

# Despite issuance of SRO 604, no check on import of substandard solar equipment into Pakistani market - Saleem Diwan

*Exclusive interview of Chairman, Diwan International*

**D**espite the issuance of SRO 604 by the government, there has been no check on the import of solar equipment of substandard quality into Pakistan as the practice has been causing serious setbacks to the consumers and companies dealing in top quality solar products", this was stated by the Chairman of Diwan International, M Saleem Diwan, stated this during a recent interview with Energy Update. Following are the important excerpts of his interview for our readers:

■ By Mustafa Tahir

**Energy Update: Please the details of your company's profile?**

**Saleem Diwan:** We are a private limited company. We have been importing articles related to different sectors like we used to import yarn and silk related to the textile industry. Likewise, we have also been doing construction work as we have Diwan Builders for the purpose. We have constructed a lot of buildings in Karachi. We have also been importing pulses. We have been into the business of power products since 2002 including UPS and batteries while we started dealing in the solar sector since the last two years.

**EU: Are you satisfied with the standard of the solar sector in Pakistan?**

**Diwan:** Equipment and material of substandard quality of the solar sector is being imported into the country unchecked despite issuance of the SRO 604 by the government. The solar equipment of substandard quality is being brought to Pakistan in massive



quantities. In contrast to this, availability of "A" quality equipment in the local solar market is just ten per cent. Apart from these substandard equipment, we are among the top three to four companies dealing in tier-1 brands of solar equipment being imported into Pakistan in terms of brand and quality.

**EU: Is there any other issue concerning Pakistani solar market?**

**Diwan:** The equipment belonging to tier-1 brands is being imported into the country directly from the factories, which are mostly in China as the third parties have been doing such unchecked import. Such equipment directly being brought to the country doesn't carry any quality certification as this practice tarnishes the image of tier-1 brands.

**EU: So what is the actual issue in this regard?**

**Diwan:** The order SRO 604 was primarily issued by the government to allow only import of top quality solar equipment into Pakistan but no action was taken later on to implement this order.



## Exclusive Interview

Equipment of every quality is being brought into Pakistan as even counterfeit products are available in the market. You will find low quality solar equipment whenever you go to any market of Karachi or elsewhere in Sindh. This practice has been causing serious setbacks to the consumers and bona fide companies dealing in top quality solar equipment.

### EU: So what role the government should play in this regard?

**Diwan:** Through your magazine, I would like to request the government to strictly recheck whether the rules and regulations it had earlier created in this regard, are being implemented or not. We are also a part of the Pakistan Solar Association as we will surely lead a campaign in this regard to make the government and consumers realize the importance of superior quality solar equipment.

### EU: In what areas of Pakistan, the solar energy is being mostly installed?

**Diwan:** The solar energy is mostly being installed in the interior of Sindh and Punjab. But mostly solar equipment of questionable quality is being installed there. Even people there are using counterfeit products. Then in the second place, solar is being installed by the industrial consumers. The number of residential consumers relying on solar power is quite less as compared to the industrial consumers using the same renewable technology. The industry has been switching to the usage of solar energy much faster due to the prevailing energy crisis.

### EU: What measures should be adopted to promote usage of solar energy in a city like Karachi?

**Diwan:** Not many efforts have been made to promote solar technology in the country. Only taxes have been withdrawn on the solar equipment. There has not been much publicity to promote solar technology in the country. Despite this background, usage of solar energy in the residential sector has increased in the year 2020. Though, the adoption of solar energy has not been as fast as it should have been. But it is a fact that the big brands of solar energy have started taking interest in Pakistan. Now up to six top brands of solar power have full focus on the Pakistani market. ■

## Government to transform outlook of energy market



Federal Minister for Energy Mr. Omar Ayub Khan met Her Excellency Ms. Lis Rosenholm, Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan in his office today. Mr. Tabish Gauhar, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Power also joined the meeting. During the meeting, the outlook of the emerging market of the energy sector and business opportunities in view of the newly approved Alternative Energy Policy. While acknowledging the lead role of Denmark in clean and green energy at the global level he said that Pakistan too embarked upon tapping the huge indigenous potential of renewable energy.

The Minister said that Pakistan's New Renewable Energy Policy would bring opportunities for investors due to transparent policies of the current government. He said that the government had set ambitious targets to introduce 25 percent renewable energy by 2025, and 30 percent by end of 2030 including 45 percent share of hydel power generation and 10 percent of nuclear energy into the energy mix of the country. While explaining the investment potential in the Power Sector, the Minister said that the Government would induct renewable energy-based power plants through an open and transparent competitive bidding process, which would lower the cost of production of electricity. He also apprised the envoy that the government had prepared the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP) 2047 for competitive market structure, generation, up-gradation of transmission, Smart AMI and modernization of distribution system.

The Minister apprised the Danish Ambassador that with lowering of electricity cost for industries and establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would boost economic activity along with creation of thousands of new jobs in the country. The Danish Ambassador while appreciating the government's commitment to raise the share of renewable clean and green energy, said that the new policy is more transparent as it provides a level playing field for all.

She suggested setting up a joint energy platform to study the market, so that Danish companies would closely follow developments in the field of renewable energy and they could participate in the competitive process of renewable energy projects. ■

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