

ERC keen on bidding for 3,400 MW



The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) expects more than 3,400 megawatts of total renewable energy to be put up for bidding shortly, says commission member Viraphol Jirapraditkul.

The new round of bidding will focus on power from biomass, biogas and waste-to-energy projects nationwide, except for the Northeast where high-voltage transmission lines are already running at full capacity.

The ERC has not finalised how many megawatts of total generating capacity it will open for first-phase bidding or the exact date, he said.

Solar farms and solar rooftops were excluded from the bids because their development is in the construction period, expected to start operation by the end of this year. Over 1,000 MW of solar power are scheduled to be generated.

Wind farms are also likely to be excluded as there are limited areas for development. The two existing wind farms are in Nakorn Ratchasima and Chaiyaphum provinces.

The Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency Department is evaluating locations, types of renewable energy and the amount of power-generating capacity before opening bids, said Mr Viraphol.

ERC is seeking ways to prevent the disastrous 2010 bid for solar farm development that saw many profiteers speculate, planning to resell the licences. There were few buyers, which meant little development of solar farms.

The commission is working on investor details and bidding evaluation.

Yesterday ERC released its plan to manage electricity demand during the planned gas disruption from July 19-23 by inviting volunteers from businesses to suspend operations during peak periods. Gas supply from the Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area's A18 block of 420 standard million cubic feet per day will be disrupted during its regular maintenance shutdown.

It expects volunteers will help cut power demand by 100 MW during the disruption. They will receive a subsidy of 3.4 baht per kilowatt hour.

The shutdown is expected to cut the power supply by 826 MW, while ERC plans to buy 630 MW from Malaysia during the disruption.

