

Huge need for reforms in power sector: UP CM Yogi Adityanath

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LUCKNOW: Amid looming power crisis in view of the blistering heatwave and shortage of coal, CM Yogi Adityanath on Monday underscored the "huge need" for reforms in the energy sector and planning for future needs.

Presiding over a review meeting, the CM pitched for comprehensive changes at every level in the power department. He asked energy minister AK Sharma to thoroughly review the functioning of the department.

Yogi highlighted the urgency vis-a-vis power situation in the state days after he met the Union ministers for coal and railways urging for support to meet the increasing demand for power.

Already, the state has recorded a demand of 22500 Mw, one of the

highest in recent times. Technical glitches in power plants made the matters worse. According to UPPCL officials, it was only after the state managed to get the additional 2000 Mw power that the situation somewhat came under control.

Yogi stressed on ensuring uninterrupted power supply in all 75 districts as per roster and maintained that the Centre was lending "all possible help" to mitigate the crisis.

He said while rakes of coal were being rolled in by trains, options regarding transportation of coal from mines to power plants through roads should also be explored. Yogi also underlined the need for timely issuance of bills and their payment.

"Overbilling, false billing or late billing causes inconvenience to consumers. The energy department will have to make a concrete action plan to increase billing and collection efficiency. Special efforts are needed in rural areas," Yogi said.

The CM also advised for introduction of a one-time settlement (OTS) scheme for payment of electricity bill arrears. He said the scheme should be planned in such a manner that people get exemption from interest on arrears and there should be facility of payment in instalments.

OTS was introduced before the announcement of the model code of conduct for UP assembly elections and was extended amid average response from the people.