# “Acme Has A Clear And Defined Focus On Each Activity Of The Project”

***Mr. Shashi Shekhar, Vice Chairman, ACME***

**What are the latest worldwide innovation trends has India been able to keep pace with the same?**

India has limited solar cell manufacturing capacity and they are not following the international benchmark of efficiency. Though we have decent capacity of module manufacturing, the country mostly imports modules for setting up power plants. The current protectionism measure on components of modules has made module manufacturing nor being able to compete with China, Korea, Taiwan etc.

**What are the main challenges domestic solar industries is currently facing and where do you see the future of the Indian PV market?**

India has a great solar potential and had commissioned about 30 GW cumulative capacities so far. India Government is promoting all renewable energy but solar is surging due to its efficiency, scalability and amenability for better forecasting.

Its scalability is determined by the continued reduction in tariff, so as to economically displace variable cost of thermal power. Tariff is dependent on the price of solar panels, GHI, interest rate and taxes & duties. Cost of solar panels is coming down and likely to continue. GHI is natural to a locality and is a given situation. High interest rate with unfavourable lending conditions by public sectors financial institutions, frequently changes of taxes & duties structure, absence of land leasing framework, lack of robust payment security mechanism, are some of the important challenges being faced by the solar power sector. Regional or National level of load dispatch adopting merit order dispatch, will enable Discoms to absorb more cheap RE that will reduce their financial losses. Transmission capacity constraints of ISTS located in high GHI areas are yet another challenge.

Despite the above factors, India has made rapidly added solar power capacity to achieve 100 GW by 2022.

**What pipeline of projects do you currently own, kindly specify the size of the project, its location, tariff, scheme, timeline of completion, its viability**

From a humble beginning of 15MW solar company in 2011 to being India’s largest solar energy company contributing 5500 MWp (DC Capacity) today at 2019. This tremendous growth can be attributed to its technology and costing, innovation to successfully bidding for projects and timely commissioning.

ACME started its solar power journey from first solar project in Gujarat and then expanded to multiple locations. After Gujarat, second and third state to venture was Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, and then successfully we made our presence in all major states like Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka.

Currently we have an operational solar capacity of 2500 MWp and the balance 3000 MWp (DC) is likely to be installed in Rajasthan. ACME growth is also virtue to its hard working and penchant employees who have set industry benchmarks for maintaining quality in their work, and also incorporating best industry standards for safety, environment and security during project execution.

**Has the safeguard duty led to any significant positives for manufacturers?**

Safeguard duty (SGD) was imposed on 30 July 2018 on the imported solar modules. The purported intention was to protect domestic manufacturers. There seems to be no perceptible help to the manufacturers, though it has resulted in an increase in tariff and created an uncertain environment for investment to take place.

**For long term profitability, ensuring good asset quality is very important. What are some key areas which directly impact the life and performance of large scale solar assets?**

We cannot allow slippages in any sphere whether it’s BOM like Module, Inverters, or Projects processes, ACME has a clear and defined focus on each activity of the project. Once specification is defined, it is obligatory for us to honour it and make sure that there is no threat in terms of generation and reliability.

**ACME had performed really well in the tenders last fiscal. As Head Quality, how have you managed to be aggressive in bids while ensuring high quality of solar assets?**

High price does not necessarily mean good quality and vice versa. We believe in working with our partners, finding ways of doing new innovations and then do round the clock monitoring to make sure there are no compromises in implementation.

**Kindly enlighten on “Energy Storage as Game Changer”... Technology & Cost Trends, Incentives and Government Support needed**

Lithium-ion Battery is the new storage technology after Lead Acid that is slated to grow very fast in the coming years. Currently, these are being deployed for various applications such as Home lighting Solutions, Microgrid/ MiniGrid and some of EV’s (Electric Vehicles) applications though the mass application is yet to come.

Lithium-ion battery price is witnessing rapid fall in price and the technological development is further increasing storage capacity without adding to size and weight. It is expected that the cost of Energy Storage System (ESS) will reach a low level by 2025 that would make stored energy cost very competitive. It is expected by 2025 Energy Storage System (ESS) would become a very big market.

After use in Electric Vehicles, Lithium-ion battery can also be used for storage application and power supply. The cost of such power would further get cheaper as cost of battery would have been recovered in running EV’s.

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