

'INDIA CAN BECOME ASIA'S NERVE CENTRE FOR GREEN POWER'

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[THE HINDU BUSINESS LINE](#)

'India can become Asia's nerve centre for green power'

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JOJI GEORGE, Managing Director of UBM India

The eighth edition of the Renewable Energy India Expo 2014, also known as REI, opened on Wednesday. A key architect of the event, Joji George, Managing Director of UBM India, told BusinessLine in a telephonic conversation that the event would bring together decision makers, technical experts and professionals from leading companies involved in renewable energy generation, transmission and distribution within India and around the world. Edited excerpts:

How does REI Expo 2014 become the most significant trade show in the renewable energy space?

Today, promotion of renewable energy sources is an integral component of the country's strategy for sustainable development. With the landscape and the needs of a developing country like ours, India is very well positioned to become Asia's nerve centre for the renewable energy industry, with special focus on manufacturing and developing its road map to sustainability and natural conservation.

Renewable Energy India (REI) is the only Indian platform for industry stakeholders to exchange ideas and information about the current and futuristic trends and expectations of this sector. It also acts as a window for the industry to access innovations, product launches and an opportunity to absorb clarity on the Indian regulatory framework for mainstreaming and upscaling of renewable energy.

This year would be the eighth edition of the Expo. What would be the major highlights this year?

This year will witness multiple business opportunities existing within the solar, wind, bio-energy, smart grids, geothermal and energy efficiency sectors. The event will showcase pavilions from Japan, the US, Canada, Taiwan, Italy, Catalonia and Belgium, besides a European pavilion. Another highlight is the 'start-up' pavilion, which will encourage budding entrepreneurs with limited budgets to build their business portfolios.

The Planning Commission of India is hosting a session 'India Energy Security Scenario 2047'. Other highlights are multiple conferences and sessions deliberating upon the challenges and solutions that exist in the renewable energy sector in greater detail.

Apart from UBM, which are the other major stakeholders that make such a show a reality?

UBM India enjoys strong industry support for REI 2014, especially from leading associations like the National Solar Energy Federation of India, Solar Energy Association of Gujarat, Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy, India Smart Grid Forum, UK Trade and Investment, and Bloomberg New Energy Finance as strategic partner.

Who would be your key exhibitors? What significance do they bring to the event, in terms of technology, innovation, projects, etc?

The exhibitors are primarily from solar energy, wind energy, bio energy and energy efficiency, who, through their innovations and product launches, will showcase cutting edge technologies, which in turn help highlight the needs and shape the trends of the industry.

The key industry players participating in this event include Refex Energy, Borg Energy, Vikram Solar, Premier Solar, Tata Power Solar, Chemtrols Solar, GE India and Centrotherm.

How would REI Expo 2014 contribute to encouraging the SME sector in the renewable energy space?

We at UBM India is trying to promote the SME sector at REI 2014 with a special 'Start-up' Pavilion, which encourages a budding entrepreneur with a limited budget, to build his business portfolio.

This initiative is one of the key highlights of this year's edition.

What about Government participation?

The event has always received immense support from MNRE and SECI. The senior officials have been guiding the attendees through their knowledge base. This year we have an esteemed gathering of State Energy Secretaries / nodal agency heads deliberating upon scaling up solar programs at the State level, besides panel discussion with policy makers, state secretaries, regulators and Government authorities.

In the Union Budget 2014, the Government has allocated ₹1,000 crore for renewable energy. To what extent could REI Expo 2014 contribute to strengthen this initiative of the Government?

The budget allocation makes for a realistically tangible setting for the renewable industry to hope and expect considerable momentum in the sector.

And now the onus lies on the industry to step up innovations and leverage on the multiple investment opportunities being created by the Indian Government.

This is where a well-coordinated and close cooperation across stakeholders will determine a coherent and outcome led policy and vision. And the industry associations have to align and chart their roadmap accordingly.