

Paving the way to prosperity - AEDB

A Dialogue with CEO Alternative Energy Development Board Mr Amjad Ali Awan



Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB) is the sole representing agency of the Federal Government that was established in May 2003. With its mission being to facilitate, promote and encourage development of Renewable Energy in Pakistan, it plays a pivotal role to introduce Alternative and Renewable Energies (AREs) at an accelerated rate. Amjad A. Awan is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB). Armed with a vast professional experience of working in diverse leadership positions for the government and private sectors, he has been trained from esteemed academic institutions including Massachusetts Institute of Technology MIT, Harvard University (USA) as well as Universities of Lancaster and Birmingham (UK). A qualified Electrical Engineer and an MBA, he has specialised in energy, infrastructure and institutional development matters and brings to the table a multi-faceted skill base in the technical, management and policy spheres. He was recently kind enough to grant time to The Energy Insight team and discuss AEDB's role in detail. Here is what he had to share:

Q. What is the role of AEDB in Pakistan's energy sector? How is it facilitating renewable energy projects?

A. AEDB is an autonomous government body with the mandate to promote and facilitate utilisation and usage of renewable energy resources in the country. It is also mandated to develop national strategies, policies and plans for utilisation and promotion of alternate and renewable energy. AEDB coordinates and facilitates commercial application of renewable energy technologies along with assisting private investors. It is also

entrusted to act as a forum for evaluation, monitoring and certification of renewable energy projects and products.

Q. Please tell us about your current and future projects as well as the targets that you aspire to achieve.

A. Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB) has been pursuing the development of Alternative and Renewable Energy (ARE) based power projects through private investors under the Renewable Energy (RE) Policy 2006. The current status of the RE power generation projects is as follows:

- Six wind power projects of 308.2 MW cumulative capacity are operational and providing electricity to the grid. Nine wind power projects of 479 MW have achieved financial closing and are under construction.
- One solar project of 100 MW is operational and three solar project of 100 MW capacity each are under construction.
- Four sugar mill based bagasse co-generation projects of 142.1 MW capacity are also operational.
- More than 1300 MW capacity wind and solar projects are in the pipeline.

Q. What are the challenges that you foresee in the energy industry?

A. The energy sector faces several challenges which include development of grid infrastructure for the future power generation projects, up-gradation of the existing transmission and distribution network, demand side management and arranging financing for power projects and grid infrastructure. The increasing demand of natural gas for power generation and domestic sector requirements and depleting reserves is also a crucial challenge.

Q. What strategies have the AEDB devised to cope up with the above challenges facing Pakistan's energy sector?

A. AEDB is promoting optimal use of renewable energy technologies for

power generation near the load centers and distributed generation using RE technologies and both large scale level and small scale / consumer level in order to lessen the load on the national grid and do away with long distance transmission network requirements. The use of RE technologies in the domestic sector for power generation and space / water heating is also being promoted.

Q. How successful is the 26 MW co-generation power plants at JDW Sugar Mills at Rahim Yar Khan and Ghotki?

A. The framework for Power Co-generation (Bagasse/Biomass) 2013 was announced by the government in order to utilise the available potential for power generation from the existing sugar mills. The high pressure boiler based plants set-up by M/s JDW Sugar Mills at the facilities in Rahim Yar Khan and Ghotki are the first two projects developed under this framework and are successfully supplying their spill-over electricity to the national grid.

Q. Enlighten our readers about the potential of the alternative energy sector of Pakistan. How do you see Pakistan's renewable energy sector to look like in the next five years?

A. Pakistan has an immense alternative and renewable energy potential comprising of wind, solar, biomass and hydro resources. The large scale wind and solar power projects can easily contribute up to 10-15% share in the energy mix of the country. Small /mini/micro hydro has a potential of more than 3000 MW, especially in the northern areas. High pressure boiler based bagasse co-generation from sugar mills has the potential of about 1500-2000 MW. Apart from large scale power generation projects, small scale applications such as solar systems in the domestic, industrial and commercial sectors and village electrification using renewable energy technologies will play an important role in demand side power management.

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