

Press Release

Solar, Rays of Hope for India? DEC 14 2009

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For Immediate Release



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With great solar potential, India's solar mission allows the country to make a long-term commitment to controlling carbon emissions, contributing to a greener world, while sustaining economic growth.

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (December 14, 2009) - With high rates of economic growth and over 15% of the world's population, India has become a significant consumer of energy resources. However, the South Asian country lacks sufficient domestic energy resources and India imports much of the energy it needs. To meet its energy requirements, India has announced a vastly ambitious plan to tap the power of the sun to generate clean, renewable electricity.

Currently, India generates virtually no solar energy. India's installed solar capacity is estimated to be approximately 3 MW. The Indian government's recently announced solar initiative, called the 'National Solar Mission', envisions the country generating 20 GW of energy from sunlight by 2020. According to the International Energy Agency, global solar capacity is predicted to be just 27 GW by 2020. Therefore, India expects to produce almost three-quarters of the world's solar energy in approximately 10 years.

Ambitious Solar Plan

Don Christensen, CEO of Green Energy International, a renewable energy project developer based in the United States, has told InterPV magazine, the leading resource for global solar professionals, that India's 'National Solar Mission' would form the centerpiece of India's National Climate Change Strategy and would cost an estimated US\$20 billion to implement. With worldwide installed solar generation capacity currently totaling just 16.5 GW, the plan has attracted considerable attention for its scale and ambition, added Christensen.

The 'National Solar Mission' has a "near-term" target of 100 MW and is a three-phased plan that hopes to generate 1-1.5 GW of solar power by 2012, 6-7 GW by 2017 and the remainder by 2020. Initially, for the 2009-2012 phase, the plan indicates rapid solar deployment may be achievable through the installation of solar technology on approximately three million square meters of rooftop space on 2,000-3,000 government buildings. Long-term goals of 100 GW by 2030 and 200 GW by 2050 have been established by India's government.

Once implemented, India's 'National Solar Mission' will ensure large-scale deployment of solar generated power for both grid-connected as well as distributed and decentralized off-grid provisions of commercial energy services. Solar-powered equipment and applications will be mandatory for hospitals, hotels and government buildings. Villages and small towns will be encouraged to participate with micro financing. India will promote solar heating systems and will use 40-50 million square meters of area to install solar collectors in domestic, industrial and commercial sectors. The country's solar mission also outlines a system of paying households for any surplus power generated by solar panels that is fed back into the national grid. The government would also like to provide 3 million households with access to solar lighting by 2012 and install an estimated 20 million solar lights in homes by 2020. The 20 million solar lights could save 1 billion liters of kerosene per year. Solar power could also replace the 20-25 GW of electricity currently generated from diesel that is used to meet peak powers. India's government believes its 'National Solar Mission', in total, could cut about 42 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

The Road Forward

Christensen emphasized that foreign collaboration would be crucial to the success of India's 'National Solar Mission' since financial constraints are one of the main problems that India is facing in achieving its established solar energy goals. Currently, India's domestic solar energy companies do not receive any substantial incentives. There is low demand for solar energy systems within India, which is why the country's domestic solar companies derive the majority of their revenues from exports.

In order to find out the latest information on trends and policies in the PV industry, it is more important than ever for solar professionals to watch the market closely and have access to best-practice ideas and technology. **EXPO Solar** is the best single-source opportunity to have this access and commensurate networking. Across three days, **February 3-5, 2010**, over 600 market leading companies will be on hand at **EXPO Solar 2010** to discuss your specific requirements, and offer tailored support and advice.

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Source: EXPO Solar

Contact: Ms. Jeanny Lim
PR & Communications Executive
EXPO Solar
Tel: +82-2-719-6931
E-mail: swied@infothe.com

Mr. Jimmy Cheong
International Marketing Executive, Europe & Middle East
Tel: +82-2-718-6931
E-mail: interexpo@infothe.com

Mr. Sydney Suk
International Marketing Manager, North America & Asia
Tel: +82-2-718-6931
E-mail: interexpo@infothe.com

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