

## TSE PLANS 15 SOLAR FARMS

NALIN VIBOONCHART  
THE NATION

Thai Solar Energy, a new venture of the Maleenont family, plans to invest Bt14 billion in 15 solar farms in Kanchanaburi and Suphan Buri over three to five years.

The 15 plants would have a combined capacity of 135 megawatts.

Cathleen Maleenont, chief operating officer of TSE, said yesterday that this is the first time that the clan, which runs an entertainment empire including TV Channel 3, has diversified into renewable energy. It believes that the prospects for this business in the future are bright.

The first project called TSE 1, in Kanchanaburi's Huay Krajao sub-district, is to be commissioned next month with installation capacity of 5MW. It will be expanded to 9MW next year.

The second project, TSE 2, is under construction and will be commissioned next year.

The company has a concrete plan for investing Bt4 billion in four solar energy projects with installation capacity of 9MW each.

The other 11 projects will be planned later, but all of them will be located in Kanchanaburi or Suphan Buri.

TSE's solar farms are different as they will use direct steam generation (DSG) technology, while the

other solar farms in Thailand use photovoltaic and thin film technology, which is becoming cheaper.

### DSG TECHNOLOGY

"Although the cost of DSG technology is about 30 per cent higher than photovoltaic technology, the efficiency of electricity generation is up to 27 per cent better than the photovoltaic one. I'm confident that the cost of DSG technology will be lower in the near future like photovoltaic. TSE 2, for example, can be constructed 30 per cent more cheaply than TSE 1," she said.

Photovoltaic technology costs about Bt100 million per megawatt, while DSG is about Bt180 million.

TSE has been granted an adder of Bt8.5 per megawatt for 10 years from the Energy Ministry. This technology can last up to 30 years.

TSE 2, located in Suphan Buri, was just awarded investment privileges from the Board of Investment last week. The project is worth Bt1.3 billion.

The Maleenont family became interested in renewable energy because the government offers strong support for developers in the form of attractive adders. This ensures good returns for investors, she added.

TSE has Bt1.36 billion in registered capital. Its major shareholders are PM Energy and Wave Entertainment with 53 per cent and 25 per cent. Other shareholders hold 22 per cent.

The Maleenont family owns shares in PM Energy and Wave Entertainment with a combined stake of 50-60 per cent.