

PAVAGAD SOLAR PARK MAY BE READY IN 20 MONTHS.

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Pavagad solar park may be ready in 20 months.

The State government's proposed solar park at Pavagad in Tumakuru district will begin to take shape soon. Tenders for the same will be called in the first week of September. The park itself is likely to materialise over the next 20 months, according to G V Balam, Managing Director of Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd (KREDL).

Balam was addressing the gathering at the annual power conference of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) recently. The solar park is being built over an area of 15,000 acres.

◆We are at an advanced stage of implementing this park. The tenders for infrastructure of the park will be called in September, ◆ Balam said.

The solar park is being set up to generate around 2,000 MW of power. Of this, the National Thermal Power Corporation Limited is expected to set up an unit for 600 MW and Solar Energy Corporation of India is expected to contribute 500 MW through its unit. KREDL itself would be generating 500 MW.

◆For the rest, tenders will be called eventually, ◆ Balam told reporters on the sidelines of the conference. Though the State has a huge potential to generate solar power, acquiring land is difficult. This is because, people in the State do not own huge tracts of land required for setting up the units. The land required for developing a solar park would, hence, often have to be acquired from different parties, Balam said. The State is said to have a potential of generating at least 20,000 MW of solar power.

The State's renewable energy policies are good. However, one needs to ensure quality, said Ashish Khanna, chief executive officer, Tata Power Solar Limited. He said that the country had a long way to go to meet its target in solar energy. While the aim is for 100 gigawatts (GW) of solar energy by 2022, currently what the country is able to produce is 3 GW (1 GW=1,000 MW). China also has an aim to generate 100 GW by 2020. But they are already able to generate 28 GW, Khanna said.

On the occasion, a study titled ◆Solar Power in Karnataka - Charting the path for a bright future◆ was released by Deloitte. It highlights that not even one per cent of the total solar energy potential has been harvested in the country. Also, even after 946 MW of solar capacity that is currently under development in the State, it would have used only about 4.2 per cent of its solar power potential.

The conference saw participation of experts and discussions on a range of topics including issues pertaining to rooftop solar units, emerging technologies in solar power and innovative financing models in the sector. Vedamoorthy Namasivayam, senior director of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Private Limited, was among those present.