

Headline	Digitalisation of utility sector takes centre stage at CEPSI 2018		
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Digitalisation of utility sector takes centre stage at CEPSI 2018

Digitalisation — defined by technology research and advisory firm Gartner Inc as the usage of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities — is enabling changes for just every industry out there today.

The line-up of key discussion topics and speakers at this year's Conference of the Electric Power Supply Industry (CEPSI) shows that the utility sector is intrigued as well by the promises that digitalisation makes. This is given that quite a number of the topics centre on the impact of digitalisation on the sector.

In fact, the theme for CEPSI 2018, "Re-imagining the Utility of The Future", could not be more apt when applied to the impact that technology has on the industry. It underpins the current reality of how the electric supply industry is transforming in response to the acceleration of technology disruptions, economic shifts, evolving sustainability,

regulatory requirements and increasing customer expectations.

This biennial conference, which is in its 22nd edition, is hosted by Malaysia's largest electricity utility Tenaga Nasional Bhd on behalf of the Association of the Electricity Supply Industry of East Asia and Western Pacific.

Over 1,500 delegates from all over the world are expected to participate in CEPSI 2018 which will be held from Sept 18 to 20 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Fifteen high profile speakers will headline keynote sessions and share their insights on digitalisation, global trends and shifts, the utility of the future, innovation and more. Here are the profiles of four of the speakers and the topics they will be discussing. **E**

The Edge is the media partner for CEPSI 2018

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THE SPEAKERS



Zubin Postwalla

Marketing leader China, East Asia Pacific, Grid Solutions
GE Power

An electrical engineer by profession, with an MBA in International Business and over two decades of experience in the Transmission & Distribution industry (from testing engineer to sales operations to marketing) Postwalla is currently focused on developing business for GE in one of the fastest-growing regions in the world – Asia.

He has been following grid technology, super grids and distributed grids and how they are being adopted globally and more specifically in Asia. With the uptake of distributed generation and renewables in recent years Postwalla has been more focused on digital and flexible alternating current transmission system technologies being deployed to make our grids more resilient, productive and environmentally friendly.

Apart from that Postwalla has a keen interest in developing high-voltage direct current (HVDC) and sulphur-hexafluoride free switchgear technologies.

At CEPSI 2018, he will speak about innovation in the grid space to boost sustainability, resilience and distributed generation.

The keynote session will, among other things, address the challenges ahead for the electricity infrastructure industry with the demand for electricity on the rise, ageing electrical infrastructure and an increase in energy efficiency and the uptake of renewables. Utilities would then need to change their role accordingly and deploy new technologies to cope with these challenges.

Postwalla's presentation will also dwell on several technologies the utilities must focus on moving forward, such as HVDC, digital twins, energy storage, power quality solutions, digital substations, microgrids, green gas for switchgear, asset performance management, renewables integration and other software – all of which will form part of the next generation of utilities.



Dr Hiroshi Okamoto

Executive vice president
TEPCO Power Grid Inc

Okamoto is currently in charge of corporate planning and management reform at Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) Power Grid Inc.

Having started his career with TEPCO in 1993 in the Engineering Department, Okamoto became the group manager of the Smart Grid Strategy Group in the Engineering Department in 2010. In 2013, he was general manager of the Power System Engineering Center, Engineering Research and Development Department and Wide-area Interconnection Promotion Office. In 2015, Okamoto became a managing executive officer of TEPCO, president of TEPCO Research Institute, and secretary general of the New Growth Task Force.

In 2017, Okamoto jointly published a book *Utility 3.0: Game change in the energy industry 2050*. He has also published many articles and other books.

Okamoto's presentation at CEPSI 2018 is entitled "Utility 3.0: Digital Utility Shaping a Future Cyber-Physical Society". He will share on TEPCO's vision of how utilities are transforming themselves – via technology and platform integration – into digital utilities, which is necessary for decarbonisation and smart programmes.

Okamoto will also discuss how a utilities like TEPCO are looking beyond the traditional business of energy provision towards becoming a key partner in building future cities and societies by designing a cyber-physical system.



D John Yesuraj

General manager
(research & development)
CG Power & Industrial Solutions Ltd, India

Yesuraj is responsible for developing new switchgear technologies and products for the modern extra high voltage (EHV) networks at CG Power & Industrial Solution (formerly Crompton Greaves Ltd). With over 25 years experience in high voltage product development, he spearheads the organisation's product strategy for the global markets.

As a core technical committee member of India's prestigious 1200 kV ultra-high voltage (UHV) transmission test station, Yesuraj prepared the UHV product technical specifications and indigenously developed two UHV products for this project.

He also established a prestigious and state-of-art 1600 kV UHV Research Centre in Nashik, India, which is one of the world's largest indoor test stations of its kind. Yesuraj has published numerous technical papers in national and international conferences and has received four National Awards on behalf of CG.

At CEPSI 2018, Yesuraj will speak on "Sustainable Transformations: Lessons from the Past". He says past energy transformation designs have contributed greatly to the current energy trilemma that the world is facing.

As such, Yesuraj's session will highlight some of these key lessons, as he believes that it is important to understand why such a path was chosen, in the hope that the future can be redesigned and planned in a such a way so as to sustain progress while remaining sustainable.

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Gavin Barfield

Chief technology adviser
Manila Electric Company

Barfield, in his role, has oversight for Manila Electric Company's (Meralco) corporate information technology, cybersecurity, corporate process and data, and corporate project management functions. In addition, he acts as an adviser on a number of market and industry issues at the Philippines' largest power distributor.

Barfield is a well-recognised expert in the Philippines and Singapore energy markets and has spoken at several international conferences on Asian energy markets. He was involved in the design and development of the Singapore National Energy Market and the Philippines Wholesale Electricity Spot Market and provides regular advisory services to the Philippines' Department of Energy and Singapore's Energy Market Authority on industry developments and regulatory issues.

At CEPSI 2018, Barfield's presentation topic is entitled "The New Digital Disruptors: Enabling a Sustainable Energy Future".

Digital disruptors – the third information technology platform that includes social media, mobile technology, cloud and big data – were the drivers of the digital transformation of many companies for the past few years.

However, those technologies have already become the norm and are now making way for a fresh wave of powerful technologies that promises – or threatens – to disrupt again.

Barfield's presentation will cover some of these new and emerging technologies that may impact or are already having an impact on many industries, including the energy sector.

He will share and highlight existing and potential cases of the new digital disruptors and the benefits these technologies will bring to enhancing operational efficiency, transforming customer service and improving environmental sustainability.

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