

Net metering will attract solar energy growth in private sector - Shaaf Mehboob

Exclusive Interview of CEO, Adaptive Technologies

■ By Mustafa Tahir

EU: Please inform about yourself, your qualification, experience and attachment with Renewable Energy Sector?

Shaaf Mehboob: My undergraduate degree was in economics followed by a brief stint in Investment Banking before proceeding to pursue an MBA at Imperial College, London. My final year project during my studies pertained to Quantum photovoltaics. I engaged heavily with the physics department of the college that had worked on the R&D of some proprietary technologies. My interest in renewable brought me back to Pakistan and I set up my own solar energy company (Adaptive Technologies (Pvt) Ltd). We did our first PV project in 2009 and its been an uphill ride ever since.

EU: What's your decision making process to run your business?

SM: I use two decision making processes in business. For strategic business decisions requiring a holistic approach I mostly end up following Michael Porter's five forces that examine competitive rivalry, supplier power, buyer power, threat of substitution and threat of new entry. For routine and management business decisions I follow the five step decision making process that involves goal identification, weighing out options to fulfill that goal, weighing out the consequences of that decision, making the decision and finally evaluating it. I ensure that Managers across the company are able to follow the same guidelines both individually and in teams.

EU: Would you like to share your current and future projects? and what is the future of the green energy in Pakistan?

SM: Solar is still a potentially major energy source poised for growth in Pakistan offering one of the lowest LCOE's (levelized cost of electricity) both for private use and at a utility scale. From a private sector perspective, roof top and ground mounted installations will continue to gain traction due to net metering, cheap financing dedicatedly available for renewable energy projects and high electricity cost. Furthermore, many export oriented sectors have green energy requirements from their buyers which will continue to fuel growth for solar in this space. As for the utility scale projects, we have recently seen nertec quetta and zorlu receiving generation licenses for a 50 MW and 100 MW project at the beginning of the year and more recently Artistic group and Siddiqsons getting approvals for licenses for 50 MW solar power projects. The main issue with Solar is that of the base load but I think with the reduction in prices of storage along the way this can be improved both through single point or distributed generation.

EU: What is your suggestion to improve ENERGY SECTOR of Pakistan? How we can convert all



Government should force DISCO's to improve losses, induct cleaner and cheaper energy into their transmission networks and also lead to a smart grid setup going forward. As for the micro perspective it is imperative that in coming years cheap financing be made available to the masses in Pakistan, these views were given in an interview to the Energy Update by the CEO of Adaptive Technologies. He says that

conventional means to clean energy?

SM: Again if we split this into macro and micro perspectives then at a macro level we need to seriously look at privatization and de-centralization of the DISCO's and move towards an energy exchange mechanism. This will improve efficiency and competitiveness and force DISCO's to improve losses, induct cleaner and cheaper energy into their transmission networks and also lead to a Smart grid setup going forward. As for the micro perspective it is imperative that in coming years cheap financing be made available to the masses. Presently, with cheap financing in place, solar is a no brainer offering immediate ROI and savings offsetting the capex and markup repayments. At the end of a 5 -10 year tenor the plant is transferred to the owner who still has 10-15 more years left to reap the benefits of the electricity. ■