

LADAKH HILL COUNCIL WANTS SHARE OF SOLAR REVENUE**JULY 28, 2014**[THE HINDU BUSINESS LINE](#)

Ladakh Hill Council wants share of solar revenue

CHENNAI, JULY 28: The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council wants a “revenue share” if solar power plants are put up in the region.

“The land is vested with the Council,” asserts Rigzin Spalbar, Chairman and the Chief Executive Councillor of the body.

The hills may look barren but they are rich in pastures where the Pashmina goats graze; and there is wild life, Spalbar, a Congress leader, told *BusinessLine*.

The Council has said it will not allow the lands to be taken away for solar projects without the people getting something in return.

The State Government seems to have a different view. An official, who is not involved in the decision making, said that the Government feels that Council has no unfettered rights over the lands.

Ladakh is one of the four places where the Indian government wants to have ultra mega solar projects set up.

Ladakh is a great place for tapping solar energy as it has ample sunshine, thin air and cold temperature.

“Contrary to the general impression, solar panels love cool climates; heat tires them out,” Arul Shanmugasundram, Chief Technology Officer of Tata Power Solar, said.

Yet, it will be an uphill task to set up a solar project there.

“The challenge,” says Bikesh Ogra, President of Sterling and Wilson, India’s largest solar plant construction company, “would be to rein in the cost of installation – the region would call for specially rated electrical equipment and more cable lengths.

Second, transmission lines have to be set up. However, building transmission infrastructure is a long-term deal, and until it comes up no financier would give money for a solar project.

If a determined government creates an ultra mega solar project, the electricity is not likely to be cheap; Spalbar’s demand could only make it costlier.