

a-Si thin-film module production cost to fall to US\$0.7/W by year's end, says TEL chairman

Nuying Huang, Yokohama; Willie Teng, DIGITIMES [Thursday 1 July 2010]

Production equipment provider Tokyo Electron (TEL) expects to lower costs of amorphous silicon (a-Si) thin-film solar modules to US\$0.7/W by year's end through the latest micromorph tandem process it co-developed with fellow equipment maker Oerlikon, said company chairman Takashi Ito.

US\$0.7/W satisfies the requirement for module costs in reaching grid-parity, said Ito, adding that a-Si thin-film PV will see explosive growths in the next 1-2 years.

However, the performances and costs of a-Si thin-film cells and modules by various manufacturers remain inconsistent, meaning as subsidization reduction puts pressure on cost management, elimination induced by price competition is to be expected, according to industry sources.

Ito pointed out that most solar farms that adopted thin-film systems typically installed based on methods more suitable for crystalline systems, which limited electricity generation efficiency. With module costs now approaching grid-parity and development of thin-film-specific installation technology, Ito believes solar farms will play a huge role in the growth of the thin-film PV market.

TEL has plans to work with its customers in solar system installation and join forces to bid for international projects in the near future, he added.