

Monthly Policy Review

June 2024

Highlights of this Issue

[New Union government formed after general elections to Lok Sabha \(p. 2\)](#)

Members from 41 parties were elected to Lok Sabha. BJP won 240 seats and formed the government with its allies.

[First session of 18th Lok Sabha begins \(p. 2\)](#)

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha commenced on June 24, 2024 and will continue till July 3, 2024. The Lok Sabha Speaker was elected.

[President addressed joint sitting of both houses of the Parliament \(p. 2\)](#)

The address outlined major policy achievements in various sectors. It highlighted work in areas such as infrastructure, defence manufacturing, economic growth, and internal security.

[Current account surplus of 0.6% of GDP recorded in the fourth quarter of 2023-24 \(p. 4\)](#)

Current account surplus in fourth quarter of 2023-24 was driven by a decrease in merchandise trade deficit and an increase in net services exports.

[High-level Committee constituted to suggest reforms in examination process \(p. 6\)](#)

The Committee will recommend: (i) reforms in the mechanism of examination processes, (ii) improvement in data security protocols, and (iii) changes in the structure and functioning of the National Testing Agency.

[Draft Central Excise Bill, 2024 released for comments \(p. 2\)](#)

The draft Bill seeks to replace the Central Excise Act, 1944 and provide for the levy and collection of central excise duty on goods produced or manufactured in India.

[Draft guidelines to prevent unsolicited calls released for public comments \(p. 5\)](#)

The draft guidelines seek to protect consumers from unsolicited and unwarranted business calls, SMS, and messages on social media platforms.

[Cinematograph \(Adjudication of Penalty\) Rules, 2024 notified \(p. 4\)](#)

The Rules prescribe the manner in which penalties will be levied by an authorised officer and the procedure for appeals. They also empower authorised officers with powers of investigation.

[UGC releases curriculum and credit framework for postgraduate education \(p. 5\)](#)

The Framework establishes the eligibility requirements for admission into a PG programme, design of different PG programmes and learning outcomes expected from the same.

[Cabinet approves the National Forensic Infrastructure Enhancement Scheme \(p. 7\)](#)

The Scheme will expand Central Forensic Science Laboratories and National Forensic Sciences University in India. It will be implemented between 2024-25 and 2028-29.

[Rules to identify offshore mineral areas for granting concession notified \(p. 8\)](#)

The Rules provide for the identification of mineral bearing areas for granting production lease and composite licences.

[Cabinet approves viability gap funding for offshore wind energy projects \(p. 8\)](#)

The scheme will support installation of a total of one gigawatt capacity of offshore wind energy. This will comprise of 500 MW each off the coast of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

July 1, 2024

Parliament

New Union government formed after general elections to Lok Sabha

Arpita Mallick (arpita@prsindia.org)

Results to the elections to the 18th Lok Sabha were declared on June 4, 2024, and members from 41 parties were elected from 543 constituencies.¹ The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) formed the government with Mr. Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister.² BJP won the highest number of seats (240), followed by INC (99 seats).

Table 1: Party Position after the 2024 General Elections

Party	No. of seats
Bharatiya Janata Party	240
Indian National Congress	99
Samajwadi Party	37
All India Trinamool Congress	29
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	22
Telegu Desam Party	16
Janata Dal (United)	12
Others	88
Total	543

Sources: Election Commission of India, General Election to Lok Sabha Results, 2024; PRS.

Note: Includes parties which won at least ten seats.

New Cabinet ministers were sworn in on June 9, 2024.³ The list of ministers is given in the Annexure.

First session of 18th Lok Sabha begins

Arpita Mallick (arpita@prsindia.org)

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha commenced on June 24, 2024. It is scheduled to be held till July 3, 2024, with eight sitting days.⁴ Rajya Sabha's 264th session began on June 27, 2024, and will conclude on July 3, 2024.

During this session, newly elected members of Lok Sabha took their oath. On June 26, 2024, Mr. Om Birla was elected as the Speaker of Lok Sabha. The President addressed both Houses of Parliament on June 27, 2024.

President's Address highlights achievements of the government

Rutvik Upadhyaya (rutvik@prsindia.org)

The President of India, Ms. Droupadi Murmu, addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of

Parliament on June 27, 2024.⁵ She outlined the major policy objectives and achievements of the government in her address. Key highlights of the address include:

- **Economy:** In 10 years, India has risen from being the 11th largest to being the fifth largest economy in the world. From 2021 to 2024, India has grown at an average rate of 8% annually. The government is striving to make India the third largest economy in the world.
- **Industry:** Sunrise sectors ranging from semiconductors to fighter jets and aircraft carriers are being promoted in mission mode. The north-eastern region will be a hub of Made-in-India chips.
- **Defence:** India is manufacturing defence equipment worth more than one lakh crore rupees. In the last year, about 70% of defence procurement was sourced from Indian manufacturers. Defence corridors are being developed in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- **Infrastructure and transport:** Feasibility studies will be conducted for bullet train corridors in the northern, southern and eastern regions. Government is making continuous efforts to reduce the cost of logistics.
- **Urban and rural development:** Construction of three crore houses has been approved under PM Awas Yojana.
- **Home Affairs:** AFSPA is being withdrawn from disturbed areas of the north-east in a phased manner. In the last 10 years, allocation for development of the north-eastern region has increased four times

For a summary of the President's Address, see [here](#). For an analysis of progress made on policy announcements in the last five years, see [here](#).

Finance

Tushar Chakrabarty (tushar@prsindia.org)

Draft Central Excise Bill, 2024 released for comments

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs released the draft Central Excise Bill, 2024 for comments.^{6,7} It seeks to replace the Central Excise Act, 1944.⁸ The draft Bill provides for the levy and collection of central excise duty on goods produced or manufactured in India. The 1944 Act provides for the levy of Central Value Added Tax

(CENVAT) on various goods produced or manufactured in India such as tobacco products, cigarettes, petrol, diesel, and aviation turbine fuel. Key features of the draft Bill include:

- **Assessment of excise duty:** The draft Bill allows the manufacturer of excisable goods to self-assess the duty payable on such goods. The assessee must also file returns in the manner and frequency as prescribed. The central government may specify the category of goods where the Superintendent of Central Excise or Inspector of Central Excise will assess the excise duty payable. Currently, self-assessment of excise duty is provided under Central Excise Rules, 2017.⁹
- **Annual return:** The draft Bill requires every assessee to file an annual return electronically. This must be filed within three years of the due date. Such return may include reconciliation of details declared in periodic returns furnished in the financial year. The central government may exempt any class of assessee from filing annual returns.
- **Appeal to High Court:** The draft Bill provides for appeal against orders of the Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (in matters related to excise duty) to the High Court. However, such appeal must not be related to the rate of excise duty or value of goods for assessment. The High Court can admit appeals on being satisfied that the case involves a substantial question of law. Appeal to High Court had been repealed from the 1944 Act in 2005.

SEBI takes various decisions at its board meeting

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved various decisions at its board meeting.¹⁰ Key decisions are as follows:

- **Association with unregistered persons:** The Board noted that certain persons and unregulated entities are inducing investors to deal in securities based on inappropriate claims. Persons regulated by SEBI and their agents must not be associated with any unauthorised person providing advice/recommendation on securities. Association implies any monetary transaction, referral of client, and interaction of information technology systems. These restrictions will not apply to association: (i) with persons who are exclusively engaged in investor education, and (ii) through specified digital platform

which does not provide unauthorised advice related to return.

- **Disclosure by FPIs:** University funds and university related endowments that are eligible to be registered as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have been exempted from providing additional disclosures. To avail this exemption, following conditions must be met: (i) fund must have less than 25% of its global assets as Indian equity assets, (ii) its global assets must be more than Rs 10,000 crore, and (iii) it must have filed appropriate tax returns in their home jurisdiction to prove that it is a non-profit exempt from tax.
- **Cybersecurity:** The Board approved the Cybersecurity and Cyber Resilience Framework for SEBI regulated entities. It classifies regulated entities in categories based on their span of operations, number of clients, trade volume, and assets under management. The framework classifies data into regulatory data, and IT and cybersecurity data. Regulatory data will have to be mandatorily localised while IT and cybersecurity data may be stored outside India. All entities must adopt the framework by April 1, 2025.

Macroeconomic Development

Tushar Chakrabarty (tushar@prsindia.org)

Repo rate kept unchanged at 6.5%

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India kept the policy repo rate (the rate at which RBI lends money to banks) unchanged at 6.5%.¹¹ Other decisions of the Committee include:

- The standing deposit facility rate (the rate at which RBI borrows from banks without giving collateral) has been retained at 6.25%.
- The marginal standing facility rate (rate at which banks can borrow additional money from RBI) and the bank rate (rate at which RBI buys bills of exchange) have been retained at 6.75%.

The MPC decided to remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation. This is expected to ensure that inflation progressively aligns with the target of 4%, while supporting growth.

Current account surplus of 0.6% of GDP recorded in the fourth quarter of 2023-24

India recorded a current account surplus of USD 5.7 billion (0.6% of GDP) in the fourth quarter (January-March) of 2023-24. In comparison, a deficit of USD 1.4 billion (0.2% of GDP) was recorded in the corresponding quarter of 2022-23.¹² The surplus in the last quarter was driven by a decrease in merchandise trade deficit from USD 52.6 billion to USD 50.9 billion and an increase in net services exports from USD 39.1 billion to USD 42.7 billion. In the third quarter (October-December) of 2023-24, current account deficit was USD 8.7 billion (1% of GDP).

The capital account registered a net inflow of USD 24.5 billion in the fourth quarter of 2023-24, significantly higher than the same quarter a year ago (USD 6.5 billion). In the third quarter of 2023-24, the net inflow into the capital account was USD 15 billion.

Foreign exchange reserves increased by USD 30.8 billion in the fourth quarter of 2023-24, higher than the increase of USD 5.6 billion registered in the same quarter a year ago. In the third quarter of 2023-24, foreign exchange reserves had increased by USD 6 billion.

Table 2: Balance of payments, Q4 2023-24 (USD billion)

	Q4 2022-23	Q3 2023-24	Q4 2023-24
a. Exports	115.8	106.6	121.7
b. Imports	168.4	176.6	172.5
c. Trade balance (a-b)	-52.6	-69.9	-50.9
d. Net services	39.1	45.0	42.7
e. Other transfers	12.2	16.2	13.9
f. Current account (c+d+e)	-1.4	-8.7	5.7
g. Capital account	6.5	15.0	24.5
h. Errors and omissions	0.4	-0.3	0.5
i. Change in reserves (f+g+h)	5.6	6.0	30.8

Sources: RBI; PRS.

Information and Broadcasting

Pratinav Damani (pratinav@prsindia.org)

Cinematograph (Adjudication of Penalty) Rules, 2024 notified

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting notified the Cinematograph (Adjudication of

Penalty) Rules, 2024.¹³ The Rules prescribe the manner in which penalties will be levied by an authorised officer and the procedure for appeals. The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 decriminalised some offences under the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and provides for the levy of penalties.^{14,15} These include: (i) exhibiting films with ‘A’ certificate to any minor, and (ii) failure to comply with the directions of the Board of Film Certification. Key features of the Rules include:

- **Appointment of authorised officers:** The central and state governments may appoint authorised officers for adjudicating penalty. In case of the central government, the authorised officer must not be below the rank of Under Secretary. In case of state governments, the officers must not be below the rank of: (i) Additional District Magistrates, (ii) Additional Collectors, (iii) Additional Deputy Commissioners of a district, or (iv) Under Secretary to the state government.
- **Levy of penalty:** The quantum of penalty will be decided after considering specified factors including: (i) nature of the violation, (ii) amount of disproportionate gain or advantage, and (iii) repetition of the violation. The order deciding the penalty must be passed within 90 days of issuing the notice.
- **Powers of the authorised officer:** The authorised officer may exercise certain powers to investigate violations. These include: (i) entering (or authorising another officer to enter) a place of exhibition, (ii) summoning individuals (in writing), and (iii) order for evidence considered relevant, such as surveillance footage and ticket scans.
- **Appellate process:** The appellate authority must be an officer not below the rank of: (i) Deputy Secretary or Director where the authorised officer is of the rank Under Secretary, or (ii) the District Magistrate, where the authorised officer is of the rank Additional District Magistrate. Appeals must be filed within 30 days of the order by the authorised officer. The appellate authority must decide appeals within six months, wherever possible.

Consumer Affairs

Shirin Pajnoo (shirin@prsindia.org)

Draft Guidelines to prevent unsolicited calls released for public comments

The Department of Consumer Affairs issued draft guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Unsolicited and Unwarranted Business Communication, 2024.¹⁶ The draft guidelines seek to protect consumers from unsolicited and unwarranted business calls, SMS, and messages on social media platforms. According to the guidelines, business communication has been defined as communication related to any goods or services including any transaction or service communication, but excluding personal communication. Unsolicited business communication refers to any promotional and service communication that is not as per the consent or registered preferences of the consumers. Key features of the draft guidelines include:

- **Applicability:** The guidelines will cover all persons or establishments that (i) make business communication (maker), (ii) engage the maker of such communication, (iii) would be the intended beneficiaries from such communication, and (iv) in whose name the communication was made. Such persons or establishments must not engage in unsolicited or unwarranted business communication.
- **Unsolicited business communication:** A person or establishment will be considered to be engaging in unsolicited and unwarranted business communication if it initiates such communication: (i) through a number series other than the one prescribed by TRAI/ Department of Telecommunications, (ii) despite the consumer being registered in the DND registry, (iii) without taking explicit consent from the consumer, (iv) without clearly identifying the calling entity and the purpose of call, and (v) through an authorised employee or agent.

Comments are invited until July 21, 2024.

Education

Rutvik Upadhyaya (rutvik@prsindia.org)

UGC releases curriculum and credit framework for postgraduate programmes

The University Grants Commission (UGC) released the ‘Curriculum and Credit Framework for Post Graduate Programmes’.¹⁷ The Framework seeks to provide flexibility to: (i) pursue subjects different from those studied in undergraduate programmes (UG), (ii) pursue PG education in different modes of learning, (iii) pursue simultaneous academic or industry engagements and obtain credits for the same, and (iv) exit a PG programme after one year with a PG diploma. Key features of the Framework include:

- **Credit requirement and eligibility for PG programme:** The Framework prescribes criteria for undergraduate students to be eligible for various types of PG programmes. For instance, to be eligible for a one-year MA, MCom or MSc degree, a candidate must have a Bachelor’s degree with Honours with minimum 160 credits. However, to be eligible for a two-year MA, MCom, or MSc degree, they need a three year/ six semester Bachelor’s degree with 120 credits.
- **Credit Distribution:** In line with NEP, the Framework requires PG programmes to span one or two years. One-year PG programmes will contain 40 credits. This can be obtained by doing either course work, research (20 credits each), or both. A two-year PG Diploma contains 40 credits, which must be obtained through coursework only. Other two-year PG programmes also contain 40 credits. These can be obtained through either coursework, research, or both (20 credits each).
- **Flexibility in switching subjects in PG:** The Framework permits graduate students to: (i) pursue a different subject in post-graduation, if they qualify in the entrance examination, and (ii) apply for a PG programme that was a major or minor in graduate studies. Under the Framework, certain students will be eligible for admission in Master in Engineering or a Master of Technology. These include those having completed: (i) a four-year UG programme, (ii) a three-year UG and a two-year PG programme or (iii) a five-year integrated programme, in STEM subjects.
- **Assessment:** The Framework suggests assessments to be continuous as opposed to summative (this includes unit tests and

semester-wise exams). It also suggests for assessments to be driven by learning outcomes. The National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) delineates learning outcomes for UG and PG programmes.¹⁸ It requires learning outcomes to be measured using criteria such as: (i) knowledge of the field, (ii) applicability of knowledge and skills, and (iii) employability.

High-level Committee constituted to suggest reforms in examination process

The Department of Higher Education, under the Ministry of Education, has constituted a high-level Committee to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations.¹⁹ The Committee will make recommendations on: (i) reforming the mechanism of the examination process, (ii) improvements in data security protocols, and (iii) the structure and functioning of the National Testing Agency. Its terms of reference include analysing the examination process end-to-end, and evaluating existing data security protocols related to paper setting. The Committee will be chaired by Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Chairman of the Board of Governors, IIT Kanpur, and the former Chairman of ISRO. Other members include heads of prominent education institutions and professors. The Committee is required to submit its report to the Ministry before August 2024.

Agriculture

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MSP for Kharif crops fixed for marketing season 2024-25

The Union Cabinet approved Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for the 2024-25 marketing season for 14 Kharif crops.²⁰ MSP refers to the assured price at which the central government procures crops from farmers.

The MSP for paddy has increased by 5% and by 8% for pulses like tur.

Table 2: MSP for Kharif crops for 2024-25 marketing season (in Rs crore)

Crop	MSP 24-25	Increase in MSP 24-25 over production cost	% change over MSP for 23-24
Paddy (common)	2,300	50%	5%
Jowar (hybrid)	3,371	50%	6%
Bajra	2,625	77%	5%
Ragi	4,290	50%	12%
Maize	2,225	78%	6%
Tur/Arhar	7,550	59%	8%
Moong	8,682	50%	1%
Urad	7,400	52%	6%
Groundnut	6,783	50%	6%
Sunflower seed	7,280	50%	8%
Soybean (yellow)	4,892	50%	6%
Sesamum	9,267	50%	7%
Nigerseed	8,717	50%	13%
Cotton (medium staple)	7,121	50%	8%

Sources: Press Information Bureau; PRS.

Draft National Policy on Farmer Producer Organisations released

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare released a Draft National Policy on Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).²¹ The Policy seeks to consolidate existing FPOs, promote new ones, and create an ecosystem for their sustainable growth. FPOs deal with all activities in the value chain of agriculture, and largely cater to small farmers. Key features of the Draft Policy are:

- Emulating the AMUL model:** The Draft Policy suggests designing a three-tiered institutional architecture, in line with the AMUL model. The first tier will consist of FPOs with farmers from four to five Gram Panchayats. The second tier will consist of a Secondary Level FPO Union. The Union will collect and process the surplus from the first tier, and have limited market outlets. The third tier, i.e., the Tertiary Level FPO Federation will market tier 2 products in domestic and export markets. The Draft Policy recommends providing policy support to FPOs at each tier, such as providing subsidised land for storing machinery and integration of seller platforms with Open Network for Digital Commerce.
- Institutional architecture at the Centre:** The Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare will be a Central Nodal Department,

and take all policy decisions. These decisions will be taken in consultation with the Central Committee on Policy and Coordination (Chaired by Agriculture Secretary), and Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium, an autonomous body. The Department will engage with relevant Ministries to ensure that FPOs: (i) directly supply to PSUs, railways, and defence, (ii) undertake price support operations at MSP, and (iii) are exempt from stock limits for processing.

- **Institutional architecture for states:** States will declare a department with relevant prior experience as the State Nodal Department. This Department will formulate and notify a state-level FPO policy within six months of notification of this Policy. This Department will strive to: (i) provide preferential licences for FPOs to access inputs, (ii) notify market infrastructure as 'deemed markets' under APMC Acts, (iii) allow eligible FPOs to sell produce to processors and exporters without the levy of market fee, and (iv) supply FPO products for the mid-day meal scheme.
- **Eligibility criteria of FPOs:** FPOs, must be formed by farmer-producers, and must have at least 300 members, with exceptions for hilly and northeastern states. They must be incorporated as legal entities, and be registered with Registry Portal maintained by the Centre.

Comments are invited until July 2, 2024.

Home Affairs

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Cabinet approves scheme to enhance forensic infrastructure in India

The Union Cabinet approved the National Forensic Infrastructure Enhancement Scheme with an outlay of Rs 2,254 crore.²² It will be implemented between 2024-25 to 2028-29. The scheme will: (i) establish campuses of the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) in the country, (ii) establish Central Forensic Science Laboratories, and (iii) enhance existing infrastructure of the Delhi campus of NFSU. The scheme seeks to address the shortage of trained forensic manpower in the country and help achieve a conviction rate of over 90%.

Coal

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Draft guidelines on mining plans released for public feedback

The Ministry of Coal has released draft guidelines for formulation of mining plans for coal and lignite blocks for public feedback.²³ The draft guidelines require every coal and lignite block to have a mining plan. No block will be allowed to be mined without an approved mining plan. Key features of the draft guidelines include:

- **Details to be furnished in mining plans:** A mining plan must encompass provisions for different phases of life of the mine as stage plans. These stages include first year, fifth year, tenth year, final year, and post-closure. The plan must provide specified details including: (i) proposed method of mining, (ii) annual coal production plan, (iii) safety management practices, (iv) infrastructure development plan, and (v) environmental management practices.
- The guidelines specify that project owners must minimise ecological damages. They should phase out manual mining and move towards mechanised mining. They must conduct regular safety audits. The mine closure plan should provide for continuous rehabilitation of mining sites and skilling of local communities.
- **Process for approval:** The Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) will be empowered to approve mining plans. CCO must dispose all applications within 30 days. The Ministry will set up a technical committee for scrutinising mining plans and provide recommendations. The Committee must complete its scrutiny within 15 days of the receipt of a mining plan. Any appeal against the decision of CCO may be filed before the Coal Secretary within 30 days of the order. Mining plans may be modified with the approval of CCO.
- **Compliance report:** A compliance report must be submitted every five years to CCO. The report should include specified details such as changes made during implementation, proposed minor changes, stage plans for next five and ten years, revised balance life and revised calculation of mine closure activities.

Comments are invited until July 1, 2024.

Rules to identify offshore mineral areas for granting concessions notified

The Ministry of Mines has notified the Offshore Areas (Existence of Mineral Resources) Rules, 2024.²⁴ These has been issued under the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002. The Rules pertain to identifying offshore areas for granting mineral concessions. Key features of the Rules include:

- **Identification of areas for production lease:** A production lease may be granted for an area for which: (i) at least general exploration has been completed, and (ii) a geological study report has been prepared. General exploration establishes the main geological features of a deposit. It includes an initial estimate of the size, shape, and structure of mineralised zones, and the quantity and grade of the mineral deposit. The production lease provides for undertaking mining.
- **Identification of areas for composite licence:** A composite licence may be granted for an area for which: (i) at least the reconnaissance survey has been completed, or mineral potential of the mineral block has been identified based on existing geoscience data but resources are yet to established, and (ii) a geological study report has been prepared. A composite licence grants rights for exploration as well as mining. Reconnaissance refers to a preliminary survey to locate mineral resources.
- **Application to notify an area for composite licence:** Based on the criteria outlined above, the central government will notify areas for granting composite licences. Any interested person may also submit a proposal to the government to notify an area for granting a composite licence. In his proposal, the person must furnish available geoscience data for determining the mineral reserves.

Power

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CERC notifies new Regulations for grant of inter-state transmission licences

The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) has notified the CERC (Procedure, Terms and Conditions for Grant of Transmission Licence and Other Related Matters) Regulations, 2024.²⁵ These replace the Regulations issued on this subject in 2009.²⁶ The 2024 Regulations provide a

framework for grant and administration of licences for inter-state transmission of electricity. Key changes under the 2024 Regulations include:

- **Exemption for certain purposes:** Distribution licencees and bulk consumers will not need a licence to develop and operate transmission lines that connect their systems to the inter-state transmission system. Bulk consumers refer to consumers who avail supply at the voltage of 33 kV or above.^{25,27} The 2009 Regulations did not grant such exemption to these entities.
- **Authorisation for additional works under existing licences:** Under the 2009 Regulations, for undertaking certain additional transmission works subsequent to the grant of a licence, fresh licences had to be issued. The 2024 Regulations provide for the inclusion of such additional works under an existing licence. A licencee may apply to CERC to amend the existing licence for this purpose.

Cabinet approves viability gap funding for offshore wind energy projects

The Union Cabinet has approved a scheme to provide for viability gap funding to offshore wind energy projects.²⁸ Offshore wind energy refers to generation of electricity through wind turbines installed in the water bodies, usually at sea. Viability gap funding refers to financial support for projects that may be economically justified but fall short of financial viability.²⁹

The scheme will support installation of a total of one gigawatt capacity, comprising 500 MW each off the coast of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. These two projects are estimated to generate 3.7 billion units of electricity annually. The total support for these projects is expected to be Rs 6,853 crore. For establishing the wind energy projects, private developers will be selected through a bidding process. In addition, Rs 600 crore will be provided for upgradation of nearby ports. Development of ports will help in meeting logistical requirements for the wind energy projects.

Annexure

Below is a list of Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State (Independent Charge) and Ministers of State.

Table 3: Cabinet Ministers

Name	Portfolio
Mr. Narendra Modi	Prime Minister
	Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
	Department of Atomic Energy
	Department of Space
	All important policy issues All other portfolios not allocated to any Minister
Mr. Raj Nath Singh	Defence
Mr. Amit Shah	Home Affairs
	Cooperation
Mr. Nitin Gadkari	Road Transport and Highways
Mr. Jagat Prakash Nadda	Health and Family Welfare
	Chemicals and Fertilizers
Mr. Shivraj Singh Chouhan	Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
	Rural Development
Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman	Finance
	Corporate Affairs
Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	External Affairs
Mr. Manohar Lal	Housing and Urban Affairs
	Power
Mr. H. D. Kumaraswamy	Heavy Industries
	Steel
Mr. Piyush Goyal	Commerce and Industry
Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan	Education
Mr. Jitan Ram Manjhi	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
Mr. Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh	Panchayati Raj
	Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Mr. Sarbananda Sonowal	Ports, Shipping and Waterways
Dr. Virendra Kumar	Social Justice and Empowerment
Mr. Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu	Civil Aviation
Mr. Pralhad Joshi	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
	New and Renewable Energy
Mr. Jual Oram	Tribal Affairs
Mr. Giriraj Singh	Textiles
	Railways
Mr. Ashwini Vaishnaw	Information and Broadcasting
	Electronics and Information Technology
Mr. Jyotiraditya M Scindia	Communications
	Development of North Eastern Region
Mr. Bhupender Yadav	Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat	Culture
	Tourism
Ms. Annpurna Devi	Women and Child Development
Mr. Kiren Rijiju	Parliamentary Affairs
	Minority Affairs
Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri	Petroleum and Natural Gas
Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya	Labour and Employment
	Youth Affairs and Sports
Mr. G. Kishan Reddy	Coal
	Mines

Mr. Chirag Paswan	Food Processing Industries
Mr. C R Patil	Jal Shakti

Source: Portfolios of the Union Council of Ministers, PMINDIA; PRS.

Table 4: Ministers of State (Independent Charge)

Name	Portfolio
Mr. Rao Inderjit Singh	Statistics and Programme Implementation
	Planning
	Culture
Dr. Jitendra Singh	Science and Technology
	Earth Sciences
	Prime Minister's Office
	Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
	Atomic Energy
Mr. Arjun Ram Meghwal	Space
	Law and Justice
Mr. Jadhav Prataprao Ganpatrao	Parliamentary Affairs
	Ayush
Mr. Jayant Chaudhary	Health and Family Welfare
	Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
	Education

Source: Portfolios of the Union Council of Ministers, PMINDIA; PRS.

Table 5: Ministers of State

Name	Portfolio
Mr. Jitin Prasada	Commerce and Industry
	Electronics and Information Technology
Mr. Shripad Yesso Naik	Power
	New and Renewable Energy
Mr. Pankaj Chaudhary	Finance
Mr. Krishan Pal	Cooperation
Mr. Ramdas Athawale	Social Justice and Empowerment
Mr. Ram Nath Thakur	Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
Mr. Nityanand Rai	Home Affairs
Ms. Anupriya Patel	Health and Family Welfare
	Chemicals and Fertilizers
Mr. V Somanna	Jal Shakti
	Railways

Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani	Rural Development
	Communications
Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel	Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
	Panchayati Raj
Ms. Shobha Karandlaje	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
	Labour and Employment
Mr. Kirtivardhan Singh	External Affairs
	Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Mr. B. L. Verma	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
	Social Justice and Empowerment
Mr. Shantanu Thakur	Ports, Shipping and Waterways
Mr. Suresh Gopi	Petroleum and Natural Gas
	Tourism
Dr. L. Murugan	Information and Broadcasting
	Parliamentary Affairs
Mr. Ajay Tamta	Road Transport and Highways
Mr. Bandi Sanjay Kumar	Home Affairs
Mr. Kamlesh Paswan	Rural Development
Mr. Bhagirath Choudhary	Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
Mr. Satish Chandra Dubey	Coal
	Mines
Mr. Sanjay Seth	Defence
Mr. Ravneet Singh	Food Processing Industries
	Railways
Mr. Durgadas Uikey	Tribal Affairs
Ms. Raksha Nikhil Khadse	Youth Affairs and Sports
Mr. Sukanta Majumdar	Education
	Development of North Eastern Region
Ms. Savitri Thakur	Women and Child Development
Mr. Tokhan Sahu	Housing and Urban Affairs
Mr. Raj Bhushan Choudhary	Jal Shakti
	Heavy Industries

Mr. Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma	Steel
Mr. Harsh Malhotra	Corporate Affairs Road Transport and Highways
Ms. Nimuben Jayantibhai Bambhaniya	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Mr. Murlidhar Mohol	Cooperation Civil Aviation

Mr. George Kurian	Minority Affairs Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Mr. Pabitra Margherita	External Affairs Textiles

Source: Portfolios of the Union Council of Ministers,
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