

# NEWS TODAY

## SUPREME COURT (SC) ALLOWS TELECOM COMPANIES (TELCOS) TO PAY ADJUSTED GROSS REVENUE (AGR) DUES IN 10 YEARS

Telcos have to make an upfront payment of 10% of total AGR dues by 31st March 2021 and balance amount in equal annual instalments over 10 years.

- > SC **rejected 20 years for payment** as sought by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and **also declined reassessment of dues.**
- AGR is a **fee-sharing mechanism between government and telcos** who shifted to revenue-sharing fee model from fixed license fee model (in 1999).
  - > Under this model, telcos are required to **pay licence fee and spectrum charges in the form of revenue share** to Centre. Revenue amount used to calculate this revenue share is termed as AGR.
- **Dispute on AGR**
  - > According to DoT, **revenue calculations should incorporate all revenues** earned by a telecom company – including from non-telecom sources such as deposit interests and sale of assets.
  - > Telcos want that **AGR should comprise revenues generated from telecom services only** and non-telecom revenues should be kept out of it.
  - > **In October 2019, SC ordered to include all revenues**, except for termination fee and roaming charges, as part of AGR.

### WHO PAYS HOW MUCH

The Supreme Court has given telcos 10 years-against the 20-year window that the DoT Sought-to pay a combined 1.4 trillion in dues.

TOTAL DUES (AS PER DOT ESTIMATES) (All amounts in crore)	Paid to DoT	Annual instalment (Without interest, for 10 years)
58,254 Vodafone Idea	7,854	5,040
16,798 Tata Tele-services	13004 + 5000 (ad hoc)	2,598
43,980 Bharti Airtel	4,197	1,260
70.53 Reliance Jio	195.18 (as per Self-assessment)	NA

Annual instalment will attract an interest of 8%  
Source: Supreme Court order

### WHAT THE COURT SAID

**20 YEARS** for payment of AGR dues, as sought by DoT, is 'excessive'

**TELCOS** must get 'reasonable time', considering the stress in the sector

**THERE** is no room for dispute and for reassessment of the dues

## 27 COLD-CHAIN PROJECTS APPROVED UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA (PMKSY)

- Projects were approved **under Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value addition infrastructure of PMKSY** and will help in creation of modern, innovative infrastructure and effective cold chain facilities for food processing sector.
  - > **PMKSY is for creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain** management from farm gate to retail outlet
- Cold chain infrastructure is **both inadequate as well as poorly distributed in India** due to which India witnesses huge wastages for eg. 4.6-15.9% wastage in fruits and vegetables, 2.7% in meat etc.
- **Benefits of projects:** It will help in streamlining the agricultural supply chain, generate direct and indirect employment opportunities in rural areas, provide better prices to farmers, end-users, and benefit allied sectors.
- **About Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure Scheme**
  - > Objective is to provide integrated cold chain and preservation **infrastructure facilities, without any break, from the farm gate to the consumer.**
  - > It covers **creation of infrastructure facility along the entire supply chain** viz. pre-cooling, weighing, sorting, grading etc.
  - > Implemented by: **Ministry of Food Processing Industries.**

## INDIA-JAPAN-AUSTRALIA TO LAUNCH SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE INITIATIVE (SCRI) FOR INDO-PACIFIC REGION

- SCRI was proposed by Japan as a **trilateral approach to trade, with India and Australia.** It aims to **attract FDI in Indo-Pacific region** and to build mutually **complementary relationship with partner countries.**
  - > In 2019, cumulative GDP of 3 countries was \$9.3 trillion, and their merchandise goods and services trade was \$2.7 trillion and \$0.9 trillion, respectively.
- Supply chain resilience is **to ensure that a nation has diversified its supply risk** across a clutch of supplying nations instead of being dependent on one or a few.
  - > It will help **to cohesively react to adverse events faster and also to disciplining price volatility.**
- **Significance of SCRI**
  - > To **reduce dependence on China.**
  - > Enhance **cooperation among partner countries.** Australia, Japan and India are already part of **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue** with US.
  - > **Rechurning of supply chains** in Indo-Pacific region.
    - » SCRI can work with Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) to build stronger supply and manufacturing chains that are protected from external shocks and influences.
- **Benefits for India:** Help to emerge as a supply hub in line with Make for world, reducing trade deficit with Japan etc.

## INDIA, 3 NATIONS CALL FOR UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) REFORM

- **India, Brazil, Germany and Japan** called for expediting the reform process stating **Intergovernmental Negotiations framework (IGN)** on the issue have dragged on for more than a decade without substantial progress.
  - > Four countries, also known as G4, support **each other's bids for permanent seats** on an expanded UNSC.
  - > IGN (formed in 2009) is a **group within the United Nations that is looking into UNSC reforms.**
- G4 also demanded action for **transforming UNSC in line with Common African Position (CAP)** and said negotiations **shouldn't be held hostage** by those who do not wish to bring about reform.
  - > **CAP for UNSC expansion** has been stipulated under Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration by African Union, both of which call for **at least 2 permanent and 2 to 5 non-permanent UNSC seats** to be given to African countries.
- **UNSC Reform agenda consists following 5 areas:**
  - > Categories of membership
  - > Question of veto held by five permanent members
  - > Regional representation
  - > Size of an enlarged Council and its working methods and
  - > Security Council-General Assembly relationship

# UNION POWER MINISTER LAUNCHES GREEN TERM AHEAD MARKET (GTAM) IN ELECTRICITY

- GTAM will provide an **exclusive platform for short-term trading of renewable** and it would be the first physical trading of renewable energy (RE).
- **Key features of GTAM:**
  - Energy scheduled through GTAM contract shall be **considered as deemed Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPO)** compliance of the buyer.
    - Earlier, buyer of power from wind or a solar company **could not claim that he had met RPO.**
    - RPO mechanism is an obligation to **purchase certain percentage of electricity from RE sources.**
  - There will be **separate contracts for Solar and Non-Solar energy** to facilitate Solar and Non-Solar RPO fulfillment.
  - It will have **Green Intraday, Day Ahead Contingency, Daily and Weekly Contracts.**
  - Price discovery will take place on a continuous basis i.e. price time priority basis.
- **Benefits**
  - It would **lessen the burden on RE-rich States** and incentivize them to develop RE capacity beyond their own RPO.
  - **Promote RE merchant capacity addition** and help in achieving RE capacity addition targets of the country.
  - **Buyers of RE** through competitive prices and transparent and flexible procurement and **RE sellers** by providing access to pan-India market.

## ALSO IN NEWS

<p><b>CITIIS (City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain) program</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It aims to <b>assist Indian cities in implementing urban infrastructure projects</b> that are integrated, innovation driven and sustainable.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Program combines <b>financial assistance through loans and technical assistance through grants</b> to selected cities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Project is being coordinated and managed by Program Management Unit at National Institute of Urban Affairs.</li> <li>• CITIIS is supported by <b>Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, French Development Agency (AFD) and European Union (EU).</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Forensic Accounting and Investigation (FAIS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has constituted a <b>committee to deliberate on FAIS.</b></li> <li>• FAIS aims to <b>codify best practices</b> in forensics and investigations and <b>set basic quality benchmarks</b> for conducting assignments in these areas.</li> <li>• It will make <b>India first country in the world</b> to release a set of forensic accounting and investigation standards.</li> <li>• ICAI is a <b>statutory body</b> established under <b>Chartered Accountants Act, 1949</b> for regulating the profession of Chartered Accountancy in the country.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NCRB releases annual report on suicides and accidental deaths</b></p>	<p><b>Key Findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cases of <b>suicide and accidental deaths registered an increase</b> in 2019 compared to 2018.</li> <li>• <b>Suicide rate in cities (13.9%) was higher</b> compared to all-India average (10.4%).           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Leading Causes</b> - Family Problems, Marriage Related Problems and Illness.</li> <li>➤ <b>Suicide rate in farming sector</b> accounted for 7.4% of total suicides. Suicides among <b>daily wage earners was highest.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Among Accidental death, <b>major causes were traffic accidents (43.9%),</b> sudden deaths (11.5%) and drowning (7.9%).</li> </ul>
<p><b>POSHAN Maah</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Month of September every year is celebrated as <b>Rashtriya Poshan Maah.</b></li> <li>• During this month <b>activities related to nutrition awareness and POSHAN Abhiyaan</b> will be carried out by all the states/UTs up to the grass root level.</li> <li>• <b>POSHAN Abhiyaan</b> (National Nutrition Mission) is India's flagship programme, launched in 2018 to improve nutritional status of <b>children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Robot Rakshak</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a <b>health assistant Robot, designed by Railways,</b> which can remotely communicate between doctor and patient.</li> <li>• It can <b>measure health parameters</b> such as temperature, pulse, oxygen percentage.</li> <li>• It can also <b>provide medicines, food to the patients and make a two-way video communication</b> between the doctor and the patient.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Battery made from nuclear waste</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A California-based company has made a <b>self-charging battery by trapping carbon-14 (C14) nuclear waste</b> in artificial diamond-case.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Carbon-14 (C14), or radiocarbon, <b>is a radioactive isotope of carbon.</b> It also helps in provides <b>objective age estimates for carbon-based materials</b> that originated from living organisms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The battery <b>works by generating electricity on its own from a shower of electrons as result of radioactive decay</b> scattered and deposited in the artificial diamond-case.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The company claims the battery <b>can run for 28,000 years on a single charge.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Kailash-Mansarovar</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amid tensions with India-China standoff, China has built a <b>surface-to-air missile near a lake,</b> which is a part of the Kailash-Mansarovar.</li> <li>• <b>Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar,</b> commonly known as the Kailash-Mansarovar site is <b>revered by four religions-</b> Hindus, Tibetan Buddhists, Jains, Bons (adherents of the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet).</li> <li>• <b>Four rivers originate from the site:</b> Indus, Brahmaputra, Sutlej and Karnali (tributary of the Ganges).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hampi</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hampi is a <b>UNESCO World Heritage Site</b> located in Karnataka.</li> <li>• Its <b>name is derived from Pampa</b> (old name of Tungabhadra River) on whose banks the city is built. It was the <b>last capital of the Vijayanagar empire.</b></li> <li>• <b>Founded by Harihara and Bukka in 1336,</b> it fell to the Muslim rulers of the Deccan in 1565 (<b>Battle of Talikota</b>).</li> <li>• <b>Key sites:</b> Achyutaraya temple, Vitthala temple, Pattabhirama temple, Lotus Mahal etc.</li> </ul>

