

# Suzlon chief takes over as head of wind turbine makers' body

**MRAMESH**

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Tulsi Tanti, Chairman and Managing Director of wind turbine manufacturing company Suzlon Energy, is the new President of the Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers' Association. Tanti took over from Sarvesh Kumar, Chief Operating Officer of RRB Ltd, another wind turbine company, at a meeting of the association that was held here recently.

Tanti takes over the reins of the industry's biggest association at a time when the wind sector is undergoing a major transition. Until early 2017, the price at which wind energy companies sold electricity to utilities used to be fixed by the respective state electricity regulator. But in February last year, the country's first wind auctions took place. Energy companies who agreed to sell for less price got to sign long term power purchase agreements.

Now, while there is no ban on utilities buying power at tariffs fixed by the regulator, none is doing so, because prices determined by competition are cheaper than the fixed prices. The cheapest tariff arrived at so far through



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auctions is ₹2.43 a kWhr; comparatively, the cheapest fixed tariff is ₹3.75 a kWhr paid by Karnataka. As utilities are neither willing to sign agreements on fixed tariffs nor are ready to come out with tenders inviting price quotes, fresh wind power capacity in the country in 2017-18 is expected to be not more than 1,500 MW, in sharp contrast with 5,400 MW in 2016-17.

However, a marked pick-up in installations is expected to happen in 2018-19, as the capacities already auctioned would be set up during that year, and more auctions will take place. Industry sources expect fresh capacity additions of 3,000 MW during the year.