

ENERGY



A Gunkul Engineering worker installs rooftop solar panels. The company believes solar panel sales will increase following a recent state effort to accelerate the process of granting permission for such installations.

Suppliers expect new centre to spike solar panel sales

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Sales of solar panels are expected to ratchet up following the government's decision to set up a one-stop service centre to facilitate factory operators wanting to utilise solar power, say solar panel suppliers.

The cabinet resolved on March 27 to have the Energy, Interior and Industry ministries work together to operate the centre as part of an effort to improve ease of doing business in Thailand.

The centre could benefit more than 72,000 factories countrywide if owners seek permission from authorities to install rooftop solar panels, as the centre avoids a lengthy and time-consuming procedure.

"This could lead to exponential growth in the photovoltaic panel market as well as higher sales of battery energy storage systems," said Naruechon Dhumrongpiyawut, chief executive of Gunkul Engineering Plc, an integrated clean energy developer.

A battery energy storage system (BESS) stores electricity generated by solar cells for later use, especially at night or during periods when there is insufficient sunlight to generate power.

Factory operators can also sell electricity stored in a BESS if the supply of power exceeds demand, but this peer-to-peer power trade requires approval from the government.

Ms Naruechon welcomed the new one-stop service centre as it should

significantly reduce the time required to grant permission to install solar panels on factories, which can exceed the time needed to construct a power plant.

Without the centre, factory owners need to ask six state agencies to process their requests to install solar panels, which often takes up to six months, she said.

The centre should allow more factories to adopt solar power to replace electricity sourced from the state grid, which is expensive, said Treerat Sirichantaropas, chief executive of New Energy Plus Solutions Co, a local distributor of solar panels.

He said he expects the one-stop service centre to increase revenue for the company this year after it earned 200 million baht in 2024.