

Commercial solar republic of china

China is expected to see robust growth in the development of distributed solar photovoltaic systems mounted to industrial and commercial buildings, industry insiders said.

While the high price of electricity for businesses provides an economic driver for the potential boom, the increasingly high demand for green power from enterprises, especially listed ones, will also add impetus, they said.

The development of distributed solar PV in China has gained momentum in recent years.

In 2022, the nationwide increase in solar PV power generation capacity stood at roughly 87.4 gigawatts, 51.1 GW of which was contributed by distributed facilities -- those installed close to the place where the electricity will be used. That marked the second straight year that the proportion of distributed solar PV reached more than half of the newly added capacity.

It was a trend that continued in the first three quarters of last year, with the National Energy Administration saying that 67.1 GW of new distributed solar PV capacity was connected to the grid from January to September, representing almost 52.1 percent of newly added solar PV capacity.

Often installed on a building's rooftop or facade, distributed solar PV electricity systems avoid the high distribution losses that occur in traditional centralized power generation and transmission.

Qian Jing, vice-president of Jinko Solar, a major Chinese PV player, said she believes distributed solar PV will play an increasingly bigger role in promoting the growth of solar PV capacity, with a bigger contribution coming from industrial and commercial solar PV.

The development of centralized ground-mounted solar PV stations is restricted by the availability of land, she said, as well as the grid's inability to absorb large amounts of intermittent solar power.

She said tapping industrial and commercial distributed solar PV has great potential in China because of the country's special national conditions.

Most urban residents in China, who are major electricity consumers, live in apartment buildings, Qian said. As urbanization continues, the number of residents in rural parts of China has declined substantially, and many of those left in rural areas are elderly people with low electricity demand.

Qian said distributed solar PV systems offer a viable solution for enterprises to address their high electricity costs and demand for green power.

The prices businesses pay for electricity are much higher than those paid by households, she said, and many companies are subject to power rationing during summer, the peak season for electricity consumption.

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