

Printed from

**PuneMirror**

## Switch from Thursday maintenance to Sundays: Chakan industries to MSEDCL

By [Anurag Bende](#), Pune Mirror | Oct 18, 2019, 06.00 AM IST



*Industries further said they spend 30 per cent extra over their monthly power bills on average to fund for the diesel that runs their generators; PIC: SACHIN PHULSUNDAR*

**FCI says they are spending Rs 2,000 cr extra per year just to run diesel generators on a working day; MSEDCL is also losing Rs 500 cr in revenue annually**

It has been decades now that Thursday of every week is traditionally observed as staggering day for maintenance work by Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (MSEDCL) in Pune — but this practice has for long been affecting the industrial belt of Chakan, prompting its representatives to now rally for change. In fact, according to them, shifting this day to Sunday each week would benefit not just the industries by saving money on running generators, but would also help MSEDCL get revenue that it loses by not earning from industries each Thursday.

According to these industries, power cuts on Thursdays cost them a neat Rs 2,000 crore per year collectively, spent on diesel to run their generator systems. Moreover, the power utility could also be earning Rs 500 crore extra annually if it switched to a non-working day for maintenance work.

On Wednesday, Federation of Chakan Industries (FCI) representatives held a meeting with top MSEDCL officials, submitting a proposal for the shift of staggering day from Thursday to Sunday specifically for the industrial area, saying most companies in Chakan are shut on the last day of the week.

Speaking to Mirror, FCI secretary Dilip Batwal said, “MSEDCL observes staggering day on Thursday, where they cut power for maintenance purposes. But most of our companies work on that day of the week and due to power cuts, are forced to rely on generators.”

In a report presented by FCI, they have meticulously calculated how much companies spend on diesel to run the said generators. “Per month, MSEDCL gets revenue of Rs 200 crore from electricity consumption by industries in Chakan. However, due to power cuts, we calculated that companies on average spend nearly ten times that amount annually — around Rs 2,000 crore — only on diesel to keep generators running, because they cannot stop manufacturing on a working day,” added Batwal.

Industry representatives stated that almost every company spends an average of 30 per cent extra over its usual electricity bill on a monthly basis for the above reasons. Arun Auti, manufacturing head of the Minda Industries sensor division, elaborated to Mirror, “On staggering day, power cuts last for six to seven hours, for which time generators are deployed. A 500 KVA generator requires 125 litres of diesel to run for one hour. We spend nearly Rs 4-5 lakh only on diesel, which is over and above our monthly power bill of Rs 15 lakh. So, almost every company spends nearly 30 per cent extra on diesel.”

At the same time, FCI members mooted a proposal for MSEDCL officials to shift staggering day to Sunday, when most companies shut for their weekly holiday. “Ironically, on the day most companies are not working, there is constant power and no consumption! Due to this, even MSEDCL loses some Rs 500 crore of revenue per year. Therefore, we have asked officials to shift maintenance day as a win-win situation for both us industries and MSEDCL,” Batwal summed up.

When Mirror contacted MSEDCL Pune zone chief engineer Sachin Talewar, he said, “For Pune, the day to carry out maintenance work has been decided as Thursday for decades now. However, I have already instructed staff that there is no need to observe staggering day every Thursday. We are trying to restrict staggering days to only two days of the month.”

He added, “As far as a shift to Sunday is concerned, we have no problem if it suits the industries. However, there has to be unanimity among them. It cannot happen that some industries find it convenient on Sunday while some want to be shut on Thursday. In such a scenario, we will not be able to fulfil their demands.”

We have no problem but there has to be unanimity among industries. It cannot happen that some find it convenient to face power cuts on Sunday while some want to be remain on Thursday

— Sachin Talewar, chief engineer, MSEDCL Pune zone