

# Singapore Power booster for RPG

## CESC Looks At Overhauling Distribution Network

Our Bureau  
KOLKATA

### RPG TO INK DEAL WITH SINGAPORE CO

The RPG Group is set to team up with Singapore Power, one of the biggest energy utilities in Apac with assets exceeding \$29-billion, for an overhaul of the flagship CESC's distribution network. This will be its first big-ticket technology alliance with a global power utility to give a new lease of life to its electricity distribution system. **P 10**

**T**HE Rs 13,500-crore RPG Group is poised to team up with Singapore Power, one of the biggest energy utilities in the Asia-Pacific with assets exceeding \$29-billion, for a massive overhaul of the flagship CESC's 110-year-old distribution network.

"A multi-year master technology sharing agreement will be inked between CESC Ltd and Singapore Power on November 10 at the company's Victoria House headquarters in Kolkata. Key members of Singapore Power's leadership team will be in town," top RPG circles told ET.

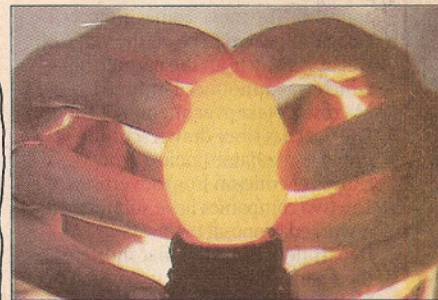
However, when ET contacted, neither RPG Group vice-chairman Sanjiv Goenka nor CESC managing director Sumantra Banerjee were willing to comment on the technology alliance with Singapore Power, which runs electricity and gas transmission-cum-distribution businesses.

This will be CESC's first big-ticket technology alliance with a globally reputed power utility to give a new lease of life to its ageing electricity distribution system. It comes ahead of a substantial ramp up in RPG's power utility's generation capacity, courtesy its upcoming green-field units at Budge Budge (250 mw) and Haldia-Stage I (600 mw). The network upgrade also comes ahead of the company's plans to take big strides into Jharkhand and Orissa's power turf.

Nobody at RPG divulged the scale of the upcoming enhancement exercise of CESC's distribution network that ensures power supply across its 567 square km licensed area.

Top circles familiar with the matter, however, said: "Singapore Power will do a detailed assessment of CESC's distribution network and share some of its globally best practices to ensure quality, uninterrupted power to the company's 22 lakh consumers and also minimise the fault redressal duration."

For instance, Singapore Power manages to fix



any electricity network fault in a maximum 30 minutes. While in Japan, it is as low as 3 minutes since the entire operation is remote-controlled. Power distribution utilities in India take a minimum 3 hours to fix problems at the consumer's end. The partnership will explore ways to make customer redressal more efficient.

Also on the cards is a string of executive exchange programmes between the two companies to ease the introduction of Singapore Power Group's global best practices. Commercially, although Singapore Power is tipped to make a tidy sum as technical consulting fees from the Goenkas.

What is not known at this stage is whether Singapore Power will in future broaden the scope of its relationship with CESC. For instance, nobody is willing to hazard a guess on whether Singapore Power could in future be a strategic investor in the RPG power utility.

Top circles in the group confirmed that several rounds of meetings have transpired between the CESC top-brass and senior officials at Singapore Power and in the Singapore government.

Mr Banerjee, it is learnt, recently led a top-flight team to Singapore that had included the company's ED (commercial and distribution) Dilip Sen, ED (finance) S Talukdar, vice-president (system operations) Bijoy Chakraborty and ED (technical) SS Sinha.

### A BIG LEAP AHEAD

The network upgrade comes ahead of the company's plans to take big strides into Jharkhand & Orissa's power turf

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## KEC International hits upper circuit on new orders

KEC INTERNATIONAL was locked in the 10 per cent upper circuit to close the day at Rs 130.75 after receiving three orders worth Rs 235 crore. The company made the announcement of orders on Monday after market hours. The orders are from Afghanistan's energy and water ministry, Power Grid Corporation of India and the Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board, a total of 672,817 shares (close to its two-week average) changed hands recording a delivery volume of 96 per cent. The stock touched a 52-week high of Rs 922 on November 8.

Share price on BSE in Rs

