News

Jinko Solar becomes global solar module shipments leader in 1H 2016

'Silicon Module Super League' (SMSL) member Jinko Solar has reported the second consecutive quarter of solar module shipments that were higher than leading SMSL rival, Trina Solar.

JinkoSolar, which has been building strong annual module shipment momentum since 2014, reported second quarter 2016 shipments of 1,716MW, beating the top-end of guidance of 1,700MW and established a new quarterly shipment record, beating its previous record 1,709.9MW in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Credit: Jinko Solar

Jinko Solar became the global leader for module shipments in the first half of 2016.

Total module shipments included 204MW used in its downstream projects. Total solar module shipments increased by 7.3% from 1,600MW in the first quarter of 2016 and 87.9% from 913MW in the second quarter of 2015.

Nearest rival, Trina Solar, had shipments of 1,423.3MW and 1,658.3MW in the first quarter and second quarter of 2016, respectively.

Strong demand during the quarter came from the US and China which accounted for the majority of shipments.

Jinko Solar reported second quarter total revenue of US$896.1 million, an increase of 8.9% from the previous quarter and 86.1% from the second quarter of 2015.

Gross profit in the second quarter of 2016 was US$182.4 million, compared with US$180.8 million in the first quarter of 2016.

Jinko Solar's solar power projects segment generated 327GWh of electricity in the quarter.

India

Chinese module suppliers increase share in Indian market to 75%

Despite most international and domestic module suppliers increasing their sales volumes in India over the last year, Chinese firms have significantly increased their share of the market from 50% to 75%, according to Bridge to India.

Furthermore, eight of the top 10 module suppliers in India now come from China, as opposed to just four in the previous year.

US firm First Solar and Indian company Waaree are the only non-Chinese suppliers still in the top 10. The top Chinese suppliers managed to keep their market share while new entrant Chinese firms including JA Solar, GCL-Poly, Hanwha (a South Korean firm based out of China), BYD, Talesun and Risen took much of the market share away from other international and domestics suppliers.

New government policies to support solar manufacturing in India

The Indian government is planning to announce a new solar manufacturing policy, which aims to offer Viability Gap Funding (VGF), a financial subsidy, to companies setting up integrated manufacturing facilities so that they can compete on an even level with their global counterparts.

The policy also envisages providing a 'reasonable' module off-take assurance for five to seven years. The 'Make in India' initiative already recognizes solar manufacturing as an industry having "strategic importance".

With the imminent implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017, domestic solar manufacturers will also get a level playing field with overseas manufacturers. With these favourable developments, it is expected that several new players, which have previously announced their solar manufacturing plans, will now expedite these strategies.

Cell and module imports to India triple in a year

Imports of solar cells and modules into India have tripled in the last year. Shipments grew to INR155 billion (US$2.3 billion) in 2015/16 from just INR51 billion in 2014/15, and INR43 billion in 2013/14.

The news is expected given India's utility-scale solar PV development booming in the last 12 months and reaching well beyond 8GW capacity. Meanwhile, India's domestic manufacturing capacity remains far too small to cater for its giant PV demands.

Minister for energy and mines Piyush Goyal said in Parliament: "Manufacturers from the US, China and other countries are supplying solar cells and modules in India and in some cases, the price is much lower than what is being offered by domestic manufacturers."

Anti-dumping

EU Commission cuts five more firms from solar MIP undertaking

Lerri Solar, DelSolar, CNPV, Motech and Xian Longi have been withdrawn from the EU's Minimum Import Price (MIP) undertaking and will instead have to service their European customers via manufacturing facilities abroad, due to violation of the terms of the agreement between China and the EC.

Earlier, the EC also withdrew Chinese solar panel manufacturer Shinetime China and its related company in the EU, Shinetime Europe, from the EU-China price undertaking.

This prompted James Watson, chief executive of SolarPower Europe, to say: "The MIP is clearly failing to function anymore; many Chinese companies are now voluntarily leaving it, as the price no longer bears the slightest resemblance to market prices for solar in the world or in Europe today."

Turkey opens anti-dumping investigation into Chinese module imports

Turkey's Ministry of Economy has opened an investigation into alleged dumping of Chinese solar panels in Turkey.

Turkey-based manufacturers Solarturk Energy, Sunlego Energy systems and Zahit Energy are behind the complaint that led to the investigation.

The anti-dumping investigation, to be carried out by Turkey's General Directorate, alleges unfair competition coming from the import of solar modules from the Republic of China.

However, Turkey's solar association Solarbaba said: "Modules imported from China was not a problem at all in Turkey, considering that the cumulative installed PV power is just around 600MW today. The result will be the same as in Europe, shrinking market, hesitating foreigner investors, many projects switching to 'stand by' mode."

Products

Manufacturers launch 1,500V modules

Vietnam-based PV module manufacturer Boviet Solar Technology has added a 72-cell, 1500VDC multicrystalline module to its growing product portfolio, designed for the growing commercial and utility-scale demand in the US for the higher voltage modules.

Higher voltage systems are known to enable longer system module strings that reduce combiner box and wiring requirements, lowering upfront capital costs and reducing installation times, providing a lower levelized cost of electricity.

China-based integrated PV manufacturer Yingli Green Energy said that its 60-cell dual glass 'TwinMAX' 1,500V modules have passed aging and safety IEC61215/61730 tests, re-spectively.

China-based solar module manufacturer Canadian Solar also launched its new 1,500V system voltage crystalline module portfolio.

Meanwhile, leading US crystalline-silicon module manufacturer SolarWorld also unveiled its 1,500V module at this year's Intersolar North America.

Yingli Green to showcase niche solar modules at SPI as sales slide

Struggling former SMSL member Yingli Green Energy is showcasing several niche solar module products at Solar Power International in Las Vegas.

These include the most recently updated TwinMAX 60-cell bifacial glass/glass module originally launched in an updated form in May 2016 as well as an Underwriters Laboratory (UL) certified module with integrated module-level power optimizers for the residential and commercial market segments

The company is also showcasing its p-type monocrystalline, UL-certified YLM Series that is available in both 60-cell and 72-cell series and the only mainstream product mentioned.

Yingli Green, once the leading module supplier in the US, has seen sales slide significantly in recent years. The company has only recognised revenue in the US on 163MW of modules in the last three quarters.

Credit: Yingli Solar

Yingli is presenting several new niche solar products at this year's SPI in Las Vegas.

REC Solar begins production of 72-cell 'TwinPeak' modules

Integrated PV module manufacturer REC Solar has started volume production of its previously introduced 72-cell 'TwinPeak' module, using half-cut cells and PERC cell technology.

The new module was rated at up to 340Wp and a 1,500V DC version will be available from November 2016 onwards.

The TwinPeak series also uses four busbars and a split junction box, which is claimed to provide an extra 20Wp, compared to conventional multicrystalline 72-cell modules.

The company had previously said it would migrate all production at its manufacturing facility in Tuas, Singapore, to its half-cut PERC cell technology, used for its TwinPeak series modules.

The 72-cell module was said to be available for all regions, and is certified for a maximum system voltage of 1,000V.

First Solar's 'game-changing' Series 5 module to reduce BOS costs and installation times

Leading thin-film module manufacturer First Solar has revealed its new-to-the-market and highly anticipated Series 5 thin-film PV module.

The Series 5 module is entering the market at 365W and consists of a 1.85m x 1.2m, three-horizontal-stacked module unit akin to the size and form factor of traditional c-Si 72-cell modules. Although it comprises three sections which look similar to the Series 4 module, Karim Asali, First Solar's technical director for Europe, said that the Series 5 is in fact comprised of "completely new modules".

First Solar has plans to progress the module's Watt capacity in future, starting at 365W and progressing to 370W and 375W and so on.