Swelect uses sun, air to make drinking water
Tastes better than bottled water, firm

N. ANAND
CHENNAI
Swelect Energy Systems Ltd. has unveiled "Source:,” a hydro (solar) panel to provide pure drinking water using sunlight and air, said a top official.

“For this, we have partnered with U.S.-based Zero Mass Water,” said R. Chellapannan, managing director, Swelect Energy Systems Ltd.

Absorbing water vapour
He said water vapour from air is drawn into Source through fans, following, which special materials absorb the water. The vapour is collected as the air flow passes through a condenser, then flows into a reservoir where it is mineralised with calcium and magnesium. Water is pumped through a polishing cartridge before being delivered to a dispenser.

The price per panel will be `2 lakh and it will generate up to five litres of water per day depending on humidity and sunlight, he said.

Safeguard Duty on Solar Panel Imports
Finmin notifies DGTR’s decision; solar tariffs may rise

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Bengaluru: The Ministry of Finance has notified the Director General of Trade Remedies’ decision to impose safeguard duty on solar panels imported from China and Malaysia, which is certain to raise tariffs of future solar projects. More than 90% of panels and modules used in Indian solar projects come from these two countries.

The DGTR had recommended the imposition of 25% safeguard duty on solar panels from these two countries about a fortnight ago for one year, followed by 30% for the next six months and 75% for another six. It did so on the grounds that such imports were causing “serious injury” to domestic solar manufacturers. The duty comes into effect from July 30.

The DGTR had responded to a complaint from the Indian Solar Manufacturers Association (ISMA) last December by conducting its own investigation. The probe concluded that indigenously made solar cells and panels, which constituted just 10% of Indian solar projects in 2014-15, had fallen even further in subsequent years. Solar developers preferred Chinese and Malaysian solar equipment, as it was cheaper than that manufactured in India.

Robust System?
Complaints Spike as Bescom Adds More Channels

Power to People
Complaints in Past Five Years

Bengaluru: With various consumer complaints mechanisms in place, including the month-old Bescom Mitra app, the Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) has received the highest number of complaints per day in the first six months of 2016. Officials attribute this to improved complaint-receiving mechanisms.

Data available with ET reveal that 0.0169 complaints were registered from January to June 2016, which averaged to 0.027 complaints per day. In 2015, the number of complaints for the entire year was 0.0814 with an average of 0.0281 complaints per day.

Interestingly, even in 2016, the year which registered the highest number of complaints from public, the daily average was 0.044 complaints. This year’s numbers could be an absolute high considering that the city is likely to face rain-related issues in the near months.

Expectedly, a large number of complaints are related to failure of supply power, followed by complaints related to billing issues and voltage. Of the 47 lakh complaints registered in the past five years, 63.88 lakh are related to power failure alone. Bescom officials attribute the rise in number of complaints to improved complaint-receiving mechanisms and to multiple complaints registering from one place. “If an area undergoes a power cut, and we get 20 complaints from residents of that area, each complaint is registered and counted separately. Hence the figure does not reflect the actual issue of power,” said Bescom managing director P. Rajendra Chakar.

Bescom has put in place various complaint-receiving mechanisms including a 24x7 helpline, SMS, WhatsApp, email, Facebook and Twitter. The mobile app was added to the list recently. A Bescom official said that launching the app in December last led to heavy rainfall in the next year could be reasons for the enormous number of complaints.

When the app was launched, it was launched to improve complaint mechanisms. But what is missing is complaint profiling and analysis. Such data points out YG Muraleedharan, coordinator of the Karnataka Electricity Governance Network and founder consumer association.

Power Fails Often
Expectedly, a large number of complaints are related to failure of power supply

“The idea behind better a complaint mechanism is to take corrective action and improve the service. Bescom should mandatorily analyse its data of complaints collected over the years, study the pattern, identify problems and take steps for systematic change. The data should be made public,” he urged. Munirul Haque also pointed out that Bescom’s quality of service has deteriorated. "A few years ago, the call centre was efficient. Calls were picked in less than 2 seconds. But now all you hear is a beep. They should strengthen the call centre," he said.

Regarding data analysis, Chakar said that the agency has an analytical wing that studies the data related to complaints and submits reports to the DGTR.

“Shifting of overloaded cables to underground is a step towards providing better quality power. The work that has been taken up has a phased manner, will reduce the rate of powercuts,”
Boost for power generation as Malnad dams near full level

Reservoirs to fill to the brim by August third week

=trueendra P.M.

Shivamogga

The torrential rains in the Malnad region since the onset of monsoon this year have brought cheer to the State power sector. The storage in the three major hydel power generation reservoirs is likely to fill to the brim by third week of August if their catchment areas continue to receive rains.

The present combined live storage of water in Linganamakki reservoir – the source of water for Sharavathi hydel power project; Supa reservoir – source for the Kalinadi hydro electric project; and Mani reservoir that provides water for Varahi hydroelectric project, is at 230 tmcft against the combined maximum live storage capacity of 327 tmcft. In the corresponding day last year, the combined live storage in the three reservoirs had stood at just 133 tmcft.

If the water level in the three reservoirs reach full capacity, it is possible to generate 8,689 million units of power. As the State relies on hydel power projects to maintain peak-hour demand for power as well as load management especially during summer, respite from power outages during summer in 2019 can be expected.

The present combined power generation capacity of the three reservoirs is at 6,192 million units – 3,387 million units from Sharavathi project, 2,169 million units from Kalinadi project, and 636 million units from Varahi project. According to sources in Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd. (KPCL), with the present level of storage in the three reservoirs, it is possible to generate 18.38 million units of power a day, up to June 30 next year.

At the same time, Shivamogga district that forms the catchment area of Linganamakki and Mani reservoirs; and Uttara Kannada district that forms the catchment area of Supa reservoir, have received heavy rains this year in June and July resulting in substantial enhancement in water levels.

Usually, the southwest monsoon enters Malnad region by the first week of June and becomes active only from second or third week of July. But this year, the catchment areas of the reservoirs got good rains in June and July.

The combined live storage in the three reservoirs has increased by 29 tmcft in June and by 126 tmcft in July. These reservoirs have witnessed heavy inflow of water during second and third week of July owing to heavy rain that lashed their catchment areas.

Normally, August is characterised by heavy rains in Malnad region. According to sources in KPCL, if the southwest monsoon maintains its momentum, the water level in the three reservoirs is likely to fill to the brim by third week of August.
RBI asset quality review finds over 200 bad loans

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has asked lenders to set on a list of over 200 companies that have defaulted on their loans to some banks but were not classified as non-performing assets (NPAs) by others. The directive comes over two years after former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan started a clean-up of bank balance sheets by a similar asset quality review (AQR).

The accounts that the RBI wants to be recognised as NPAs include many cos in the power sector. In case the RBI asks banks to classify the loans as NPAs with retrospective effect, it will have severe implications on the their balance sheets. Provisions for bad loans increase along with the age of the NPA. For instance, a loan that has been classified as an NPA over five years ago would have to be fully provided for by now, whereas for a loan that has just slipped into NPA the provision might be around 20% of the outstanding amount.

The RBI's identification of defaulters comes at a time when the central government has set up a panel to look at resolving stressed assets in the power sector. One of the terms of references of the panel is to examine the changes required in provisioning norms to prevent power projects from turning into NPAs.

The RBI has improved its ability to unearth hidden bad loans in banks on the back of the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) — a registry of corporate loans started by Rajan before demitting office. Banks are periodically required to upload the status of all loans of over Rs 5 crore to the CRILC.

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ELECTRIC ROBOT CAR: THE FUTURE OF MOTORSPORTS

The electric robot car, which was designed and manufactured as a part of the project, has been lauded for its performance. The car, which has a top speed of 120 km/h, is powered by an advanced battery system that provides a range of over 300 km on a single charge. The vehicle is equipped with advanced autonomous driving technology, allowing it to navigate complex tracks without human intervention.

Conquering the course inandatory conditions, the vehicle's design and engineering have been focused on maximizing efficiency and minimizing environmental impact. The project, which has been a joint effort between academia and industry, aims to pave the way for the future of motorsports, integrating technology and innovation to redefine the boundaries of what is possible on the race track.
Brimming giant

Water level at the Idukki reservoir, one of the tallest arch dams in Asia, has reached close to its maximum, prompting authorities in Kerala to issue an ORANGE ALERT.

- The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority has issued precautionary messages to the public in light of a possibility of water release from the reservoir via the Cheruthoni dam, a part of the project.
- The Kerala State Electricity Board will issue a RED ALERT if the water level in the dam nears 2,400 ft.

Previous opening of shutters:
1981 (from Oct 29 and Nov 13)
1992 (from Oct 12 to 21)

Power point:
- It was built as a hydro-electric project between two hills - Kuravanmala (839 m) and Kuravuthimala (925 m) across Periyar
- 1973 - Year of commissioning
- 365.85 metres - length of the arch dam
- 4,64,000 cubic metres - amount of concrete used for construction
- The project has an underground power house at Moolamattom, about 43 km from the arch dam
Orange alert for Idukki Dam, countdown begins

Water level is inching towards the full reservoir mark and if it rises by two more feet, Red Alert will be declared.

NEJMA SULAIMAN @Idukki

AN orange alert is out for Idukki Dam, with the District Collector Jeevan Babu K issuing it at 9:10 pm on Monday. Should the rain remain incessant, people settled downstream of Cheruthoni Dam - particularly in the Thadiyampadu, Karimban and Injivarakuthu areas on the banks of the Cheruthoni River - have two or three days to move out of their homes and shelters.

While clarifying there was no need to panic, the district administration issued the alert after the water level touched 2395 ft. With the catchment areas of the dam receiving heavy rainfall over the past several days, the water level in the dam has been increasing considerably.

"The water level is inching towards the full reservoir mark," said a Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) officer. "It has now reached 2395 ft and is going up by 0.06 to 0.08 ft every two hours. The rise in the level by two more feet will lead to declaration of the Red Alert. The full reservoir level is 2403 ft, but we will start opening the shutters when the water level goes above 2397 ft. If the inflow into the reservoir continues at the current rate, we may have to open the shutters within two days."

The district administration said that four relief camps have already been set up to accommodate people in case of evacuation. "Of the 200 families living downstream, preparations are under way to evacuate 40 of them to relief camps," Jeevan Babu said.

"A control room has been functioning from Sunday night and red alert message signifying the extreme gravity of the situation will be issued 24 hours before the opening of the shutters."

The District Collector has also assured people living downstream that water will be released only during the day time, with all necessary precautionary measures having been taken to ensure security. People have been restrained from visiting the area to see the opening of the Cheruthoni shutters. As estimated, the opening of the shutters at Cheruthoni - part of the Idukki dam project - will lead to water gushing to the Lower Periyar Dam and on to the Bhoothanthankettu Dam. From there, water will flow through River Periyar along Kalady and Aluva before merging with the Arabian Sea. Water is estimated to take nearly six hours to reach the Arabian Sea once the Cheruthoni shutters are opened.

First such situation during Southwest monsoon

If the shutters were to be opened, it will be the first time during the Southwest monsoon since the construction of the dam in 1973. Twice in the past, the shutters had to be opened. But they were during the Northeast monsoon (October to December).

The first instance was in 1981 (when the shutters were repeatedly opened and shut between October 29 and November 13) and the second time in 1992 (when they were kept open for 12 days from October 12 to 23). On both occasions, the water level in the dam touched the brim only when the storage built up during the Southwest monsoon (June to September) was augmented by the inflow received following heavy downpour early in the Northeast monsoon.

Warning issued

The Idukki district administration has issued warning notices to the households and shops located downstream of the Cheruthoni Dam. Many people who have cultivated crops on their agricultural land near the banks of the Cheruthoni River have started harvesting them.