

Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu



POWER SECTOR REFORMER | FORMER UNION MINISTER OF POWER | ENERGY POLICY & INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIST

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Former Union Minister of Power and senior policymaker who led landmark structural reforms in India's power sector, laying the foundation for competitive markets, rural electrification, private investment, and sustainable energy growth. Known for combining fiscal discipline, regulatory reform, and long-term infrastructure planning to strengthen energy security and affordability.

MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP – POWER & ENERGY

- Union Minister of Power, Government of India (2000–2002)
- Cabinet-level responsibility for power generation, transmission, distribution reforms, rural electrification, and regulatory restructuring.

KEY POLICY REFORMS & IMPACT

Structural Power Sector Reforms

- Introduced the Electricity Bill, 2001, a landmark reform that:
 - Enabled non-discriminatory open access in transmission
 - Mandated State Electricity Regulatory Commissions to introduce open access in distribution
 - Created the foundation for competition, private participation, and consumer choice
- Played a central role in modernizing India's electricity governance framework, moving away from monopoly-driven systems.

Generation Capacity & Infrastructure Expansion

- Prepared a national action plan to add 100,000 MW of generation capacity to ensure power availability on demand.
- Formulated renovation and modernization plans for:
 - 170 thermal power units
 - 35 hydro units
 - Total upgraded capacity: 14,000 MW
- Focused on life-extension of existing assets to maximize returns on public investment.

Distribution & Financial Reforms

- Designed a six-level intervention strategy for distribution reforms aimed at:
 - Strengthening State Electricity Boards (SEBs)
 - Improving operational efficiency and financial sustainability
- Implemented:
 - Tamper-proof metering
 - Energy accounting systems
 - Decentralized, computerized billing mechanisms
- Laid groundwork for reducing technical and commercial losses across states.

Accelerated Power Development Program (APDP)

- Executed APDP to modernize aging infrastructure and reduce transmission & distribution losses.
- Focused on performance benchmarking and accountability of utilities.

Rural Electrification & Social Equity

- Instrumental in preparing a 7-year National Action Plan for Rural Electrification with the objective of electrifying all villages.
- Enabled credit support via Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to states for:
 - Dalit bastis
 - Scheduled Tribe households
 - Other underserved communities
- Ensured power sector growth aligned with inclusive development goals.

Investment & Private Sector Participation

- Opened the power transmission sector to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through:
 - Joint Ventures
 - Independent Power Transmission Companies
- Amended the Indian Electricity Act, 1998 to enable private sector participation in transmission infrastructure.
- Encouraged long-term capital inflows into grid expansion and modernization.

Sustainable & Environment-Linked Power Development

- Set up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to:
 - Undertake afforestation
 - Implement environmental safeguards linked to power projects
 - Promoted utilization of fly ash products in public infrastructure to reduce environmental impact.
- Integrated environmental compliance with infrastructure growth rather than treating it as a post-clearance formality.

POST-MINISTERIAL ENERGY LEADERSHIP & ADVISORY ROLES

- Chairman, Asia Energy Foundation
- Co-founder, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation
- Founding Chairman, Council for Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)
- Senior Advisor, UNIDO (Energy & Industrial Development)
- Member, Global Advisory Councils on energy transition, climate policy, and infrastructure finance

GLOBAL & INTER-MINISTERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Led international energy dialogues and bilateral engagements on power sector reform.
- Represented India in global forums on energy security, clean energy transition, and infrastructure financing.
- Worked at the intersection of energy policy, climate action, and economic growth, ensuring coherence across ministries.