

## Gurgaon firm plans India's first 100MW solar thermal plant

Gurgaon-based renewable energy company Acme Energy Solutions plans to set up India's first 100MW solar thermal power plant, the company said here Friday.

'We have plans to set up a 100MW solar thermal project either in Rajasthan or Gujarat in about a year,' N. Venkataraman, executive vice president of the company's energy solutions division, told IANS on the sidelines of the 14th Technology Summit and Technology Platform.

Venkataraman said the cost of power generated by his company would be among the lowest for solar thermal plants. 'The cost of electricity would be around Rs.8 per unit, which is among the lowest in the world for such kinds of projects.'

Acme had in August announced it would set up a 10MW solar thermal power plant in Nagpur, the biggest in Asia so far.

Maintaining that there was a need to shift from conventional sources of energy to renewable sources, Venkataraman said: 'Electricity from coal currently contributes only about 5,000MW, while the country is short by 20,000MW.'

The amount of solar energy that can be produced in the country is around 5 trillion kilowatt hour, according to the ministry of new and renewable energy sources.

In solar thermal energy plants, sunlight is reflected off concave mirrors or lenses to heat oil in metal tubes, which is then used to generate electricity; the usual solar power plants convert solar energy directly into electricity.

Such plants can be put up only in arid areas or deserts where a large area is covered with mirrors or lenses to access a significant amount of sunlight.

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