



 NTPC has an ambitious plan for leading the country's energy transition. The key pillar is to create 60 GW of renewable energy portfolio by 2032. Out of this, 5 GW is earmarked for green hydrogen production. **Gurdeep Singh**, CMD, in an interview with FE, shares the company's plan across segments. Excerpts:

 **GURDEEP SINGH**

'On track to achieve **our laid-out plans**'

Can the rise in the cost of finance impede NTPC's plan of having a 130 GW production capacity by 2032? Is interest cost affecting near-term capex targets?

NTPC is well on track to achieve 130-plus GW capacity by 2032 and there is no impact of the cost of finance on our capacity addition programme. Further, we are consistently overachieving our capex targets and we are quite hopeful of continuing a similar trend.

How do you plan to increase coal production from your captive mines? Will coal imports have to rise to cater to rising demand?

At present, four of our captive mines are operating and one more mine is expected to start operations in the next fiscal. We are continuously enhancing production from our operational mines. In fact, in the current fiscal, till February, we have produced 20 MMT of coal, which is 60% higher than the previous year. For FY24, we have kept a target of 31 MMT and are focused on improving further. We are putting concerted efforts to meet the grid requirement.

How does NTPC plan to avoid the repetition of the coal shortage scenario that was witnessed in the summer months of 2022?

As indicated above, we are taking all the required steps for augmenting additional coal supplies to meet the demand apart from supplies from CIL and SCCL. With the concentrated efforts, we are hopeful of keeping our generators on the bar to meet the grid requirements.

NTPC is actively pursuing the green hydrogen portfolio. Could you share your plans on futuristic energy sources?

NTPC has an ambitious plan for leading India's energy transition. The key pillar is to create 60 GW of RE portfolio by 2032. Out of this, 5 GW is earmarked for green hydrogen production. However, this would be reviewed in a couple of years and scaled up as per the requirement.

Two pilots for green hydrogen are vigorously being undertaken; the first one is blending natural gas with hydrogen at NTPC's Kawas gas station (Gujarat), which is already commissioned and the second one is a green hydrogen-based mobility project at Leh, where work is in progress. We are also working on another mobility project in Delhi, a green hydrogen-based microgrid and green methanol



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pilot with green hydrogen and CCU. We are also working on pilots on green chemicals and commercial projects in green ammonia. NTPC has plans to set up a green hydrogen hub near the port in Visakhapatnam.

Will the company's renewable monetisation target be achieved according to the plan? Is it possible to share some details?

The government of India has given a target of ₹15,000 crore under the National Monetisation Pipeline to NTPC spread over four years from FY22 to FY25. The scheme for monetisation of 15 renewable energy assets through consolidation of the identified RE

assets under a new special purpose vehicle, NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL) has been completed. The exercise for bringing in strategic or private equity financial investors in NGEL is expected to be completed by March 31, 2023.

NTPC has plans to enter the nuclear power generation sector. Can you throw some light on that?

NTPC joined hands with NPCIL for the development of nuclear power plants. NPCIL's technical capability and NTPC's project management and financial strengths have great potential to change the sector. We are working on developing six units of 700 MW PHWR reactors in JV mode with NPCIL. At present, land acquisition and other preparatory works are in progress.

How does one look at renewable integration in the future and what role would coal based plants play? How much more new coal capacity is under consideration?

With the increase of renewable share in the grid, there will be issues with their integration in the grid till there is sufficient storage capacity, pumped hydro, hydro and gas. With the growing integration of renewables and a changing energy mix, when we will add renewable capacity as targeted, a new role for coal-based generation would evolve in the Indian power sector. While these plants were the main source of stable baseload power, they are expected to play a supportive role to balance the intermittent generation by renewable energy sources.

Considering the changes happening across the globe, while giving utmost thrust to adding renewable capacity, a need has been felt to augment coal-based capacity as it will provide resilience to the sector.