

Renewable electricity damascus

DAMASCUS, May 14 (Xinhua) -- As Syria's power system has suffered significant damage due to the prolonged civil war, the country is planning to develop renewable energy projects to alleviate domestic electricity shortage, Electricity Minister Ghassan al-Zamel has said.

In an interview with Xinhua on Monday, al-Zamel said the electricity sector has been battered by the 13-year-long war and Western sanctions, with direct and indirect losses estimated at 120 billion U.S. dollars.

The minister pointed out that the U.S. sanctions have a particularly devastating impact on the sector, leading to a power outage lasting two to four hours per day.

The limited power supplies created a ripple effect on all relevant sectors, including industry, healthcare, education, water supplies, etc., posing a challenge to Syria's recovery from years of crisis, the minister added.

In a bid to ensure the electricity supplies and drag the country out of the aftermath of the war, "we are trying as much as possible to shift towards renewable energy," al-Zamel said, noting that the ministry is outlining a strategy to introduce up to 2,500 megawatts of solar energy and 1,500 megawatts of wind power by 2030.

The minister said his ministry is seeking to allocate lands in the desert and its vicinity to establish alternative power stations, noting that "currently, there are 100 megawatts of solar power connected to the grid."

Despite the U.S. sanctions, which remain "the biggest obstacle to Syria's reconstruction," al-Zamel said the country would "rely on friendly countries" to rehabilitate the power system and Syria at large in the coming period.

Today marked the commencement of the second investment conference in Syria's electricity sector, held at the Damascus University Auditorium under the theme "Investing in renewable energy and electricity is the engine of sustainable development in Syria." The conference brought together representatives from various sectors involved in renewable energies to explore opportunities and strategies for advancing the country's energy landscape.

Over the course of two days, the conference agenda focuses on crucial topics such as the potential of renewable energy sources in Syria, investment prospects for renewable energy projects, and the role of the private sector in electricity generation. Discussions also encompass successful case studies from international and regional organizations, financing mechanisms for renewable energy initiatives, and regulatory incentives for investors.

Engineer Muhammad Nawaf Al-Taani, Secretary General of the Arab Authority for Renewable Energies,

emphasized Syria's pivotal role in Arab cooperation and outlined aspirations for becoming a model in sustainable development. He proposed declaring Damascus as the capital of renewable energy by 2035, underscoring the importance of research and development collaborations with leading countries in the field.

Minister of Electricity, Engineer Ghassan Al-Zamil, highlighted 2024 as the year dedicated to investments in renewable energies, particularly in photovoltaic and wind energy. He announced upcoming wind projects exceeding 200 megawatts and new photovoltaic projects totaling approximately 600 megawatts. Minister Al-Zamil praised recent legislative developments, Laws No. 23 and 32, which have facilitated the expansion of renewable energy projects across Syria.

Dr. Abdul Qadir Joukhadar, Minister of Industry, outlined efforts to attract investments in the energy industry, focusing on manufacturing photovoltaic panels and semiconductor components essential for photovoltaic chips. He emphasized the necessity of advanced technology adoption under the Fourth Industrial Revolution to enhance energy efficiency.

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