

Wetex focus on clean energy

Over 1,055 companies from 28 countries participating in exhibition

Dhanusha Gokulan

DUBAI — Commercial and residential buildings here are consuming more than eighty per cent of power in the UAE, according to recent statistics.

Buildings, especially those in the commercial districts and office complexes keep equipments like lights and air-conditioning on for twenty-four hours and seven days a week, informed CEO of Pacific Control Systems Sougata Nandi.

He was speaking at the 14th annual Water, Energy, and Environment Exhibition 2012 (Wetex), organised by Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (Dewa) under the umbrella of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy (SCE).

The three-day exhibition was opened on Tuesday, at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre. Shaikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Minister of Finance and President of Dewa, opened the exhibition.

Over 1,055 companies from over 28 countries across the world participated in the exhibition.

For the first time, special highlights on oil and gas sectors participated at Wetex.

The primary focus for the exhibition this year was environment with most companies showcasing new technology that facilitates a greener UAE and sustainability.

Speaking to reporters, Chairman of the Board of Dewa Mattar Humaid Al Tayer said: "The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar

Park, which was launched by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, is one of our pioneering projects to generate electricity from solar energy, and will have a production capacity of 1,000 Megawatts. This forms the foundation and benchmark for our strategy to utilise clean and renewable energy. The Dubai Supreme Council of Energy will present the Dubai Integrated Energy Strategy 2030, as new sources of energy will be provided and, consequently, shares of different sources of energy will be changed to 71 per cent gas and the remaining 29 per cent comprising nuclear energy, coal and renewable sources of energy," Al Tayer added.

Cost-cutting solutions

Companies like Pacific Control Systems have joined hands with Etisalat to introduce Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in buildings and Infrastructure under a program called Emirates Energy Star (EES).

Considering the growing carbon footprint of the UAE, the company has taken steps to centralise the air-conditioning and lighting of most commercial districts in the UAE.

"The maximum power consumption is that from office buildings. Central electrical control panels of the companies are hooked to a global command centre that will keep the lights and air-conditioning off when it is not being used. Since its inception a few months back, the project was installed in the Dewa offices and thirty per cent savings were reported in February 2012", added Nandi.

The EES programme has cut down the carbon emission of eight buildings in UAE. The company aims to set up systems in 100,000 buildings by 2015.

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The Green Car Rental booth at the Wetex exhibition at the Dubai Convention and Exhibition Centre. The company runs a fleet of electrically powered cars and gives drivers the opportunity to rent or lease hybrid and full-electric luxury vehicles. — *KT photo by Juidin Bernard*

Recharge your green car on Sheikh Zayed Road

Dhanusha Gokulan

DUBAI — Did you steer clear of buying a electric car worrying about how and where you would charge it from? Now, you can zip through Sheikh Zayed road in your 'Green car' since a solar recharge station and green car rental has opened up behind Sheikh Essa Tower on Shaikh Zayed Road. The next recharge station is expected to be on Emirates Hills. Green car rental is the 'first green' car rental company in the country.

Says Maseen Al Toukhi, general manager of Green Car Rental: "People can rent or lease

hybrid and full-electric luxury vehicles for the exact same price as a normal rental company. The difference is that here you will not be putting a dent on the environment". The fully-electric cars have zero emission. The company is seven months old, and they rent out hybrid cars like BMW X6 for Dhs 1,100 per day, Lexus CT200 and the Honda CRZ for Dhs 200 per day.

Fully-electric car, the Nissan Leaf is available for Dhs 380 per day, he added. The company began functioning with a capital of Dhs 15 million.

Toukhi said that the main reason people shy away from buying a hybrid or electric car is because fuel is cheap in the country and energy-efficient

vehicles are 30 per cent cheaper. "But, people must understand the investment is a long-term one and gas prices will eventually go up. Currently, the company has a fleet of 50 cars and is looking to expand into the limo rental business in five-star hotels."

He added, driving 36,000 kms in a petrol-powered car produces around 6.8 metric/tonnes of carbon-di-oxide. Meanwhile, in a hybrid car the emissions are almost halved, producing only 3.7 metric/tonnes of the same distance. Also, the electric cars produce zero emissions. "We look forward to having 200 cars in the next few years," said Al Toukhi.

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“ The solar park will have a production capacity of 1,000 megawatts