Cambodia utility-scale solar

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Phase I of the National Solar Park in Cambodia, with a capacity of 60 MW, recently completed construction and connected to the national grid, reaching a record-low price for utility-scale, grid-connected solar PV in Southeast Asia at $0.039 per kWh. The tender was organized in 2019 and awarded to renewable energy projects developer Prime Road Alternative.

The National Solar Park is built upon the partnership betweenthe Asian Development Bank (ADB)and Electricite du Cambodge (EDC), Cambodia"s national power utility. It is regarded as a convincing example demonstrating the potential to develop cost-effective large-scale solar PV in Cambodia by uniting the public and private sectors.

ADB has contributed to Cambodia"s electrification and clean energy transition for many years. It was an early power in helping Cambodia increase its household electricity access from 17% in 2008 to almost 90% in 2021 while also helping reduce electricity costs nationwide, according to Keo Rottanak, a management member at EDC.

With ADB"s continued support, Cambodia has established the necessary conditions for a cleaner and more sustainable energy transition. The country recently approved the Power Development Masterplan (2021--2040), covering an inspiring goal of increasing solar PV capacity to 1,000 MW by 2030 and 3,000 MW by 2040.

Commenting on the National Solar Park project, Asakawa added: "ADB is pleased to have supported the establishment of the National Solar Park, which is a landmark project not only for Cambodia but for all of Southeast Asia."

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ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa marks the milestone of the partnership between ADB and Electricite du Cambodge with a visit to the National Solar Park on 11 November.

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA (15 November 2022) — A partnership between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Electricite du Cambodge (EDC), Cambodia’s national power utility, to develop a 100-megawatt (MW) National Solar Park reached a milestone with the park’s first 60 MW solar photovoltaic (PV) power generation plant connecting to the national grid. ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa marked the occasion with a visit to the solar park on 11 November, during which he initiated the start of power delivery.

“Solar generation will need to be a key part of Cambodia’s efforts to expand access to affordable power while also transitioning to cleaner energy,” said Mr. Asakawa. “ADB is pleased to have supported the establishment of the National Solar Park, which is a landmark project not only for Cambodia but for all of Southeast Asia.”

The National Solar Park Project has demonstrated the potential to develop large-scale solar PV in a cost-effective manner in Cambodia by mobilizing both public and private resources. Under the project, an international competitive tender was organized to bid out power generation units to the private sector in two phases of 60 MW and 40 MW.

ADB provided end-to-end support for the project. This included delivering transmission interconnection infrastructure, roads, and drainage systems; transaction advisory support and advice to EDC on the private investment component of the project, including the selection of a private sector sponsor; and structuring and mobilization of private sector financing for the construction of the 60 MW power generation plant.

Phase I of the tender, for the first 60 MW, was organized in 2019 and awarded to the firm Prime Road Alternative. The process resulted in a record-low price for utility-scale, grid-connected solar PV in Southeast Asia, at $0.039 per kilowatt-hours (kWh). The remaining 40 MW was tendered in 2020 and awarded to Trina Solar Co. Ltd. This led to another record low procurement price for the region at $0.026 per kWh.

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