Dr. Gundu Sabde,
Chairman and Managing Director, RelyOn Solar Pvt. Ltd.

Energetic India speaks with Dr. Gundu Sabde, CMD, RelyOn Solar to gain more insights into company's recent progress with innovative products such as flexible solar panels and technical advances in 24 hours reliable renewable power.

"One of the most important challenges in the EV segment is to have reliable renewable power for 24 hours at charging stations. We have provided the solution at one of our projects near Dubai that provides 24 hours renewable power to run the factory through the integration of Li-Ion batteries with solar. We can provide similar solutions for EV charging stations across the country".

Dr. Gundu Sabde
CMD RelyOn Solar with over 20 years of experience in solar and related technologies in reputed MNCs managing technology development and implementation. He has completed his bachelors in Chemical engineering from UDCT Mumbai, M.Tech from IIT Bombay and and Ph.D from Clarkson university. Innovation has always been a core to his philosophy and he has spent years in R&D and research with 29 patents in Key Silicon Processes, Thin Film Semiconductors, etc and many technical papers to his name. He has worked previously as Technology Director in Micron Technology a US firm that makes Solar Cell and has contributed tremendously to enhance the efficiency of solar cells and is known as one of the top technologists in the solar world. Later he joined 3M as CTO.

During his career he has successfully managed projects of over USD 100 million. He left his lucrative job to return to India and fulfill his dream of establishing a world class solar company.

Flexible-Panel

After founding RelyOn solar in 2010 within 7 years he has established RelyOn solar as one of the leading companies in the solar industry. His strong innovation and technology focuses has transformed helped RelyOn become a quality brand and a technology company in the market assisting it to differentiate from increasing competition in the market. With his knowledge and experience he is frequently invited to speak at conferences, universities and industry forums.

ENERGETICA INDIA: **We congratulate RelyOn Solar on successful 2000 installations done so far and also include some of the unique installations in the industry such as the flexible solar panels for railway coaches. Please share more details on the flexible solar panels.**

GUNDU SABDE: Yes, in our 2000+ installations across India most of the installations are unique designs as an exclusive application for respective and diverse needs. One among them is a "flexible panel" on railway bogies. Considering the challenges in the installation of conventional solar panels on rooftops of railway bogies we have proposed the solution using flexible panels. Installation of conventional panels is not advisable since there are no structural elements available to support the mounting structure of conventional solar panels. Also, there are standard dimensions for clearance at tunnels, platform sheds, etc due to which such protrusion of solar panels will not be possible. Therefore, we offered the solution using flexible solar panels that has high efficiency and resolves all other technical issues of installation.

ENERGETICA INDIA: **How do you see the solar tracker market in India in FY2018 and RelyOn Solar's share in the growing tracker market?**

GUNDU SABDE: Indian solar industry has seen severe nosedive in tariffs which means lower and lower EPC costs. With the solar market becoming increasingly competitive, developers are continuously looking for a reduction in the levelized cost of power generation. With increasing panel prices as well as GST on solar panels and other components, trackers have become a viable option to reduce levelized cost of electricity. We are seeing a steady increase in ground-mounted solar projects with the tracker and a lot of interest in RelyOn Solar single axis row trackers, both in domestic and international markets, due to its robustness and the improvements it brings in generation. We expect over 20% of utility-scale plants to be built with trackers over the next two years and we hope to achieve a considerable market share in the domestic market.

Relyon - Sola r- Advanced - Battery - Storage

ENERGETICA INDIA: **How do you think the recent imposition of 70% anti-dumping duty on the solar panels (imported from China) will impact the Indian solar industry?**

GUNDU SABDE: There has been exponential growth in solar installations in recent years. Considering the target announcements and various promotional schemes by the government; more entrepreneurs are joining the industry and the growth is expected to continue in near future.

Anti-dumping duty might cause a temporary dip in the growth curve. To sustain such a growing demand, the domestic production of solar panels need to increase. Once the quality of domestic solar panels improves and production has increased to the proportion of demand, growth in this industry is unstoppable. Such developments might pose temporary challenges to the solar industry.

RelyOn Solar through its R&D is consistently working to bring indigenous components to help reduce dependence on imports.

ENERGETICA INDIA: **What role do you think RelyOn Solar can play in the nascent but important Electric Vehicles (EV) market, that has been receiving encouragement from the Indian Government?**

GUNDU SABDE: We have experience of integration of Li-Ion batteries with solar. One of the most important challenges in the EV segment is to have reliable renewable power for 24 hours at charging stations. We have provided the solution at one of our projects near Dubai that provides 24 hours renewable power to run the factory through the integration of Li-Ion batteries with solar. We can provide similar solutions for EV charging stations across the country. This solution is especially very useful for charging stations in remote locations and highways.

ENERGETICA INDIA: **Please tell our readers more about the RelyOn's focus on 24 hours reliable renewable power**

GUNDU SABDE: We are consistently working on 24 hours reliable renewable power for diverse applications. Integration of advanced storage pack using Li-ion batteries is just one element within this. Solar power plants with advanced storage is an ultimate solution for mini-grids, micro-grids, off-grid systems at remote locations, petrol pumps and charging stations on highways and for industrial and commercial installations that can be on 100% renewable power. We have developed exclusive solutions for each of such applications.

ENERGETICA INDIA: **Please share more details on the newly launched single axis row tracker from RelyOn Solar.**

GUNDU SABDE: Our single axis tracker is an advanced tracker technology launched by an Indian player with 120 panels installed on single tracker unit as compared to industry average of 60 panels. The tracker with its robust gearbox and DC motor design for each row allows adaptive backtracking for individual row, thereby increasing the output. Its frictionless bearing and maintenance free gearbox design is meant to provide more than 25 years of life. The lack of connecting links between rows also allows easy cleaning and maintenance of solar panels.

The client is further benefited by an increase in the generation with unique tracker algorithm developed in-house for real-time tracking of the sun. Though tracker technology was seen as a complex system for installation with high maintenance requirements, flexible solutions like our tracker have proven the opposite. The independently powered row design also allows installation on slopes and can accommodate the land contours. With the key components, virtually maintenance free RelyOn Solar trackers can reduce the levelized cost of power generation by 6 to 8 percent for the clients and increases generation by up to 23%.