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India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

PV & EV will change CV of a country: Mr Vikalp Mundra

IEEMA Executive Committee member and INTELECT 2017 Organising Committee member Mr Vikalp Mundra speaks to **IEEMA Journal** about the USP of solar sector and how extensively it should be used in a country like India. He also shares his views on INTELECT and how it is relevant for Renewable and Non – Utilities sector.



What are your views on Indian Power Generation capacities as many of the states are becoming surplus and facing a problem of excessive generation. Are we reaching towards a power surplus nation ?

The real meaning of this in present context is not 24/7 power to each and every household. But, it ONLY means 24/7 power for them who are ready to pay a fair price for that. I hope you understand the real situation. Our major populations are still living in villages, who have adopted their lifestyle according to availability of power between 2 to 4 hrs a day. If you double the availability to 6 to 8 hours do you think the consumption will be doubled? No, it may increase exponentially and nobody knows the exact figure, but the problem is will it be economically viable? This is the major question which needs to be answered. And I salute our H'ble Prime Minister who is solving this problem from a difficult end. He is trying to put more money in pocket of consumer by various ways, raising aspiration of common man to grow, tackling bull of corruption by its horns and many such initiatives which are slow but resulting into long term solutions.

There is a major thrust of Renewable from govt, how do you see the aggressive 175 GW Target and target of 2022.?

Coming from Solar Industry I could comment on 100 GW target of Solar till 2022. Although the target is very aggressive, but till time this Govt. seems to be going

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in right direction. In my view the target of 2022 is not significant but to reach to 100 GW is more significant, may be couple of years here and there.

What are your views on Mega Ground Mounted and small roof top solar plants ?

In my views Distributed generation is the USP of Solar and it should be used extensively, It would not only save a lot of cost, but more importantly time for a vast country like India.

Presently government is also putting more efforts on growing Rooftop Solar, according to you Off Grid or Grid connected solar will grow fast. What are the Challenges and opportunities?

Off Grid Solar : Presently the Off Grid market in India is by Compulsion, but if this country has to grow, this market should be die down & a new market should be grown which is Off Grid by Choice. This means that a customer is Free to select its power source & time of use of power without falling prey of prevalent monopolistic power supply business.

So challenge is to convert compulsive off Grid towards off grid by Choice, I see it as an opportunity.

On Grid Solar : In a matured energy market everything needs to be connected & Grid connected Solar is must to grow this sector. The question may be Net-metering, FIT or something else. What policies, what technologies etc. The answers will evolve with time.

How power companies are responding to massive growth of solar ?

Some individuals holding important position in Power sector see this growth of PV (solar) as enemy to their business. I would like to give a simple parallel when Mobile telephony came, BSNL also saw them as enemy.

But, NO individual or organisation is big enough to block the “power of choice of the customer”. You love it or hate it you have to deal with it.

There are definitely some challenges to deal with in-firm power, but human being found solutions to every problem.

How do you see future Energy space & relevance of renewable power.

I feel we are on verge of witnessing DISTRUPTION in Energy space, when I say energy it includes auto sector also. According to me following 4 things will speed up this disruption.

1. Distributed PV generation (Solar)
2. Storage Technologies
3. Electric Vehicles (EV)
4. Self Driving Vehicles.

Please allow me to say “PV & EV will change CV of a country’. And to my country India it is Blessing in Disguise we will be benefited by it, same as we got benefitted by Mobile telephony.

How do you see relevance of storage in near to midterm?

According to me, the future relevance of storage in Indian energy space is in :

- To feed Peak Time power
- To flatten the load curve
- To give freedom to customer on selection of energy source.
- Pave way for Electric and Driverless vehicles.

As I understand the cost of Storage is prohibitive, how soon it will reach to a economic level



As of now the cost is high but it is coming down at a very fast pace, it will follow rather beat the falling of price of PV. We had witness the rapid fall in price of PV in last 4 years. Economy of scale and new technologies will bring it down rapidly.

Which technology will going to lead in storage space?

As of now Lithium Ion is looking very promising, but brilliant minds are working in labs to create better technologies with different chemistries. They are using combination with Lithium, Zinc etc. People are working to use Air as a cooling medium, which I see path breaking if succeed. So as of now it is very difficult to say who will win the race, but the race had already been started and One person will surely come as First and then there are Silver and Bronze medals too.

Can you please elaborate INTELECT theme – Redefining Electricity for Smarter Living and how it is relevant for Renewable and Non – Utilities sector & aligned conference with the event?

Intelect is the show for everyone who is a user of Electricity. Our Electricity is becoming Intelligent & Smart. Few things are happening in back end and many things will happen in Future. It will be a good opportunity for a Common Man, Housewife, Architects, Interior Designers, HVAC companies etc. To show what Intelligence they are putting in their products and what is coming ahead.

The aligned conference is for persons who are making it happen so let me put in these words - “Brains will go to conference and Eyeballs will go to Exhibition”. ■