digitalization roadmap, development of IT cadre, and capacity building of staff and AMISP is necessary for success.



Session 3: Challenges in Renewable Energy Integration

The rapid scaling of solar, wind, and Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) capacity has introduced significant technical and operational challenges, making grid flexibility and agility an urgent necessity that requires substantial investment. For DISCOMs, the primary challenge lies in managing the transition to a greener grid while maintaining affordability and reliability, particularly when dealing with the intermittent and infirm nature of renewable power. This variability necessitates costly balancing measures to ensure availability during peak hours and places immense pressure on grid stability. Furthermore, the high cost of integration is often exacerbated by severe transmission constraints, as RE-rich regions frequently lack the robust evacuation infrastructure needed to move power efficiently. Addressing these hurdles is essential to ensuring that the evolution of India's power landscape does not compromise the financial health of utilities or the stability of the national grid.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Shri Ghanshyam Prasad, Chairperson, Central Electricity Authority (CEA)***
- ***Co-Chair: Shri Ajitabh Sharma, Principal Secretary (Energy), Government of Rajasthan***
- ***Moderator: Shri Alok Kumar, Director General, AIDA***

- ***Panelists included Shri A. K. Saxena (Senior Director, TERI), Ms. Reena Suri (ED, ISGF), Shri Vivek Singla (MD & CEO, PXIL), Shri Vishu Mahajan (JMD, TNPDCL), Shri Dhruv Suri (Co-founder Pravah, Phd Scholar -Stanford University) and Shri Shiv Kumar (Director-Power Systems SECI).***

The session examined technical and operational challenges associated with renewable integration, including intermittency, grid stability, balancing costs, and transmission constraints.

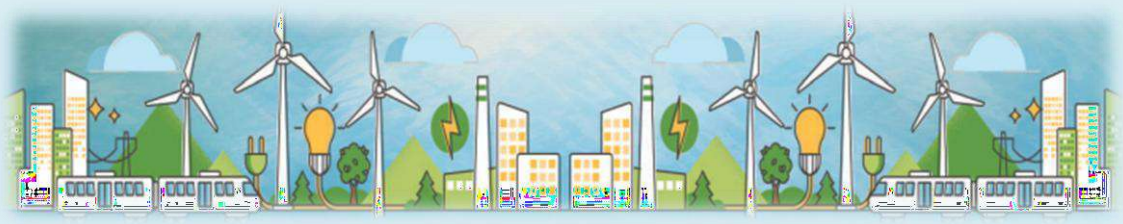
This session also featured two insightful presentations, delivered by:

- Shri A K Saxena, Senior Director, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

The presentation analyzed the existing and emerging challenges of renewable energy integration, with particular emphasis on variable renewable energy (VRE) integration to support India's climate commitments. It included a Duck Curve (the phenomenon where high midday solar generation is followed by a sharp evening demand ramp) analysis and an assessment of the all-India demand and reserves profile for 2025. The way forward highlighted the need to enhance visibility and monitoring of rooftop solar generation, institutionalize resource adequacy, prioritize distributed renewable energy solutions in the eastern and north-eastern regions, and enable least-cost integration through a combination of flexibility options (electro-chemical; BESS and mechanical; Pumped Hydro, storage solutions), advanced network management, and electro-chemical and mechanical energy storage solutions.

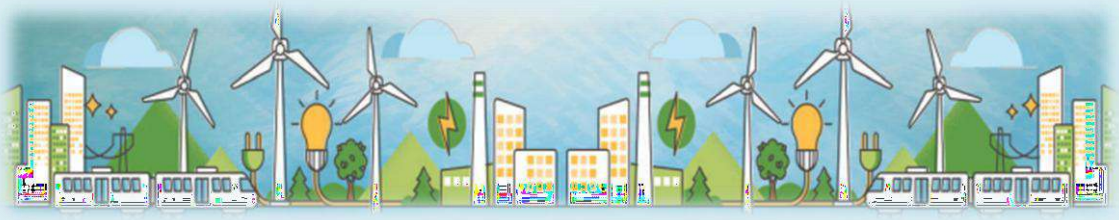
- Ms. Reena Suri, Executive Director, India Smart Grid Forum.

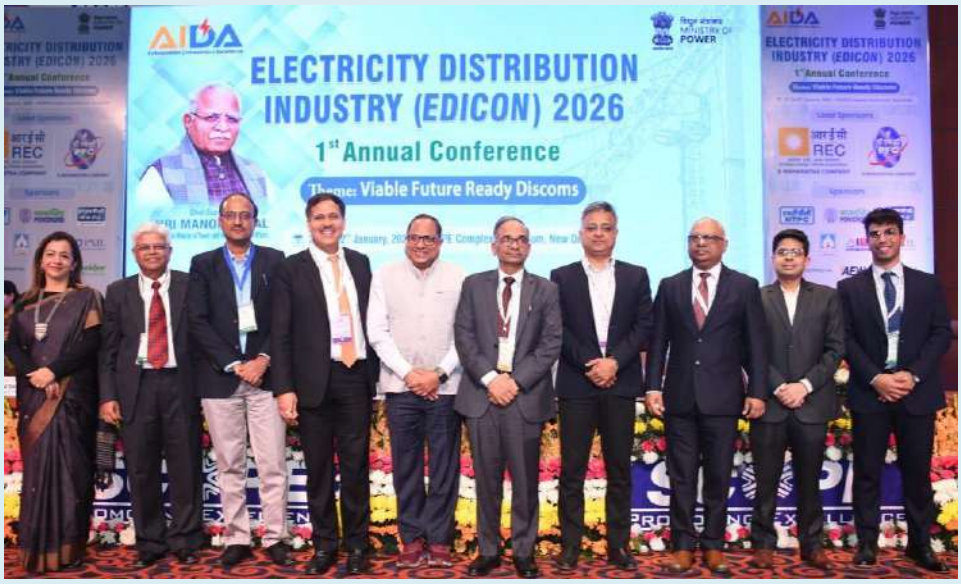
The presentation by ISGF highlighted the role of digitalization in enabling cost-effective renewable energy integration, focusing that digitalization is the essential catalyst for cost-effective renewable integration, transforming passive consumers into "flexumers" active participants who modulate their demand and supply in response to grid signals. To manage the technical hurdles of high renewable penetration such as reverse power flows and generation variability—the session proposed a suite of "digital flexibility" tools. These include smart inverters and reverse power relays to stabilize local distribution, alongside the strategic deployment of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) technology to turn electric vehicles into mobile storage units. By leveraging these digital solutions and peer-to-peer (P2P) trading, DISCOMs can move beyond simple energy delivery to managing a dynamic, bidirectional ecosystem that maximizes the value of local green energy.



Key Takeaways:

1. Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Pumped Storage Plants (PSP) are expected to operate in dual-cycle mode for about 90–100 days annually, with single-cycle operation during the remaining period. Hence market-based storage products must be introduced.
2. Greater emphasis is needed on increasing intrastate generation to enhance grid reliability and reduce dependency on inter-state power flows.
3. Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE), including rooftop solar, should be scaled up within states to address rising costs and evacuation constraints.
4. The STELLAR tool can be effectively used for renewable energy scenario analysis and planning. RPOs should be state specific.
5. Improved visibility of rooftop solar capacity up to the SLDC/ utility level is essential for better forecasting and system operations.
6. Mandating at least two hours of storage with DRE/RTS generation can support grid stability and flexibility.
7. Localized reactive power compensation should be strengthened to improve voltage management and overall grid performance. Impact of power flows on state level transmission networks in RE rich states should be probably assessed for appropriate regulatory interventions.
8. There is urgent need to resist and phase out net metering, banking and must run states.
9. Tightening of DSM regime for RE has become critical. Introduction of 5-minute scheduling should be expedited.





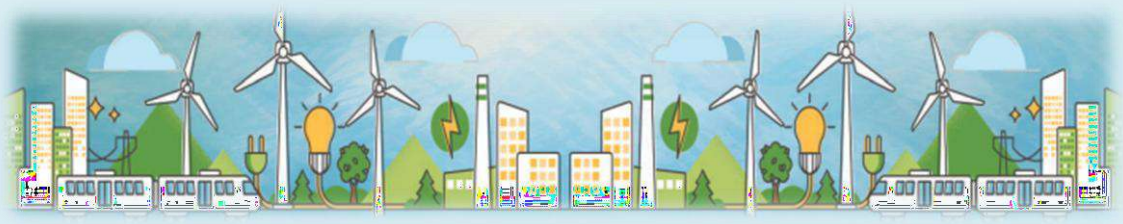
Session 4: Interventions for Improving Reliability of Supply

The reliability of India's electricity supply is fundamentally dependent on the transition toward resilient, flexible networks and the adoption of modern, automated infrastructure. As growing demand and increased renewable integration place new stresses on the grid, DISCOMs must prioritize the strengthening of network automation and the implementation of real-time monitoring and control systems to ensure stable, uninterrupted power. These interventions ranging from advanced distribution management systems to predictive maintenance are essential for reducing technical and commercial losses while directly enhancing consumer satisfaction. By focusing on data-driven improvement plans for key reliability indices, such as the System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI), System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI), and Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI), utilities can shift from reactive troubleshooting to a proactive, digitally resilient operational model.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Dr. Ashish Kumar Goel, Chairman, Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL)***
- ***Moderator: Shri Abhishek Ranjan, CEO, BSES Rajdhani Power Limited***
- ***Panelists included Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh (Executive Director REC), Gaurav Sharma (GM Technical NPCL), Shri Jignesh Upadhyay (S.E. PGVCL), Rohit Bajaj (JMD, IEX) and Samir Kumar (Service Director, GE Vernova Ecosystems).***

The session also featured two insightful presentations, delivered by:



- Prabhat Kumar Singh, ED, REC ltd.

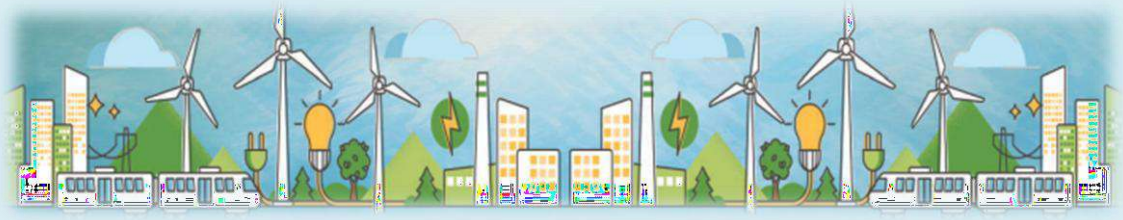
  The REC presentation highlighted power supply reliability as a strategic priority, reviewing the RDSS scheme, current trends, and challenges such as frequent outages, slow fault detection, high restoration times, limited automation, protection issues, and RE integration risks. Key interventions proposed include fast-track system strengthening, adaptive protection and sectionalization, accelerated fault location and restoration via SCADA/remote switching, and AI/ML-enabled modernization, supported by a reliability governance approach using SAIFI, SAIDI, and CAIDI to enhance network resilience and grid performance.

- Jagabanta Ningthoujam, Principal and Director, RMI

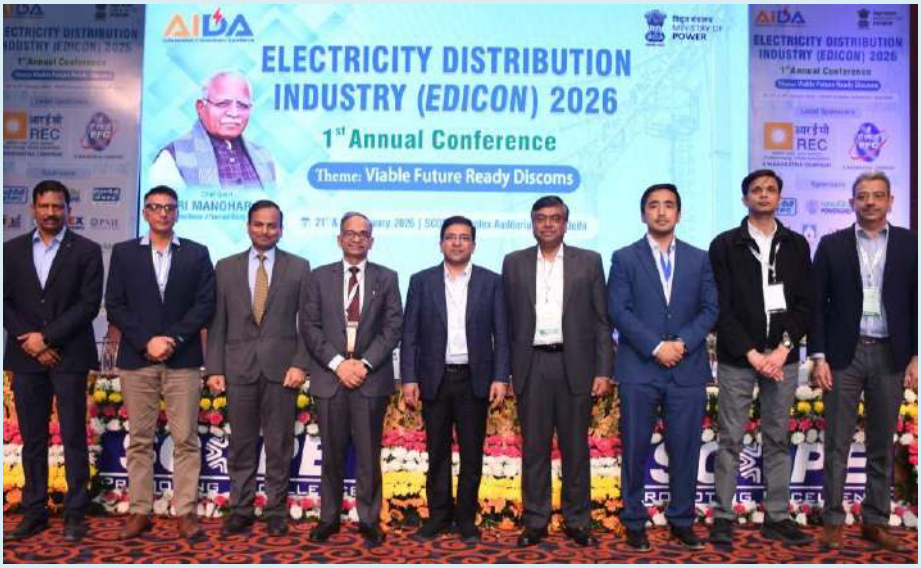
  The presentation highlighted the role of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in enhancing grid stability and supporting renewable energy integration, with 4-hour BESS primarily deployed in high VRE states in western and southern India. Beyond RE integration, BESS smooths load profiles and provides ancillary services, as demonstrated by international markets like California's electricity markets. Highly flexible and cost-efficient, BESS tariffs have fallen sharply, but operational capacity remains limited due to multi-phase coordination and contracting challenges. A digital infrastructure layer with integrated platforms and aggregators is critical to enable local energy markets.

Key Takeaways:

1. GIS mapping of Network and Consumer Indexing needs to be fast-paced in Discoms.



2. Reliable & Affordable Power is the essence of economic growth of Discoms, State & Country. Discoms should be assisted to draw medium- and long-term roadmap for improving reliability.
3. Need-based, capex-bound planning with focus on LT network strengthening, ageing asset replacement, transformer/conductor constraints, and selective N-1 redundancy while balancing reliability cost and tariffs.
4. Shift to preventive, predictive & prescriptive maintenance using AI, sensors, DT monitoring, health-index based asset management, and condition-based maintenance to reduce failures and SAIDI/SAIFI.
5. Network automation & protection coordination through ADMS, feeder automation, self-healing schemes, standardised SOPs, and proper protection settings (11 kV–DT coordination, ~100 ms selectivity) to enable <1-hour restoration.
6. Digitisation with end-to-end data integrity completion of GIS mapping, consumer indexing, smart/DT metering, and reliable SCADA–DMS data to support planning, fault isolation, and operational decision-making.
7. Last-mile reliability, skills & resilience focus, LT upgrades, consumer-level switchgear standardisation, structured workforce training, and climate-resilient infrastructure to meet consumer expectations.
8. There is a need to reduce bid interval and period for gate closure to facilitate timely procurement.
9. Network upgrades should keep in view the need to enhance resilience.



Session 5: Renewable Consumption Obligations for DISCOMs

The Renewable Consumption Obligation (RCO) mandates that DISCOMs source a progressively increasing share of their electricity—targeted to reach 43.33% by FY 2029-30, from renewable avenues such as wind, hydro, and distributed renewable energy (DRE). To meet these annual targets set by the Ministry of Power and State Regulatory Commissions, utilities utilize a diverse procurement portfolio including long-term solar/wind PPAs, the Green Term-Ahead Market (GTAM), and the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) via VPPAs or the emerging buy-out price mechanism. While compliance adds a significant cost layer to DISCOM operations, non-compliance triggers severe financial penalties and regulatory scrutiny, making financial discipline essential. Innovations like the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) trading of rooftop solar recently launched as pilots in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh further empower "prosumers" to trade surplus energy directly via blockchain-enabled platforms, potentially reducing the cost of compliance for DISCOMs while democratizing the transition to a sustainable, decentralized power network.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Shri Alok Kumar, Director General, AIDA***
- ***Co-Chair: Shri U. N. Behera, Former Chairperson, Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC)***
- ***Moderator: Dr. Rahul Tongia, Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)***
- ***Panelists included Shri Milind Deore (Secretary, BEE), Shri Pankaj Kumar (MD, UPPCL), Shri Krishna Bajpai (MD, GESCOM), Shri Dharmveer (CEO, PowerXchange) and Shri Rajul Agrawal (CBO, BRPL).***

The session discussed compliance strategies, procurement options, financial implications of RCOs, and innovative mechanisms such as green markets and peer-to-peer transactions.

This session also featured five insightful presentations, delivered by:

- Dr. Sharath Rao, Visiting Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)
  The presentation discussed the renewable consumption obligation, a shift compliance from procurement to consumption, netting, banking, storage and implications of traceability questions. with increasing trajectory, state wise penalties can be substantial. as these RCOs are based on assumed capacity, CUF, buyouts may not be enough and even ignore TOD as generation always does not mean consumption.

- Dnyanesh Kulkarni, Chief Engineer, MSEDCL

  The presentation on RCO focused on key policy instrument to ensure that DISCOMs increase the share of renewable energy in their power procurement and supply mix, RCO targets to be linked to contracted RE capacity (MW terms). To fulfill these targets infrastructure -related safeguards, storage for flexibility and grid stability, design re-engineering as well as increasing the solar capacity through solar feeder solarization has been a game changer for the utility.

- Shashi Bala, Deputy General Manager, PowerXchange

  The presentation, based on RCO context and strategies on how the DRE obligations are to be dealt with, in absence of any inter-category fungibility, and lack of uniform national level regulations, she also dealt with the … of Discoms like risks around revenue protection, cross-subsidy impact, and operational control and P2P depends on smart meters and reliable meter data, and the efforts undertaken by PowerXChange to build a peer-to-peer (P2P) energy trading platform on blockchain, presenting a case study of first UEI-based P2P pilot implemented with ISGF team in MVVNL (Lucknow).

- Shri Milind Deore, Secretary, BEE

  The regulatory landscape for Renewable Consumption Obligation (RCO) was detailed through an overview from the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), highlighting the compliance status of targets across Indian states. This presentation underscored the Ministry of Power's proactive policy shifts, beginning with the landmark Energy Conservation Act amendment in December 2022 and the revised April 2024 trajectory, which introduced total fungibility across renewable sources and expanded the definition of obligated designated consumers. A pivotal development occurred on September 27, 2025, with a succeeding notification that significantly modernized compliance by introducing corporate-level fulfillment, Virtual Power Purchase Agreements (VPPAs), and RCO buyouts. Critically, this latest regulation established a clear financial framework by defining the maximum non-compliance penalty at ₹3.72 per kWh, providing DISCOMs and designated consumers with a definitive cost-benefit baseline for their renewable energy procurement strategies.

- Shri Pankaj Kumar, MD, UPPCL

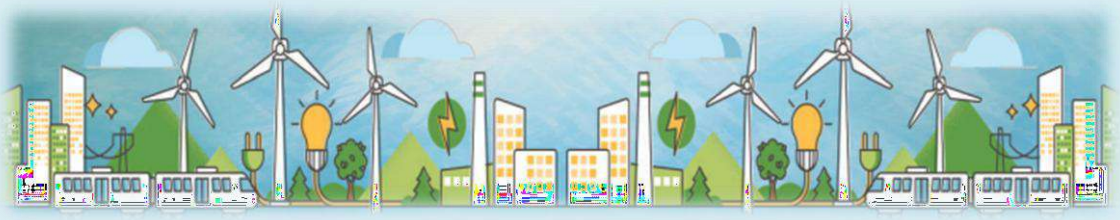
  The presentation by Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited reflected its strategic shift from approximately 15% RPO in FY 2023–24 to nearly 30% RCO in FY 2024–25, underscoring the scale and pace of Uttar Pradesh's renewable transition. It highlighted that DISCOM performance is dependent on timely commissioning of contracted RE projects and continuous contracting aligned with the annual trajectory, especially given the steep compliance pathway from ~30% to 43.33% within six years. The presentation outlined several structural and operational challenges, including uneven state-wise targets, higher RE penetration leading to

grid risks, penalty exposure for shortfalls, legacy long-term coal PPAs, a large demand base, RE resource constraints (solar generation mismatch with UP's demand profile, limited wind and hydro potential, seasonal co-generation variability), and reliance on inter-state transmission. It emphasized that even marginal shortfalls can create crores of liabilities, while reduced scheduling of thermal plants increases high fixed-cost burdens. The state's large absolute consumption magnifies cash flow and working capital pressures, and dependence on inter-state RE exposes it to transmission charges and waiver phase-out risks.

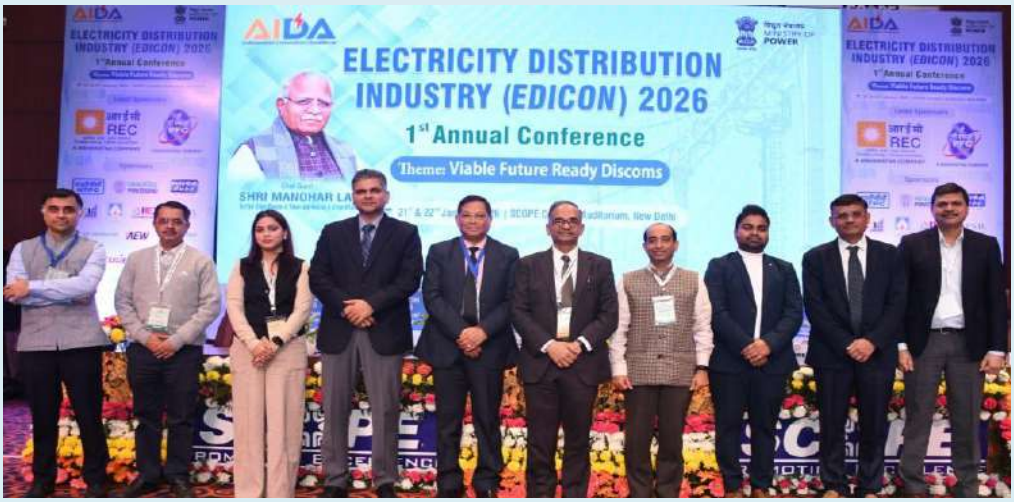
The presentation also showcased a projection of net financial gain of ₹23,043 crore, due to the stranded cost vis-à-vis from FY 2025–26 to FY 2034–35 and power purchase cost reduction due to transition to renewable energy (RE) by FY 2034–35. While RE procurement saves ₹32,961 crore by avoiding expensive market purchases and a 4.03% annual escalation in thermal costs, it also incurs a ₹9,918 crore burden from "thermal backdown" (fixed costs for idle coal plants). Despite these stranded costs, shifting to RE remains the more stable long-term strategy, effectively hedging against fuel price inflation and market volatility.

Key Takeaways:

1. Shift to Consumption and "Buyout" Flexibility: Compliance has moved from procurement to actual consumption. DISCOMs now have three equal pathways to meet targets: direct RE consumption, purchasing RECs, or opting for the RCO Buyout (set by CERC at ₹347/MWh for FY 2025–26), which provides a cost-predictable "third way" to fulfill obligations.



2. Surging Penalty Pressures: While the buyout price offers a market-linked out, failing to use any compliance route triggers penalties under the Energy Conservation Act that are ten times higher than preceding penalty (ceiling of ₹3.72/kWh). This creates a massive financial gap between "paying to comply" (buyout) and "paying for failure" (penalty). States should be given flexibility in setting RPO trajectory. Also, the compliance should be based on contracted capacity as generation of RE is not uncontrollable.
3. Tariff and Accounting Mismatch: A major hurdle is the lack of Time-of-Day (ToD) linkage in RCO calculations. This makes it difficult to account for RE in retail tariffs accurately, as generation patterns rarely align with real-time consumption, leading to potential financial imbalances for utilities.
4. Storage Costs and Grid Limitations: Meeting rising RCO targets (targeting 43.33% by 2030) necessitates heavy investment in storage infrastructure. This adds significant costs, and the conventional grid faces "curtailment" risks because it can only handle a limited influx of intermittent renewable power.
5. Rooftop and DRE Measurement Gaps: The rise of Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) and P2P trading is changing RCO dynamics, yet utilities currently lack a "gross calculation" for rooftop solar. Most systems only measure exported energy, ignoring self-consumed energy, which leaves a large portion of actual green consumption unaccounted.



Session 6: Scaling up Demand Response

Demand Response (DR) serves as a strategic tool for modernizing the grid by incentivizing consumers to shift or reduce their electricity usage during peak periods, thereby enhancing grid flexibility and reducing the overall cost of power procurement. Scaling this initiative requires a focus on increasing consumer participation through clear financial incentives and awareness, supported by key technology enablers such as Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), automated load controllers, and real-time communication platforms. While the potential for improved reliability and lower peak-demand stress is significant, widespread adoption faces challenges including high initial infrastructure costs and the need for robust policy frameworks to standardize compensation models. Overcoming these hurdles through targeted regulatory support will allow DISCOMs to transition from passive supply management to an active, bidirectional partnership with consumers, ensuring a more resilient and cost-effective energy ecosystem.

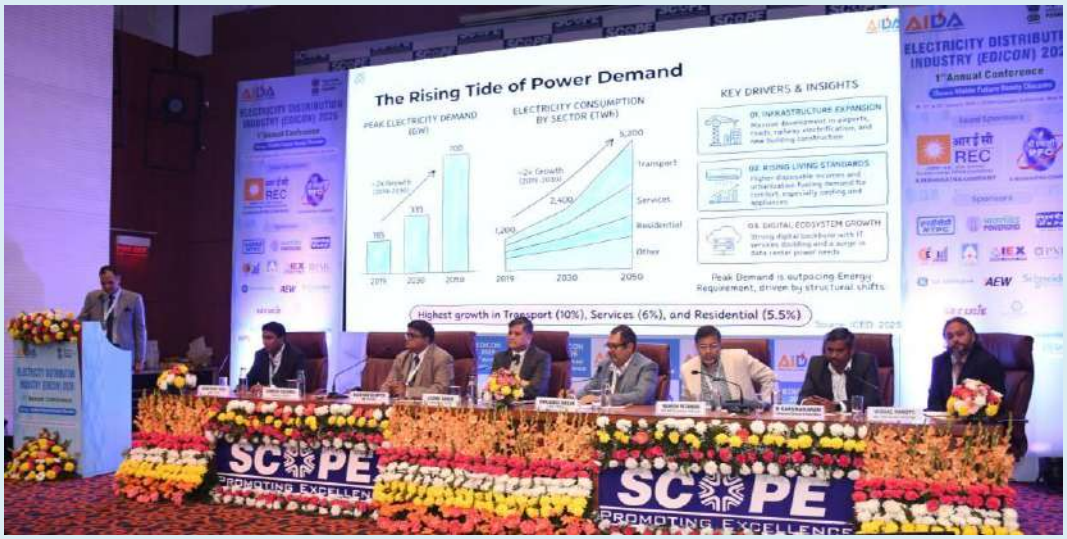
Speakers of the Session:

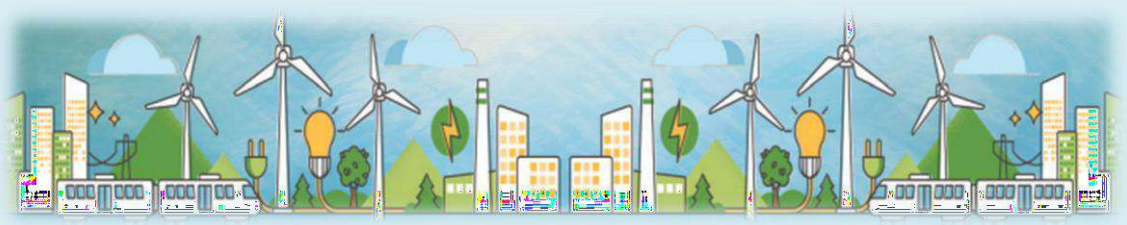
- ***Chair: Shri Jishnu Barua, Chairperson, Chairperson, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC)***
- ***Co-Chair: Shri Dwijadas Basak, CEO, Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited***
- ***Moderator: Shri Sumedh Agarwal, Director, Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE)***
- ***Panelists included representatives from Shri B. Karunakaran, Head - Commercial Services & Smart Metering, TPC Mumbai, Ravish Gupta, MD, PVVNL, Vishal Pandya, MD, Reconnect Energy, Dr. Mahesh Patankar, Founder & MD, MP Ensystems Advisory Pvt Ltd,***

This session also featured two insightful presentations, which was delivered by:

- Shri Sumedh Agarwal, Director, Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE)
  The presentation highlighted the decision-making framework for demand flexibility and identifying optimal solutions. It examined rising electricity peaks and sector-wise consumption growth driven by infrastructure expansion, higher living standards, and digital ecosystem growth—particularly in transport, services, and residential sectors. Demand asymmetry affects distribution and network planning, while high renewable energy penetration can cause over-voltages (e.g., Tamil Nadu) and increase procurement costs (price and volume volatility, merchant DAM exposure), congestion, and delays in PPA signing. Since renewable energy is flexible but non-dispatchable (in conventional manner), mechanisms such as Viability Gap Funding (VGF) and tenders integrating solar, storage, and demand flexibility under supportive regulations, can help India efficiently meet its flexible demand needs.

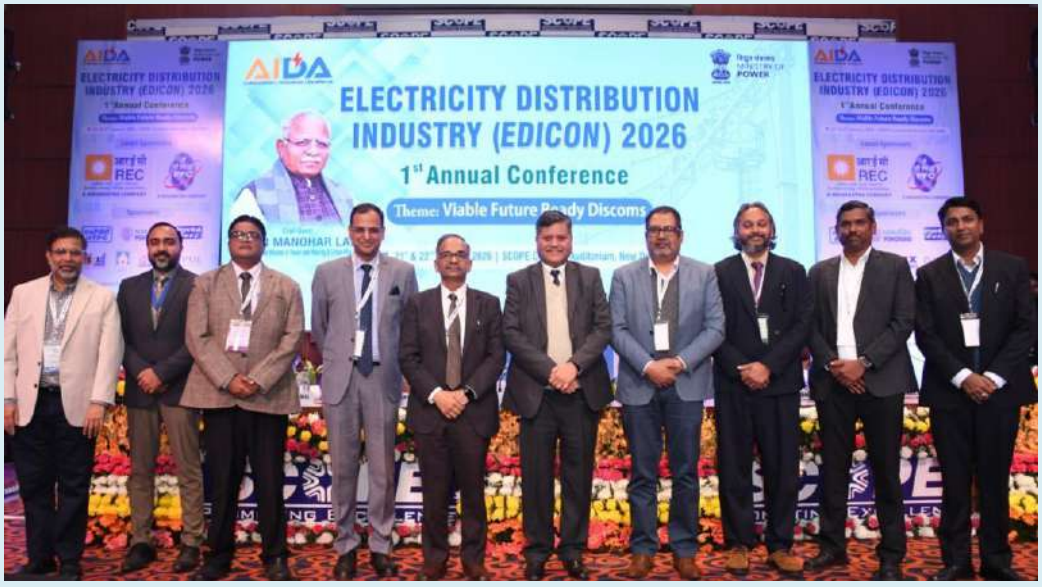
- Mr. Syed Hasan Imam, TPDDL
  The presentation focused on behavioral and automated demand response (DR) for consumers, covering pricing, benefits, and practical use cases. It highlighted the current imperatives and the growing potential of DR, with more than 3 GW of capacity being added annually and an aggregated flexible capacity of 30 GW projected over the next 10 years. Key developments include Delhi's EV policy, which could add 100 MW of additional load to the network, mature AMI and smart metering infrastructure, and retail consumer load growth of approximately 5% per year. Improvements in the IT-OT landscape are enabling stronger back-end integration, while demand response and flexible resources are increasingly critical for grid stabilization amid rising distributed energy resource (DER) integration.

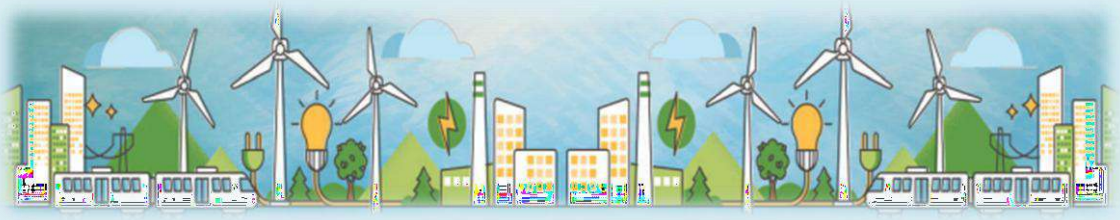




Key Takeaways:

1. Demand Response Is Essential, Not Optional: with structurally rising electricity demand, energy efficiency and demand response must complement supply expansion to ensure affordability and system sustainability. Initially, regulatory target for demand response may be required to accelerate its adoption.
2. One Unit Saved or Shifted is One Unit Generated: Load shifting and peak reduction are as valuable as new generation, directly lowering peak power costs and improving tariff economics.
3. Demand Response Delivers Reliability and Cost Benefits: DR supports grid stability during emergencies and reduces peak procurement costs in normal operations making it both a reliability and cost-optimization tool.
4. Customers Will Participate When Trust, Feedback, and Recognition Exist: Rapid scaling, reduced incentives, fast feedback, and social recognition show that customer engagement depends more on trust, visibility, and pride than on cash incentives.
5. Technology Enables Scalable, Zero-Cost Capacity: Smart meters, analytics, and real-time M&V enable large-scale DR, delivering "zero-cost, zero-emission generation" while positioning customers as active grid partners.





Session 7: Capacity Building of DISCOMs Personnel

As the power sector undergoes a digital and renewable-driven transformation, comprehensive capacity building is essential to cultivate a tech-savvy, consumer-oriented workforce capable of managing modern utility systems. To bridge existing skill gaps, DISCOMs must prioritize technical upskilling in emerging areas like AI, smart grids, and AR/VR-based maintenance, alongside deepening financial, commercial, and regulatory expertise to navigate complex energy markets. Beyond technical proficiency, strengthening soft skills for enhanced consumer interaction and fostering a leadership pipeline skilled in strategic planning, project management, and data-driven decision-making is crucial for long-term efficiency. Achieving this requires robust institutional support through strategic partnerships with premier organizations such as NPTI, IITs, IIMs, and industry leaders, ensuring that employees at all levels are equipped with the specialized knowledge and managerial agility required for a future-ready distribution network.

Speakers of the Session:

- ***Chair: Shri Pankaj Kumar, Managing Director, Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited***
- ***Co-Chair: Shri Minhaj Alam, CMD, Kerala State Electricity Board Limited***
- ***Moderator: Shri S. N. Kalita, Director (Regulatory Affairs), AIDA***
- ***Panelists included Dr. Indu Maheshwari (Principal Director, NPTI), Shri Vineet Sikka (MD, CESC), Prof. Abhijit Abhyankar (Professor, IIT Delhi) and Shri Jignesh T. Ray (HR, GUVNL).***

This session also featured two insightful presentations, which was delivered by:

- Shri Jignesh T. Ray (GM, GUVNL)

  The presentation by GUVNL focused on *Powering the Future* and preparing transformational leadership for tomorrow. With increasing installed capacity, the dynamics of the power sector are rapidly evolving, alongside the emergence of new verticals within energy utilities. These changes demand not only adequate manpower but also the right skill sets to keep pace with the transformation. Providing a case study, he showcased how GUVNL's Leadership Development Program aims to bridge this gap through timely training initiatives, a problem-solving approach, the creation of an exceptional talent pool, and the adoption of a sandbox-based learning framework.

- Dr. Indu Maheshwari (Principal Director, NPTI)

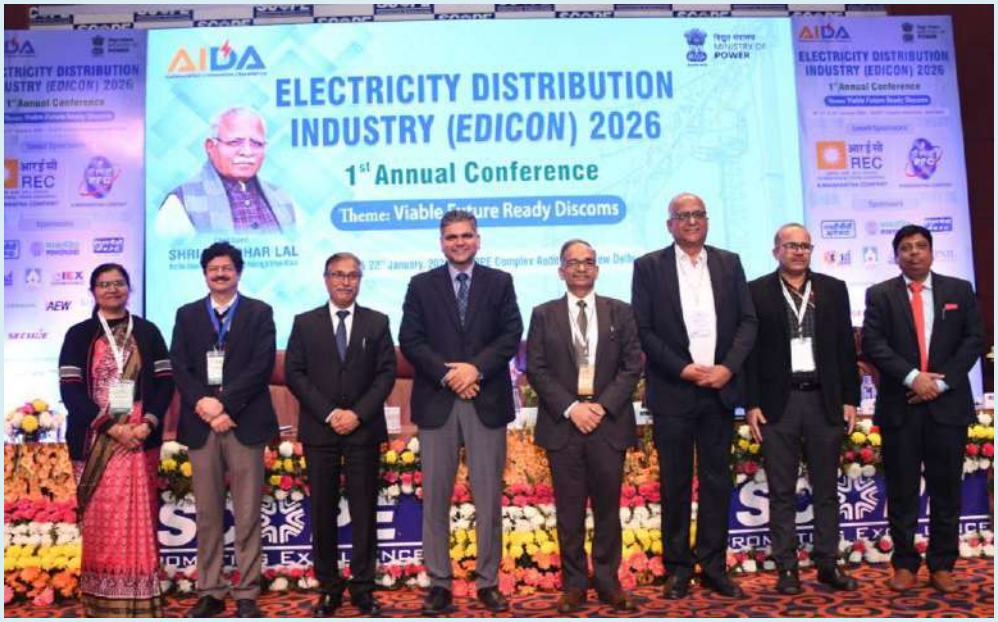
  The presentation by NPTI highlighted the various training programs offered by the organization, including initiatives in cybersecurity, training under RDSS, Mission Samarth, system operator certification, and mandatory foundation programs for fresh recruits of all CPSEs and autonomous bodies under the Ministry of Power. It also outlined NPTI's role as a National Apex Body in capacity building for the power sector.

Discussions focused on skill gaps, leadership development, institutional partnerships, and use of advanced training tools to build a future-ready DISCOM workforce.

Key Takeaways:

1. Cultivating Tech-Savvy Leadership: Transformation requires "transformational leadership" prepared for new utility verticals. Programs like GUVNL's Leadership Development utilize sandbox-based learning to foster a problem-solving approach and create an exceptional talent pool.
2. Addressing Digital and Technical Skill Gaps: As sectors go digital, workforce upskilling must prioritize emerging technologies like AI, smart grids, and AR/VR-based maintenance, alongside critical specialized areas like cybersecurity and system operator certification. Use of AR/ VR increases employee engagement.
3. Mandatory and Specialized Training Frameworks: Institutional training is becoming more structured, with NPTI leading mandatory foundation programs for recruits and specialized training under national schemes like RDSS and Mission Samarth. Similar induction courses for various entry levels in Discoms need to be prepared.
4. Beyond Technical Proficiency: Effective capacity building must balance technical training with financial, commercial, and regulatory expertise. Strengthening soft skills for consumer interaction and data-driven decision-making is essential for modern, consumer-oriented utilities.
5. Strategic Institutional Partnerships: To bridge specialized knowledge gaps, DISCOMs are leveraging partnerships with apex bodies like NPTI, academic institutions like IITs/IIMs, and industry leaders to ensure managerial agility in a future-ready network.

6. Knowledge of AI/ ML: wish the rapid expansion of the smart meters, SCADA and ERP, Discos are in possession of huge quantum of data. Data analytics with the help of AI/ML has become a need of the hour.



Conclusion

EDICON 2026 served as a powerful collaborative forum, enabling stakeholders to exchange best practices and chart actionable pathways for a more resilient distribution sector. By bridging the gap between policy and operational excellence, the conference reinforced AIDA's role as a catalyst for national energy transformation.

The event concluded with a heartfelt felicitation ceremony, extending gratitude to the eminent speakers, chairs, moderators, and panellists for their invaluable insights. Special thanks were also given to the managing directors, special invitees, and key sponsors including BRPL, TPDDL, ISGF and others whose support was instrumental. The session closed with the shared hope that the ideas sparked at EDICON 2026 will serve as a guiding torch for DISCOMs and the broader power sector in the years to come

Annexures

Annexure I- AIDA Annual Report:

The report, titled "India Discoms: 2025", was released during the inaugural session of the First Annual Conference of All India Discoms Association (AIDA), on 21st January 2026, with the Hon'ble Minister of Power, Government of India, as the Chief Guest.

The report presents a comprehensive outlook of India's distribution sector, highlighting ongoing efforts by distribution companies to enhance reliability of supply and operational efficiency, alongside the key challenges they continue to face. It also provides an overview of major policy and regulatory initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Power and the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) to address these challenges, including key features of the Roadmap for Digitalization in DISCOMs, Data management and Data Governance in Electric Utilities, Reforms in Distribution, Safe Power Delivery by Telangana, Best Practices in Financial Management, Behavioural Demand Response and other reform measures. The publication includes thirteen articles by eminent power sector leaders.

The report also featured a brief overview of the innovative initiatives and best practices adopted by distribution companies that was recognised through the AIDA Annual Awards 2025, conferred and awarded during the inaugural session of the Conference.

In addition, it includes a summary of key findings from a research study jointly undertaken by AIDA and REC, analysing tariff orders and true-up orders of selected states to identify gaps and recommend corrective actions for State Electricity Regulatory Commissions. The publication concludes with a brief account of the activities undertaken by AIDA during the year 2025.

Annexure II -Annual Awards

To commemorate the completion of AIDA's first year of establishment, the First Annual Conference of the All India Discoms Association (AIDA) was successfully organized. As part of the Conference, the AIDA Annual Awards 2025 were instituted and conferred to recognize exemplary performance and innovative initiatives undertaken by member DISCOMs. The awards aim to encourage utilities to sustain and scale best practices while enhancing the public perception of DISCOMs.

For the year 2025, Gold and Silver awards were conferred in each category, covering a total of six award categories, namely:

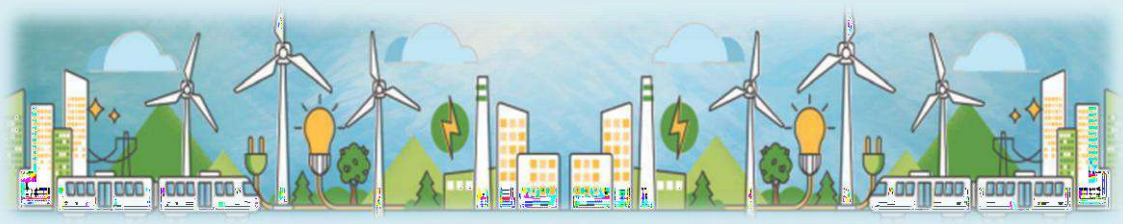
1. Highest improvement in recovery of revenue in FY 2025 in a rural circle or equivalent area and the innovative methods deployed for the same.

2. Best use of smart meter data by DISCOMs for purposes other than billing.

3. Highest improvement in FY 2025 in consumer satisfaction in terms of digital payment in a DISCOM.
4. Innovation in Energy Transition and Renewable Energy integration
5. Agricultural feeder solarization.
6. Effective change management for improvement in consumer services.

The AIDA Secretariat received 78 nominations from 29 DISCOMs across the six categories. The nominations were evaluated by an independent Jury comprising eminent experts from the power sector which includes Shri Rakesh Nath, former member of Appellate Tribunal on Electricity, and Former Chairperson of Central Electricity Authority; Shri Sudeep Jain, Member Secretary, National Commission for Women and former Additional Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; Shri T.S.C. Bosh, Director (Projects), REC Limited and former CEO of REC-PDCL, and Shri Sutirtha Bhattacharya, former Chairperson of West Bengal State Electricity Regulatory Commission and former Chairman and Managing Director of Coal India Limited. The awards reflected strong participation and performance across the sector, with State Government–owned DISCOMs winning a significant share of the awards alongside private sector utilities. Notably, the award-winning DISCOMs represented all five regions of the country, underscoring the nationwide spread of innovation and best practices in the distribution sector.

Category	Award	DISCOM	Key Achievement
1. Improved Revenue Recovery in a Rural Area	Gold	Tata Power Central Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPCODL)	31.79% improvement in collection, 101.12% collection efficiency in Paradeep Circle
	Silver	Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd (GUVCL)	44.43% arrears reduction, 102.20% collection efficiency, Baroda Rural Circle
2. Best Use of Smart Meter Data	Gold	Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd (APDCL)	RDSS-enabled smart metering, AT&C losses reduced from 18.73% → 15.45%
	Silver	Tata Power Western Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPWODL)	Smart meter analytics reduced AT&C losses from 28.56% → 17%



Category	Award	DISCOM	Key Achievement
3. Improved Consumer Satisfaction in Digital Payment	Gold	North Bihar Power Distribution Co Ltd (NBPDCL)	Inclusive digital payment ecosystem, 80% digital payment share, 52 lakh prepaid meters
	Silver	Dakshin Gujarat Vij Co Ltd (DGVCL)	Online and QR-based payments, increased digital payment share from 28% → ~70%
4. Innovation in Energy Transition & RE Integration	Gold	Paschim Gujarat Vij Co Ltd (PGVCL)	Scaled RE capacity to 3393 MW; projected 6453 MW by FY26–27 via PM-KUSUM, rooftop & distributed solar
	Silver	Noida Power Company Ltd (NPCL)	Exceeded RPO targets, 266 MU RE surplus FY25; planning to scale RE share to 59% by 2034
5. Agricultural Feeder Solarisation	Gold	Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd (JVVNL)	6,138 MW connected agricultural load, commissioned ~2,200 MW solar in 1.5 years, 5,400 MW projects awarded
	Silver	Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd (MSEDCL)	2,909 MW decentralized solar commissioned, 1,985 MW agricultural solarized under MSKVY
6. Change Management for Improved Consumer Service	Gold	CESC Ltd	3.7M consumers engaged via 5-pillar digital strategy; 85% digital adoption, SAIDI 0.25 hr/year, SAIFI 0.41
	Silver	Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corp Ltd (TNPDCL)	Billing modernization for 3.4 crore LT consumers, 75% LTCT, 76% Non-CT automatic, 23.56 hr/day supply