ABB wins $640 million mega deal for long distance power transmission link in India

Zurich, Switzerland, January 10, 2017 – New link across over 1,800 km will be capable of bringing electricity to more than 80 million people

ABB has teamed up with India’s national electricity grid operator Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) in a mega project worth over $640 million for ABB to deliver a transmission link that will have the capacity to bring reliable electricity to more than 80 million people. The Raigarh-Pugalur 800 kilovolt (kV) ultra-high-voltage direct current (UHVDC) system will connect Raigarh in Central India to Pugalur in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

The 1,830 kilometer (km) link will be among the longest in the world. With a capacity of 6,000 megawatts – the equivalent of more than six large power plants – it will be enough to meet the electricity needs of over 80 million people in India. The two-way link will integrate thermal and wind energy for transmission of power to high consumption centers located thousands of kilometers away, supporting electricity demands in the south, when wind strength is low, and transmitting clean energy to the north, when there is excess wind power.

“ABB is honored to partner with POWERGRID for this smart long distance transmission project,” said ABB CEO Ulrich Spiesshofer. “Delivering reliable electricity to India’s energy demand centers is a top priority for the Indian government to support the country’s impressive growth momentum. ABB is strongly committed to India for more than a century and with this new long distance transmission link we are delivering the benefits from the Energy Revolution to the country, building on the strength of our strong local manufacturing footprint. With our state-of-the-art UHVDC technology, we enable the balancing of renewable and conventional electricity supply over long distances in a smart and reliable way.”

ABB is the global market leader and partner of choice for stronger, smarter and greener grids around the world as it supports utilities and grid operators to take advantage of the Energy and Fourth Industrial Revolutions. ABB’s Power Grids division, which will deliver the mega project, is number one in the world in the segment.

“As part of our Next Level Strategy, we are committed to delivering cutting-edge technologies like HVDC to integrate renewables and transmit power reliably and efficiently, providing vital access to electricity and making a real difference to people’s lives,” said Claudio Facchin, President of ABB’s Power Grids division. “We will leverage our extensive local manufacturing and engineering base in India and proven partnership with our consortium partner BHEL for the execution of this prestigious project”.

ABB has an impressive HVDC track record in India, where it introduced the technology over 25 years ago with the Vindhyachal project in 1989. Raigarh-Pugalur is ABB’s sixth HVDC project in India and the second UHVDC installation, following the multi-terminal North-East Agra link, which has been already partially energized and is in the final phase of completion. The turnkey project encompasses design, engineering, supply, installation and commissioning and major equipment supplies include the complete
UHVDC stations, including transformers, converter valves, cooling systems, as well as control and protection technology.

UHVDC transmission is a development of HVDC, a technology pioneered by ABB more than 60 years ago. ABB has been awarded about 110 HVDC projects, which represents a total installed capacity of more than 120,000 MW and accounts for around half the global installed base.

HVDC transmission links help to conserve land as they occupy only one third of the space compared to the alternative. In this case that amounts to a saving of approximately 244 square kilometers of space – around one third the area of Bangalore or the entire city of Kuala Lumpur. The mega project will also feature technologies selected to minimize the footprint of the transmission stations.

The total project value is worth more than $840 million and the balance will be executed by ABB's consortium partner BHEL (Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited), a leading Indian public sector company. The order was booked in the fourth quarter of 2016.

The mega project is expected to be completed in 2019.

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