

ENERGY & POWER



Capacity Charge & The Missing Links

- As War Prolongs, EU Ready To Combat Ensuing Winter
- The EU Resolution On Jailing Odhikar Executives: Is It Fair?
- Grid-Tied Solar Plants May Greatly Help Cut Oil-Based Power Generation



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(A joint venture of NWPGL & CMC)



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Coal Transportation	Oldendorff, Germany
Commercial Operation Date	15 May, 2020 (Unit - 1) 8 Dec, 2020 (Unit - 2)
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Payra 1320 MW Thermal Power Plant (1st Phase)



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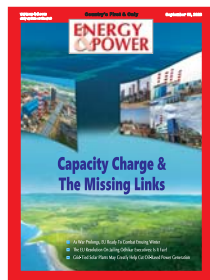
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Decisions for putting inefficient power plants to planned retirement and increasing contributions of the country's coal and natural gas resources instead of imported fuel need to be taken from appropriate technical and economical considerations. Otherwise, the present chaotic situation of the power sector will grow into a major headache for the economy of the country...
A. S. M. Alamgir Kabir tells EP



EDITORIAL

The power sector has emerged as a complete puzzle in Bangladesh. It's currently wrestling with a significant problem: there's way more electricity production capacity than the country actually needs. This surplus capacity often remains unused because it has become difficult to get enough fuel to run the power plants, and this idleness is costing the consumers as well as the government exchequer a lot in terms of capacity charges and rent. People from all walks of life, including citizens, consumer rights bodies, and politicians from opposition political parties are raising their voices against this issue. They're pointing fingers at poor planning and the inability to ensure a steady supply of fuel as the main culprits behind the financial losses in the power sector. What's surprising is that a whopping 25% of the national budget's subsidies are pouring into the power sector. But even with all this support, the Bangladesh Power Development Board is struggling to pay its bills to independent power producers. As a result, consumers have had to bear the brunt of rising electricity prices for over a decade. The government is working on a master plan, but it is missing some key details about what the country needs in the future and what kinds of fuel it should use.

To fix this mess, experts are calling for better planning, more realistic predictions of power demand, and stricter financial control. Otherwise, the progress made so far in the power sector might be overshadowed by controversies and financial woes.

highlights



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The Government plan to increase LNG import capacity through setting up 2 more FSRUs. These also may not be completed before end of 2026 even if these start in early 2024. RPGCL is still struggling to start work on the Land Based LNG terminal at Matarbari. Experts believe that unless some special initiatives it will not be operational before 2030. ...more on Article



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The power sector is passing through controversies over excessive reserve margins against demand, keeping most of these idle for fuel deficit, and consequent payment of huge capacity charges and rent. Civil society, consumer rights activists, and opposition political parties also held the failure to supply primary fuel to the power plants responsible for accounting for huge capacity charges and rent.



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GECF Announces Key Milestone



The Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) marked a significant step towards its flagship event, the 7th Summit of Heads of State and Government, by convening the 4th High-Level Ad-Hoc

Working Group (HLAHWG) meeting recently at the GECF Secretariat.

This gathering sets the stage for the Summit, scheduled to take place on March 2, 2024 in Algiers, Algeria, with associated events commencing on 29 February.

The HLAHWG, comprising representatives from GECF member countries, including Algeria, Bolivia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Iran, Nigeria, Qatar, Russia, Trinidad and Tobago, UAE, and Venezuela, oversees the preparations for the upcoming edition of this biennial gathering.

During the session, the Algerian delegation presented comprehensive updates on the ongoing preparations, as well as insights into the Summit's draft agenda and draft declaration.

The GECF Summit represents a pivotal moment for member countries and the global energy community. It serves as a platform for fostering international cooperation, addressing critical energy challenges, and shaping the future of the gas industry.

Russia Ready to Boost Gas Exports to Turkey: Lavrov



Russia is ready to scale up natural gas exports to Turkey, including through creation of a gas hub there, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said during talks with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan.

"On our side, we confirmed the commitment of Russia to all the agreements of increasing natural gas exports, including through implementation of the initiative of the heads of our states on creation of an integrated gas hub in Turkey," Lavrov said.

Russia and Turkey are developing strategic projects in the energy sphere, "which traditionally act as a powerhouse" in relations between the two countries, the top Russian diplomat said. "Construction of all four power generating units of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant is on track," he added.

EU has No Immediate Plans to Ban Russian LNG

The European Union has no short-term plan to ban Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) despite soaring imports to the bloc, Spain's energy minister said, citing fears of another price spike.



Russia's energy revenue has fallen since western powers imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine, but LNG still brings in billions of dollars.

"There is this feeling of scarcity and fear," Spanish energy minister Teresa Ribera told a media, referring to Europe's energy crisis last year. Spain holds the rotating EU presidency until the end of December, enabling it to prioritize legislative decision-making.

The bloc's overall imports of Russian natural gas have sunk since last year after Russia cut flows to Europe in response to sweeping western sanctions on its economy.

Shell Delivers First Gas from Timi Platform Offshore Malaysia

Sarawak Shell Berhad (SSB), a subsidiary of Shell Plc, says gas production has started at its Timi platform in Malaysia under the SK318 production sharing contract (PSC).



Timi features Shell's first wellhead platform in Malaysia that is powered by a solar and wind hybrid power system. Shell says this unmanned platform is also more cost efficient, as a result of it being about 60% lighter in weight than a conventional tender-assisted drilling wellhead platform that relies on oil and gas for power.

Timi is designed to produce up to 50,000 boe/d of gas at peak production and will evacuate its gas through a new 80-km pipeline to the F23 production hub. The project supports the future growth in the central Luconia area off the coast of Sarawak.

Timi is developed as part of the SK318 PSC with SSB as the operator holding 75% equity. The other two partners are PETRONAS Carigali Sdn Bhd (15%) and Brunei Energy Exploration (10%).

US Firms Interested to Investing in Energy Sector: Nasrul



State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid has said the interest of US companies is increasing gradually to invest in Bangladesh's power and energy

sector as an investment-friendly atmosphere is prevailing here.

"US firms have shown interest in conducting drills in the deep sea. US company Excelebrate Energy has been given approval to set up another FSRU in the deep sea at Pyara," he said when a 15-member delegation of the US-Bangladesh Business Council paid a courtesy call on him at the Secretariat recently.

Nasrul said there are opportunities to invest in gas and power transmission, construction of smart grids, installation of modern technology in the power and energy sector, renewable energy, offshore and onshore wind power, lithium battery factories, cyber security, and oil and gas exploration.

Lauding the progress of Bangladesh, US-Bangladesh Business Council president former ambassador Atul Keshap said the US companies are very interested in investing in Bangladesh, so deep sea exploration is possible.

BPDB Chairman Reappointed



Md Mahbubur Rahman has been reappointed for the second time as the chairman (Grade-1) of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) for the next one year, says a press release.

He was first reappointed as BPDB chairman by the government on September 1, 2022. He has been serving in the same role since January 31, 2022.

Mahbubur Rahman was born in Shariatpur on September 1, 1963. He obtained B.Sc. Engineering (Civil) degree from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in 1986.

He completed his M.Sc. in Engineering (Hydro-Power) from the Norwegian University of Engineering & Technology, Norway in 1995. Later, he obtained MBA degree in Bangladesh.

Titas Gas Reappoints Harun as Managing Director

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited Managing Director Md Harunur Rashid Mollah has been reappointed for the next one year.

The company reappointed him considering his Integrity, efficiency and experience, said a press release.



He will serve in this position for the next one year from September 29, 2023, the release added.

Executive Motors Brings BMW's First EV iX3 M Sport

Executive Motors Limited recently unveiled the BMW iX3 M Sport, the first-ever electric vehicle from BMW, for the Bangladesh market. The vehicle has a price tag of Tk 1.55 crore.

"We are immensely proud to introduce the BMW iX3 M Sport, the first-ever BMW electric vehicle in Bangladesh. This marks a pivotal moment for both the BMW brand and our valued customers here," said Ashique Un Nabi, director for operation at Executive Motors.

"The entire world is experiencing an electric vehicle revolution, which will eventually supplant automobiles that run on fossil fuels. In keeping with that, Executive Motors Limited began the iX3's journey within the entire country."

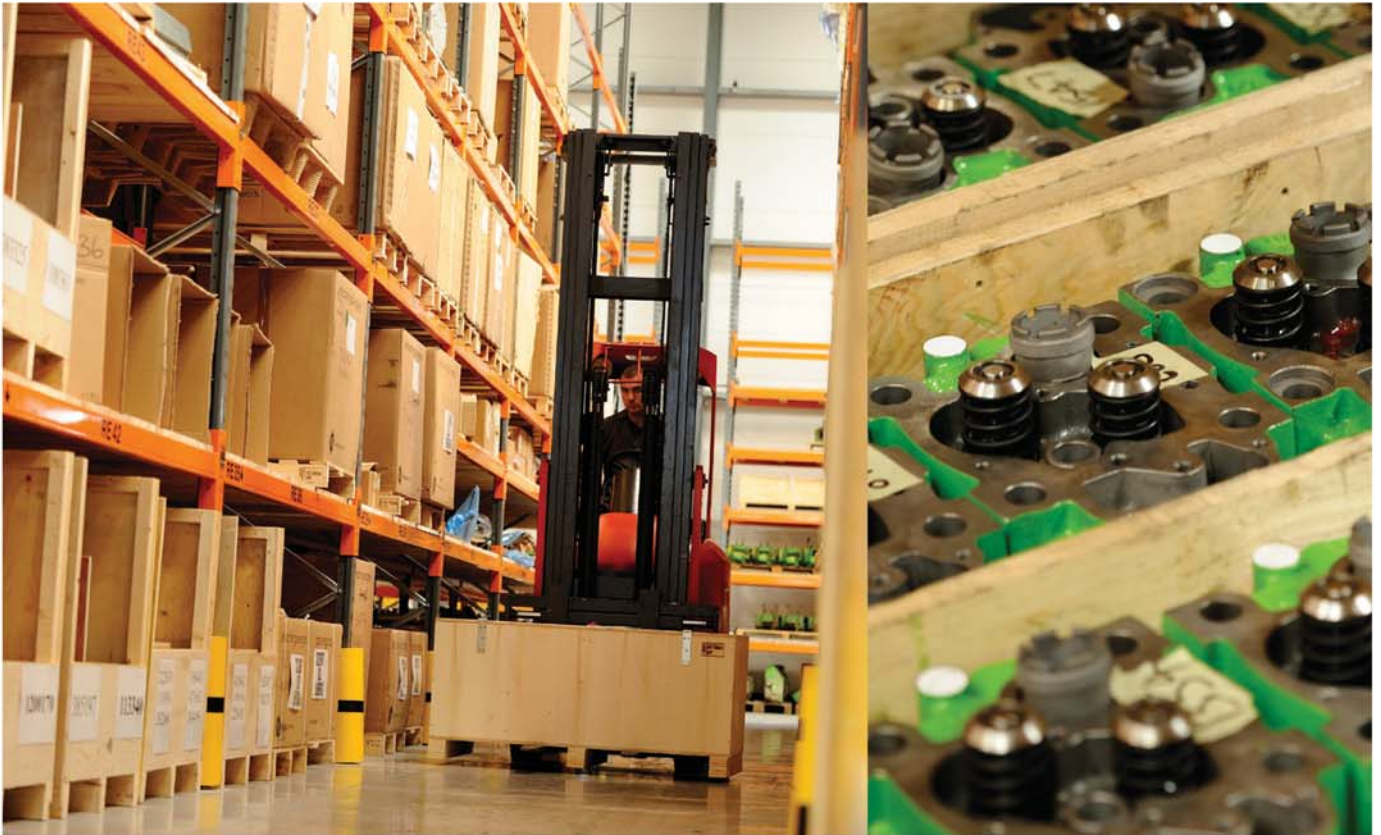
New Marketing Office for Titas Gas Inaugurated

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited managing director professor Md Harunur Rashid Mollah inaugurated the zonal marketing office building at Fatullah in



Narayanganj recently with the aim of simplifying customer service and delivering service to the customer's doorstep, said a press release. On the occasion, a discussion was organized and a dua mahfil was held.

Local dignitaries, customers of all levels and senior officials and employees of the company were present at the programs.



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LPG Price Adjusted Upward



The government has adjusted the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) upward and now a 12-kilogram (Kg) LPG cylinder will be sold to the consumers at Tk 1,284 instead of

Tk 1,140. "The newly fixed price of LPG is Taka 1,284, which will be effective from today at 6pm (September 3) and all licenses of LPG marketing companies will implement the price," Chairman of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) Md Abdul Jalil announced the newly fixed price of LPG at a press briefing at BERC office recently.

He said the LPG price was Tk 1,140 for 12-kg cylinder in August while it was Tk 999 in July.

The chairman said that the BERC also re-fixed auto gas price Tk 58.87 per liter, while per kilogram of LPG at Tk 107.01 at retailer level inclusive VAT owned by private sector and Tk 103.18 per kilogram of liquefied supplied LPG in reticulated system owned by private sector.

According to the BERC details, the price of LPG \$550 and \$560 per tonne was fixed for September 2023 by Saudi Contract Price (Saudi CP). Considering the Propane and Butane ratio 35:65 average, Saudi CP per ton \$556.50, the BERC re-fixed the price of LPG and auto gas for September 2023.

As per the BERC decision, new price at retailer level owned by private sector, 12.5 kg LPG has been fixed at Tk 1,338 at retailer level, 15 kg at Tk 1,605, 16 kg at Tk 1,712, 18 kg at Tk 1,926, 20 kg at Tk 2,140, 22 kg at Tk 2,355, 25 kg at Tk 2,675, 30 kg at Tk 3,210, 33 kg at Tk 3,531, 35 kg at Tk 3,745 and 45 kg at Tk 4,815.

NESCO Engineer Suspended 'Over Statement in Media'

Executive Engineer of NESCO (Northern Electricity Supply Company) office in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat Rocky Chandra Das has been suspended reportedly for making a statement in the media violating rules over the recent vandalism at the power office.

A three-member probe committee has been formed in this regard. Managing Director of NESCO, Rajshahi, Zakirul Islam visited Kaliganj power office recently to investigate the matter.

Rocky was suspended in a letter signed by NESCO Deputy General Manager (Acting) Rahmat Ullah Al-Faruq on Wednesday night. In the letter, order was given to attach him with the office of Rangpur chief engineer.

NESCO Rangpur Region Chief Engineer Mokhlesur Rahman confirmed the suspension of the executive engineer.

Govt to Import 2 Cargoes of LNG from Spot Market

The government will import 2 cargoes of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from the international spot market.



Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase recently approved two separate proposals of state-owned Petrobangla, placed by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division.

Both the proposals were approved as unsolicited offers on the basis of Speedy Increase of Power and Energy Supply Act (Amendment) 2021.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal presided over the virtual meeting, which also approved some other 3 proposals.

As per the first proposal, the Petrobangla will import one cargo containing 33.60 lakh MMBtu LNG) from TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd., Switzerland, at a total cost of Tk 595.45 crore with each unit of LNG at \$13.77.

The other LNG cargo containing the same quantity will be imported by Petrobangla from Vitol Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore, at a cost of Tk 674.35 crore with each unit at \$14.90.

IDCOL Awards Meritorious Students with Scholarships

Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) recognized the academic excellence of 11 outstanding



students at the NEC Auditorium in collaboration with the Economic Relations Division (ERD) on 3 September 2023.

These exceptional students, who are children of ERD employees, demonstrated remarkable academic prowess in their SSC/"O" Levels & HSC/"A" Levels.

The event was graced by the esteemed presence of Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary of ERD and Chairman of IDCOL, who was present as the chief guest.

She awarded certificates and scholarship funds to the talented scholars. Ms. Sharifa Khan expressed her gratitude to IDCOL for their valuable support of this commendable initiative.



Capacity Charge & The Missing Links

Mollah Amzad Hossain

Over the past 14 years, consumers had to bear the brunt of the failures of the policymakers due to repeated increases in power tariffs. On the other hand, the government had to pay a capacity charge and rent of around TK 105,000 crore to the power plant operators during the period. Controversy about capacity charges has started taking a new dimension. The government should be more alert and proactive in planning and implementing new projects in the sector.

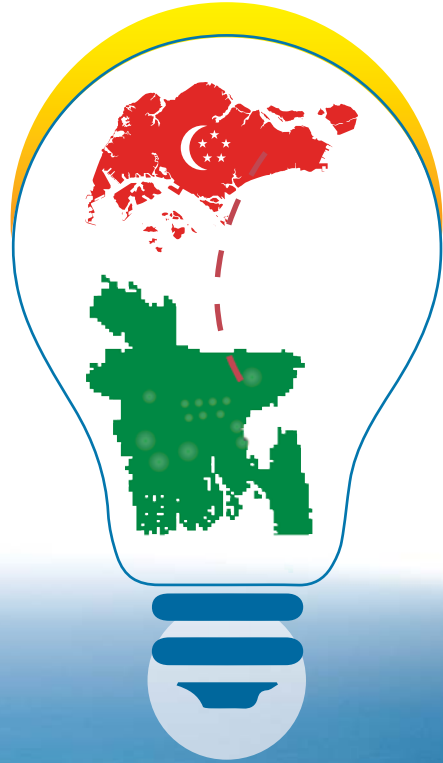
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The power sector is passing through controversies over excessive reserve margins against demand, keeping most of these idle for fuel deficit, and consequent payment of a huge capacity charge and rent. Civil society, consumer rights activists, and opposition political parties claim that the construction of an excessive number of power plants than actual demand for flawed planning and keeping many of these idle for failure in supplying primary fuel are the reasons for accounting for huge capacity charge and rent. This is the main reason why the loss of power sector is alarmingly increasing. About 25% of the subsidy provided in the national budget now goes to the power sector. Even then BPDB cannot meet the outstanding payments of IPPs. Over the past 14 years, the consumers through repeated increases in power tariffs are made to bear the brunt of the failures of the policymakers. Recently, Nasrul Hamid MP, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, responding to a question in the parliament stated that the government paid about TK 105,000 crore as a capacity charge and rent to power plant operators over the past 14 years. Controversy about capacity charges has started spreading into new dimensions. Of course, besides the capacity charge, the government also pays huge money as fixed charges to

public sector power plants for keeping these idle. Some quarters termed capacity charge as an unacceptable model, but sector experts term it a widely practiced element in tariff calculation for private sector power generation. This is in practice in many countries. There is no scope for creating controversy about capacity charges. Rather the necessity of time is to evaluate the extent of financial stress created by developing a huge reserve margin of generation capacity against actual demand and failures in ensuring sustainable supply of primary fuel.

The total grid-connected installation capacity of 151 power plants, imports from India, and grid-connected solar power is now around 25,000 MW. The highest generation recorded so far was 15,648 MW on 19 April 2023. The present daily demand is about 14,500 MW. However, due to BPDB's inability to make outstanding payments and fuel supply deficits, the generation is kept restricted at 13,000-13,500 MW. The impacts of power load-shedding are not felt that much in cities and towns but people in the villages are in great suffering. Frequent load-shedding is being experienced in the villages from midnight till morning. Engr Mizanur Rahman, General Secretary of Bangladesh Energy Society and former member of BERC was asked why a capacity charge is an object of

controversy. He said, "There is no scope for creating controversy about capacity charge. It is a globally well-established and practiced process in the calculation of the tariff of power from private sector power plants. But what is not acceptable is that you do not have demand, but you still pay capacity charges keeping those plants idle." Controversy can of course be created over this mismatch.

The Awami League-led government while returning to state power in 2009 had no option but to take some contingency measures for recovering the stagnant economy and uncomfortable civic life from the diabolic power crisis. One after another a huge number of power plants were set up engaging entrepreneurs without a formal tendering process under the coverage of the Speedy Power Supply Special Act. The present situation is a fallout of that uncontrolled action. Engr. A. S. M. Alamgir Kabir, former Chairman of BPDB in an interview with EP said setting up of new power plants is a continuous process in the power supply chain. It needs to be continued. But at the same time, power plants must also be retired and taken out of operation after their designated term of operation. The fuel-inefficient plants should also be replaced and modernized if required. Finally, a sustainable supply of fuel must also be ensured before finalizing decisions for setting up new power plants. The present crisis has emanated from not following these basic norms and processes. Consequently, it is now required to pay huge capacity charges and fixed costs to plants even without utilizing 10% of the Plant Load Factor (PLF). This continues to increase the cost of generation. Ignoring efficiency in power sector management has led to the present crisis.

Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD) in June 2023 published a study report. It stated that from 2017-18 to 2021-2022 about 25% of the total subsidy provided in the annual budget would be paid to the power sector alone. In the forecast, it said that the reserve margin against demand may increase to 50% in 2025.



1200 MW SS Power Coal Based Power Plant in Chattogram

It is an alarming news for the power sector. According to the CPD analysis, BDT 57,970 crore has been paid to IPPs as a capacity charge in 5 years. In addition, BDT 41,309 crore has been paid to the BPDB-owned power plants as a fixed cost. It makes a total of BDT 99,297 crore.

Analyzing BPDB information, it appears that from 2017-22, 68 of 151 plants were virtually paid fixed costs and capacity charges without even putting it into operation. The contributions from these were below 10% of their PLF. 42 of these were public sector plants and 26 were IPPs. Public sector power plants were paid BDT 13,446 crore as fixed costs. The reasons were either no demand or fuel deficit for operating the plants.

Reviewing the fuel supply scenario, we find the demand for gas for power now is 2,100 MMCFD. But Petrobangla supplies a maximum of 1,200 MMCFD. Hence it is possible to generate only 6,000 MW of gas-based power although the capacity is 13,000 MW. To compensate for this, liquid fuel – furnace oil and diesel – are being used for generation. The use of coal is relatively less expensive but for import and transportation constraints coal-based generation is also frequently interrupted. The outstanding payments of IPPs have now accumulated to BDT 27,500 crore. Hence the liquid fuel base plants also cannot operate at full capacity. The total outstanding payments for imported LNG, gas from IOCs and primary fuel is BDT 6,800 crore. The present outstanding payments of the power and energy sector is US\$ 3.3 billion. To maintain the fuel supply, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina advised in June 2023 to clear US\$ 96 million every month to progressively repay the outstanding dues. The advice was to provide US\$ 16 million to the power sector and US\$ 8.0 million to the energy sector every week. But the necessary dollar has not been made available till now. On the other hand, for the power sector, it has been requested to allocate US\$ 500 million every month in 2023-24. That

Capacity Charge/ Rent by Power Plants

Power Plants	Capacity Charge/Rent (Tk crore)
Summit Group	17,610
Agrico International	8,310
United Group	7,758
Payra Power Plant	7,455
Rural Power Company	7,325
Bangla Trac Group	5,423
Orion Group	4,080
KPCL (Summit-United)	3,744
Haripur	3,678
Dorin Group	3,066
Hosaf Group	2,860
Mohammadi Group	2,834
NWPC	2,824
APR Energy	2,788
Max Group	2,351
Confidence Group	2,185
Sikdar Group	1,843
Baraka Group	1,693
Paramount-Bangla Trac	1,631
Sinha Group	1,554

means US\$ 6.0 billion in the financial year. However, within three months of the fiscal year, genuine concerns had developed about the provision of the amount.

Prof. Dr. M Tamim, Dean of BUET and former Special Assistant to the Chief Advisor of the former interim government said an integrated and comprehensive plan for the power and energy sector needs formulation and implementation. But this is not being done. Without assessing the real extent of demand through proper study, generation capacity has increased manifold. Consequently, capacity charges and fixed costs have grown into a pain in the neck. Due to fuel supply deficit and much lower demand, some plants remain idle for most of the time. But these need to be paid capacity charges as per provisions in the contract. This is a real crisis.

Alamgir Kabir, former BPDB Chairman, also observed that another major reason

for the present crisis is the failure of the energy sector to keep pace with the power sector. EMRD and Petrobangla failed to impress upon the Prime Minister the necessity of exploiting domestic coal resources and expediting petroleum resources exploration. He also agreed that the power sector did not carry out extensive feasibility studies to ensure a sustainable supply of required fuel before making decisions on mega power projects. He suggested that actions for setting up new power plants should now be delayed till the present energy and power supply chain management situation is thoroughly reviewed. A special program must be launched for generating up to 2,000 MW of grid-connected solar power for complete moving out of liquid fuel-based power generation during the day. It is possible if a well-coordinated and intensively monitored contingency program is implemented.

Prof. Dr. Shamsul Alam, Senior Vice President of CAB and energy expert, in a discussion with the media, claimed that to serve the interest of individuals rather than catering to the demand, one after another power plants have been set up. This has created a crisis. He suggested getting out of capacity charge provision in the tariff calculation of IPP. According to him, it is a waste of public money. The responsibility for the flawed policy must be fixed and mischief mongers must be brought under law.

Engr. Mizanur Rahman observed that the IPP policy of 1996 and all model agreements like the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), Gas Supply Agreement (GSA), and Land Lease Agreement (LLA) are standard transparent documents. These are followed globally. Capacity charge is not an issue. Rather a huge reserve margin has created the crisis. We must now explore the ways of getting out of it. Agreeing with Engr. Mizan, Prof. Dr. Ijaz Hossain, former Dean of BUET said the Bangladesh power sector is not very reliable. A reserve margin of up to 25%

is acceptable. But now it is much higher. The contingency actions taken in 2009 were the requirement of that time for addressing the chronic power supply crisis. But why most of those contingency liquid fuel-based power plants were not retired? It must now require an investigation of why additional liquid fuel-based plants were approved in 2017-18.

Responding to criticism about capacity charges and excessive reserve margin, Mr. Nasrul Hamid informed the media several times that the reserve margin in many countries including our neighboring India is higher than Bangladesh. He said that the capacity charge and fixed charge are globally-followed processes. The critics have no idea about the power system. These surfaced as the power and energy sectors are in huge financial stress now. We are not responsible for this. We are rather victims of global crisis. We are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Western embargoes imposed after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We expect that it will be possible to get out of the situation.

Reviewing data and information of BPDB, Power Cell, Power Division, and EMRD we don't see any light even at the end of the tunnel that the gas supply situation improving soon. Works are continuing. Some success may come in the next few years. Even an increase in dollar supply and reduction of LNG price in the global market may not help improve the gas supply situation soon. The capacity of the present LNG import infrastructure is 1000 MMCFD. Though the initiative has been taken to double the capacity, this may not happen before the end of 2026. It is also not clear whether the next government will make a political decision for mining domestic coal.

On the other hand, new power plants are being added as per plan. Two large gas-based power plants at Meghnaghat have been added to the supply chain and another will be ready soon. The 2400MW capacity Nuclear Power Plant will be added in the next 2 years. It has now become urgent to send into retirement 7,000 MW liquid fuel-based power plants systematically in phases.



Summit Meghnaghat Power Plant

That will facilitate reducing stress created by expensive power generation. The state minister has recently stated that they have proposals for generating about 10,000 MW of renewable energy in the next 7 years. Of these, he is optimistic about adding 3,000 MW.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has a vision of about 40% generation of the planned 60,000MW capacity coming from renewables by 2041. That means 24,000MW will need to be generated from renewables. Many appear not too optimistic though few believe it to be possible. But this will require extensive policy support like that of fuel oil-based power plants set up under the contingency plan.

The power sector envisions increasing capacity to 40,000 MW by 2030 and 60,000 MW by 2041. Experts believe that there is no appropriate plan for ensuring fuel supply for these. The good track records of Bangladesh government organizations for loan repayments have started disappearing. Confidence in borrowing banks and the investor community has started eroding. These are not good symptoms at all. Clearing the present accumulated dues and arranging funds for future requirements appear to be a major challenge now for the power and energy sector. However, the sector cannot alone meet the challenges. It largely

depends on the overall economic situation of the country. And that also depends on the global situation.

Given the overall situation, experts observe that the government will be required to be more alert and proactive in planning and implementing new projects in the power and energy sector. More realistic and reliable demand projection of power and energy is essential. Intensive care and attention must be given to cost estimations and control. Work on the formulation of an integrated power and energy master plan is in progress. The draft mentions Ammonia and Hydrogen as future energy but clear directions about future demand and appropriate fuel mix have been found missing. Efficient use of power and energy needs to be ensured. Stress must be given to demand-side management. At the same time, the government has to come out of the present liabilities by paying outstanding bills.

Failure to address the issues will overshadow all the achievements of the power sector due to the controversies over capacity charges and excessive reserve margins. Competent and experienced manpower resources must be engaged and utilized. By engaging the right people in the right places, policymakers can meet the present and emerging challenges.

EP



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Contingency Actions For Confronting Energy Crisis

Saleque Sufi

Ensuring a sustainable supply of electricity and fuel will be the major challenge among others during the upcoming government's term from 2024 to 2028. The present grid-connected power generation capacity is 24,971 MW and the highest demand served so far was 15,648 MW on 19 April 2023. Adding off-grid captive generation, and off-grid renewable power, the total installed capacity is 28,134 MW. About 2500-3000 MW generation capacity remains idle due to lack of fuel supply. There exist some constraints in the power transmission grid and distribution networks. The power supply chain has a huge reserve margin. As such BPDB requires accounting for a substantial amount of capacity charge to power plant owners even though the plants remain idle. The State Minister in a recent statement in the national parliament mentioned that over the last 14 and half year's government paid Tk 105,000 crore to independent power plants as capacity charges. The onus of this has been transferred to

the users through increasing power tariffs several times. Despite having a huge surplus generation capacity, the power supply chain suffers from chronic short-

age of fuel. Production of natural gas from Bangladesh gas fields which at some stage of the present government regime increased to 2760 MMCFD has now depleted to 2200 MMCFD. Despite taking some actions by BAPEX and Petrobangla, production continues to be depleted. The government is importing LNG and using two private sector-operated FSRUs anchored at Mo-heshkhali offshore supplying up to 800 MMCFD-equivalent RLNG to the national gas grid. The total gas supply available is now 2900-3000 MMCFD. As per Petrobangla's information, the daily deficit is about 800-1000 MMCFD. The gas supply deficits not only handicap generation of gas-based power but also impact fertilizer production, operation of industries, CNG, and domestic cooking. Present fuel mix as appeared on the BPDB website indicates that 45.65% of generation is natural gas based, 31.1% is liquid fuel based, 10.66% relies on power import, 10.81% is coal-based, RE contributes 1.84% and Hydropower

Present Power Sector Scenario (June 30,2023)
Generation Capacity

A Public Sector		
Companies	No Of Plants	Installed Capacity MW
BPDB	39	6233
APSL	05	1394
EGCB	03	957
NWPGCL	07	1401
B-R Power Generation	02	312
RPCL	03	182
Subtotal	59	10,479 (42% of Total)
B Joint Venture		
Companies	Plant	Installed Capacity (MW)
BCPCL (JV of NWPGCL & CMC, China)	01	1244
BIFCPCL (JV of BPDB and NTPC, India)	01	617
Subtotal	02	1861 (7%)
C. Power Import		
Source	Plant	Capacity (MW)
Bheramara HVDC	01	1000
Tripura Radial Mode	01	160
Jharkhand (India) Adani Power	02	1496
Subtotal		2656 (11%)
D. Private Sector		
Companies	Plants	Installed Capacity
IPPs	62	8494
SIPPs (BPDB)	04	99
SIPPs (REB)	09	251
15 Years Rental	04	169
3/5 Years Rental	02	105
Rental (No Power, No Payment)	10	797
Sub Total	91	9915 (40%)
<i>Grand Total Grid Connected Generation Capacity: A+B +C + D = 24,991 MW</i>		
<i>Total Generation Capacity: Grid + non-Grid = 24,991 + 2800 (Off Grid Captive) + 423 Grid and Off Grid RE = 28,134 MW.</i>		

0.92%. But for gas supply constraints power generation from the recent past relies about 60% on imported fuel. Given the dollar crisis and depletion of foreign currency reserves, BPDB, BPC, and Petrobangla are severely stressed in making payments for coal, LNG, and Liquid fuel imports. BPDB also cannot make regular payments for power supplied by IPPs, and Petrobangla cannot make regular payments to IOCs. BPC struggles to make payments to liquid fuel suppliers. Private sector LPG operators are in problems in establishing letters of credit for LPG import. The COVID-19 Pandemic followed by the ongoing war in Ukraine has impacted the global economy. In such a situation, the next government must make an appropriate integrated plan for addressing energy and power sector issues. Special attention must be given to exploiting discovered coal resources, and expediting petroleum exploration. Bangladesh's economy cannot sustain the price shock of imported fuel. Bangladesh cannot let its industries, especially export-oriented ones continue suffering from chronic power and fuel crises.

As far as generation capacity is concerned Bangladesh has made milestone achievements. In two years, more coal-based power and nuclear power generation capacity will be added. Some new gas-based power plants in the Meghnaghat area have started commercial operation. Hydropower imports from Nepal may also start. Renewables, especially rooftop solar, will contribute. The challenges are now completing ongoing works

of power transmission and distribution networks, planning, and executing own fuel exploitation initiatives, energy conservation, and efficiency.

IOCs per GPSA of PSCs are allowed to produce at the rate of 7.5% of the

proven recoverable reserve. As such all the IOCs operated gas fields including prolific Bibiyana are on the verge of depletion.

Total Gas Production from Bangladesh Gas Fields

It may be noted that mainly from development work, the IOCs' gas production reached 2760 MMCFD. BAPEX, retaining exclusive rights of exploration onshore, did some work within its capacity and discovered a few marginal gas fields. But that increase was way below the expected level. Consequently, proven gas reserves continued depleting and there is a possibility of major depletion setting in the next couple of years. Petrobangla initiated a plan for importing LNG in 2010 but in 13 years since then only about 800 MMCFD LNG can be imported using two private sector FSRUs anchored at Moheshkhali offshore.

Petrobangla sources inform that the coincident peak demand of gas now is 3700 MMCFD. However, reliable unofficial sources claim that the demand is not less than 4300-4500 MMCFD. For a huge gas deficit at least 50% of the gas-based power generation capacity remains idle, and gas rationing needs to be done for fertilizer plants and CNG. Still, industries continue to suffer from the acute gas crisis. The situation may get more acute in 2024 and 2025 unless the next government implements some contingency action plans for ensuring a sustainable supply of fuel.

Present Plans

The present crisis has emanated from the government's failure to develop the energy sector as a com-

Gas Production Scenario (9-10 September 2023)

A. Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFCL)

Gas Fields	Producing Wells	Capacity (MMCFD)	Production On The Day (MMCFD)
Titas	26	542	388.50
Habiganj	08	225	123.10
Bakhrabad	07	43	31.60
Norshingdi	02	30	25.40
Meghna	01	11	03.20
5 Gas Fields	44	851	571.90

B. Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL)

Gas Fields	Producing Wells	Capacity (MMCFD)	Production On The Day (MMCFD)
Sylhet	01	06	05.50
Koillashtilla	04	68	25.30
Rashidpoor	05	60	46.40
Beanibazar	01	15	15.50
4 Gas fields	11	149	92.60

C. Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Company (BAPEX)

Gas Fields	Producing Wells	Capacity (MMCFD)	Production On The Day (MMCFD)
Salda	02	03	03.30
Fenchuganj	02	26	12.10
Semutang	02	03	00.90
Shabazpur	04	50	64.80
Sundalpoor	01	05	07.90
Srikail	03	40	30.40
Begumganj	01	10	08.20
Rupganj	0	0	00.00
8 Gas Fields	15	145	127.60

Shabazpoor Gas Fields at Bhola is not connected to national gas grid.

D. International Oil Companies

Companies	Gas Fields	Producing Wells	Capacity (MMCFD)	Production On The Day (MMCFD)
Chevron	Jalalabad	07	270.00	173.50
Chevron	Maulavibazar	05	42.00	16.40
Chevron	Bibiyana	26	1200.00	1089.30
Tullow	Bhangura	05	103.00	43.60
2 IOCs	4 Gas Fields	43 Wells	1615.00	1322.80

plement to the expansion of the power sector. Policymakers continued ignoring repeated suggestions and urges of experts to make political decisions on coal resource exploitation and petroleum exploration. BAPEx alone policy for onshore exploration and growing dependence on imported fuel proved self-defeating. Experts believe that the crisis would have happened whether the COVID pandemic destabilized global order or the war in Ukraine made the global fuel market volatile. In modern days no developing country can sustain price shock and supply chain risks and challenges of imported fuel. And that too leaving its own discovered coal resources at mineable depth buried. Policymakers even overlooked some study reports of potential petroleum resources onshore and offshore. The government let Petrobangla go under the exclusive control of non-performing bureaucrats. The Petrobangla initiative for increasing gas production failed. GAZPROM was engaged for drilling development wells in Petrobangla-owned gas fields though BAPEx had capabilities for doing these. On the other hand, BAPEx was given the impossible task of drilling 108 wells in 5 years. When it failed BAPEx was again tasked with a project of drilling 48 wells by 2025. Now by the end of 2023, only 7 of these have been drilled. EMRD now wants BAPEx to complete these by 2024. The program includes some exploration wells including some wells at deeper high-pressure zones. Experts believe that it will not be possible for BAPEx to complete the tasks even by 2025. But by then production may deplete another 200-300 MMCFD. The present plan is to increase LNG import capacity through setting up two more FSRUs by private sector companies. These also may not be completed before 2026 even if these start in early 2024. The government is still struggling to start work on the Land Based

Present Scenario of LNG Import (9-10 September 2023)

Company	FSRUs	Capacity	Supplied on The Day
RPGCL	Summit Energy & Excelerate Energy	1000 MMCFD	752.90 MMCFD

Total Gas + RLNG Supply (9-10 September 2023) = 2867.70 MMCFD

LNG terminal at Matarbari. Experts believe that unless some special initiative is taken by the incumbent government LBT may not be operational by 2030 even.

The government has approved the updated MPSC for offshore exploration. However, EMRD has not given specific instructions to Petrobangla for launching a new round of PSC bidding. Even if the incumbent government launches in the middle of 2024, it will not be possible to conclude PSCs with IOCs before early 2025. Any gas from any success in deep water may not be available before 2030. We are aware that the US Energy giant has given an unsolicited offer for investment at all 15 deep water blocks of the Bay of Bengal. Exxon Mobil wants to conclude non-binding MOUs through negotiation. Considering the global and regional geopolitics we will suggest not awarding PSCs to a single company for all deep-water blocks. On the other hand, Petrobangla and Chevron must expedite works for concluding new PSCs for exploration in the Surma basin. For this, we understand that MPSC for onshore exploration requires updating.

All of the above will take considerable time. But the crisis will continue deepening. The next government must implement a contingency action plan. Experts informed about finding 150 leads for Petroleum from 2D seismic surveys carried out by BAPEx. The company is continuing to carry out more 2D and 3D seismic surveys. The government must initiate actions for a 3-4 intensive exploration program for drilling at least 30 exploration wells investing Tk 20,000-30,000 crore. These can be done by strengthening BAPEx and engaging drilling contractors. BAPEx in its present capacity cannot carry out more than two exploration wells a year.

The BAPEx program for the exploration of CHT prospects must be expedited. If policymakers are not satisfied with the quality and competence of the short-listed companies BAPEx selected through scrutiny of responses to EOI as a joint venture with BAPEx let there be roadshows for attracting drilling companies and even investors for exploration at CHT prospects. India in adjacent Tripura has discovered petroleum resources. Gas discovered in CHT can easily be evacuated to the national gas grid.

Bangladesh cannot keep its fingers crossed and witness the gas resources running out. Bangladesh cannot absorb the price shock of imported energy in the global market, and cannot also risk supply chain disruptions. But for effectively managing all the above BAPEx and Petrobangla must be restructured making these champions for professionally managing massive exploration and development of their fuel resources. The foreign currency reserve is under stress now to meet various commitments. Very soon repayment of loans with interests taken from various development partners for the implementation of different mega projects will start. Nothing much may be left with the government for payment of fuel import bills or payments of IPPs and IOCs. Increasing contributions of own fuel, expanding RE contribution as far as practicable, and ensuring energy efficiency are the ways to confront the crisis. Industries must not suffer from fuel and power crises. This will not only discourage foreign direct investment but also will make existing export-oriented industries struggle to meet export obligations. The bottom line is exploiting its coal resources and significantly expediting the exploration of petroleum resources onshore and offshore.

EP

Saleque Sufi,
Contributing Editor, EP

An aerial photograph showing a modern power plant facility with several large cylindrical storage tanks and a complex of pipes and structures. To the right, a large field of solar panels is visible. In the background, a dense forest of green trees sits atop a hill, with a city skyline of various skyscrapers rising behind it under a clear blue sky with light clouds. Several high-voltage power lines with towers stretch across the forested area.

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As War Prolongs, EU Ready To Combat Ensuing Winter

Its Gas Reserves Reach 90% Ahead Of Nov. Deadline

Govinda Shil

As the EU has accomplished its target of filling gas storage facilities to 90% of capacity more than two months ahead of the November 1 deadline, it has adopted a policy mix, too. This gas reserve will be able to meet one third of its winter needs. Europe's gas demand reduction regulation has been extended for another year which saw an 18% drop in gas consumption from August 2022 to May 2023.

The European Commission says the bloc has enough gas to cover a third of its winter requirements. The EU energy market is in a much more stable position than it was this time last year. Their gas storage levels have reached 1024 TWh or 90.12% of storage capacity or to just over 93 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas, reports say.

On September 13, at the State of the

Union Address, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, "We have not forgotten, Putin's deliberate use of gas as a weapon and how it triggered fears of blackout and an energy crisis like in the 70s."

She said, many thought, EU would not have enough energy to get through the winter. "But we made it."

She added, "Because we stayed united – pooling our demand and buying energy together. And at the same time, different to the 70s, we used the crisis to massively invest in renewables and fast-track the clean transition."

von der Leyen said her team used Europe's critical mass to bring prices down and secure "our supply."

The price for gas in Europe was over 300 euros per MWh one year ago. It is now around 35, she added.

In response to the sufferings and global energy market disruption stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Commission has started implementing its REPowerEU Plan which was launched in May 2022. It is aiding EU to save energy, produce clean energy and diversify its energy supplies. The REPowerEU Plan is a blueprint proposed by the European Commission to rapidly decrease the European Union's dependency on Russian fossil fuels.

The Plan has started benefitting the EU citizens in many ways. The EU has

- A. reduced its dependency on Russian fossil fuels
- B. saved almost 20% of its energy consumption
- C. introduced the gas price cap and the global oil price cap
- D. doubled the additional deployment of renewables

The EU has started collectively buying gas this year. The orders could be placed from Sept. 21, for deliveries from November 2023 to March 2025, reports say.

Key investments at EU and respective national levels have also enhanced the EU's LNG import capacity, reinforcing the resilience of the bloc's gas system. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine it became obvious that the EU needed alternative sources to ensure its energy supply. Although some member states historically imported more Russian gas



than others, the consequences of possible disruptions would be jointly suffered by all. For that reason, the member states are now united and ready to share gas with their neighbours in case of need.

Since last September, Russian gas accounted for only 8% of all pipeline gas imported into the EU, compared to 41% of EU imports from Russia in the earlier year.

The EU is also

- establishing agreements with other third countries for pipeline imports
- investing in common purchase of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)
- securing strategic partnerships with Namibia, Egypt and Kazakhstan to ensure a secure and sustainable supply of renewable hydrogen
- signing agreements with Egypt and Israel for the export of natural gas to Europe

The EU thinks it needs to secure its energy supplies not only for the ensuing winter, but also for the years ahead. This is why the partnerships focus on building a greener future, towards climate neutrality.

Following the invasion, the EU proposed 'common gas procurement' so that Europeans have access to affordable energy. And, this was meant for avoiding any energy supply disruptions.



Ursula von der Leyen, President, European Commission

This system permitted EU to start buying a share of its gas needs together, as Europeans, and not competing among the members for scarce supplies.

During last year's May, the EU was able to attract bids from a total number of 25 supplying companies equivalent to more than 13.4 billion cubic meters of gas (bcm). This easily surpasses the 11.6 bcm of joint demand that EU companies had submitted through the first tender (under a deal named AggregateEU mechanism). EU companies will now be able to negotiate the terms of the supply contracts directly with the supplying companies. A number of four more tenders will be floated by the end of 2023.

The EU also launched a EU Energy Platform which played a crucial role in aiding diversification of the bloc's energy supply throughout last year. The platform helps coordinate EU actions and negotiations with external gas suppliers for preventing EU countries from out-bidding each other. The Platform is also leveraging the weight of the EU single market to achieve better conditions for all EU consumers.

As a result of working together, gas prices in Europe got lower today than prior to Russia's inva-

sion of Ukraine. It was possible partly due to coordinated European response under REPowerEU. Nevertheless, EU countries have agreed to put a limit on gas price spikes which will help protect their citizens and the economy, respectively. A price ceiling for gas transactions will be applied when and if gas prices reach exceptional levels.

This market correction mechanism is temporary. It will remain in force until February 2024.

The European Union will open its third round of joint gas buying next month, as the bloc moves to secure supplies in preparation for another winter with scarce Russian gas. The scheme estimates demand from companies, then seeks offers from global gas suppliers. And then, matches buyers and sellers. The EU is not involved in the commercial negotiations that follow between the companies to sign contracts.

The joint buying scheme is not purchasing any Russian gas. Meanwhile, in another development, British energy start-up Xlinks contemplates to build an undersea electricity cable from Morocco to the UK. It believes that Moroccan solar and wind power can provide 8% of the UK's electricity requirements by 2030.

EU Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson said, "The EU energy market is in a much more stable position than it was this time last year, in good part because of the measures we have taken at EU level. But we have seen in recent weeks that the gas market remains sensitive. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation, so that storage levels remain sufficiently high as we enter the next winter."

He put emphasis on further strengthening EU's position through investments in renewables and energy efficiency. **EP**

Govinda Shil,
Freelance Journalist



Kadri Simson, EU Energy Commissioner

Empowering Next Generation Through Climate Education

Mohammad Al-Amin

The need to combat climate change has become more urgent in the face of unprecedented environmental challenges. Climate education is essential for empowering individuals to take effective action and make positive changes. It equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required to act as change agents so they can comprehend and address the effects of the climate crisis. As the impact of climate change becomes more apparent, there is a moral obligation to equip current and future generations with the necessary knowledge and resources to become effective climate advocates. In the struggle against climate change, the international community acknowledges the significance of education and training. This essay contends for including comprehensive climate education in school curricula, emphasizing its transformative potential in nurturing environmentally conscious and responsible citizens.

Its value lies in its capacity to foster a thorough understanding of the complex relationship between human activities and the environment. By providing exhaustive and scientifically accurate information, students can comprehend the gravity of the situation and recognize

their individual and collective responsibilities to respond to the crisis. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives of the Paris Agreement require governments to educate, empower, and engage all stakeholders and critical organizations regarding policies and actions. The prevalence of climate skepticism in certain circles has impeded effective climate action. By providing individuals with accurate and timely information, we can create a society that embraces science and evidence-based decision-making. Climate education must emphasize the interdependence of environmental, social, and economic issues. It influences agricultural security, water resources, human health, biodiversity, and social justice. Incorporating these concepts into climate education promotes a holistic approach to problem-solving that considers numerous sustainability dimensions. In addition, climate education should involve the entire community and extend beyond the classroom. Educational institutions can increase awareness and encourage grassroots action by partnering with local organizations. Community-led initiatives are essential for fostering resilience, especially in vulnerable regions disproportionately impacted by climate change.

In addition to these factors, the study examined the perspectives and experiences of young Bangladeshis regarding the effects of climate change on education.

Even though 77% of respondents reported learning about climate change and global warming in school, 50% of respondents were unable to define it, according to the study's primary findings. 70% of respondents expressed at least a modicum of concern regarding the repercussions of the future. 65% of respondents believed governments should take the most action, followed by adolescents and young adults (24%) and enterprises (9%). 78% of respondents indicated that climate change impacted their education, ranging from school withdrawals induced by inundation (25%) to impacts on the commute to school (23%). If granted the necessary resources, 94% of respondents indicated they would take action to combat climate change. Floods, cyclones, storm surges, riverbank erosion, desertification, and rising sea levels are just some of the hazards that could cause physical and social damage to Bangladesh's 63 million adolescents. In 2008, floodwaters destroyed 49 schools and severely damaged 700 others, denying roughly 50,000 children the right

to an education. Climate education should emphasize practical skills and encourage students to take the initiative and promote awareness. Participating in sustainability programs or local environmental initiatives allows students to apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios.

For climate education to be truly effective, it must be integrated into a variety of subjects and educational levels. Even the industries should incorporate climate-related concepts. This interdisciplinary approach allows students to comprehend the complexities of climate change and its solutions, nurturing a well-rounded education that encourages critical thinking and creativity. CLIMATE Asia Pacific (CAP) is a network of environmental educators and advocates from Asia-Pacific nations whose mission is to raise public awareness and capacity to address climate change and other environmental issues. The

Bangladesh Renewable Energy Policy of 2008, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan of 2009, the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Act of 2010, the Bangladesh Delta Plan of 2100, the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management of 2021, the National Plan for Disaster Management of 2021–2025, and the National Environment Policy of 2018 are examples of government initiatives and policies. Incorporating technology and innovation into climate education can also produce extraordinary results. Using virtual simulations, data analysis tools, and interactive platforms for environmental monitoring and sustainable development, they enhance learning opportunities and make them more accessible to students of all ages. The education and environment ministries should implement effective programs in campaign and advocacy, training, network development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, legislative lobbying,

research and documentation, ecotourism, hill cultivation, energy efficiency and conservation awareness, etc.

In conclusion, climate education is the foundation for future climate leaders. It is not merely a theoretical pursuit but a crucial tool for empowering individuals to become agents of positive change. By cultivating a comprehensive understanding of climate science, fostering interdisciplinary learning, and promoting community engagement, we can create an informed, proactive generation committed to preserving the planet for future generations. As a society, we must prioritize climate education and invest in the potential of our youth as the engine of a sustainable future.



Mohammad Al-Amin,
Student, Public Administration,
Comilla University, District Coordinator, YouthNet (Cumilla), National Delegate, Mock COP28 Education Ministers Summit

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যোগাযোগ

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বিজ্ঞাপন হার	টাকা
শেষ প্রচ্ছদ (রঙিন)	৫০,০০০.০০
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ভেতরে অর্ধেক পাতা (রঙিন)	২০,০০০.০০
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Efforts Underway for Uninterrupted Power Supply at Affordable Price: Nasrul



State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid has said that the government has been working to supply uninterrupted electricity at affordable price with taking challenge.

"The power sector needs \$75 billion in investment over the next 15 years to ensure uninterrupted power supply at affordable price," he said while addressing a 3-day regional climate conference titled: "Energy Policy: Ensuring ac-

cess to affordable, reliable and modern energy service at towards a resilience South Asia: Regional Climate Summit 2023" at a hotel in the city recently.

The state minister addressed the conference as the keynote speaker and said that a successful transition from fossil fuels to clean energy requires coordinated and joint initiatives.

However, power and energy consumption vary from country to country, he observed, adding, "Renewable, especially, solar projects have some specific challenges. It needs huge land and it's difficult to implement in a country like Bangladesh where there is land scarcity." **EP**

Govt Shelves Dynamic Fuel Pricing Plan



The government has shelved the plan to implement an automated dynamic fuel-pricing mechanism for now, fearing repercussions from stakeholders including pump owners and commoners, ahead of the next general election, said sources.

The state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has been instructed to slow

down the execution of the formula to avoid any sort of unrest over fuel pricing, a senior BPC official said recently.

If the formula - which is meant to keep domestic fuel prices on a par with the international market - is implemented now, the domestic petroleum prices will need to be raised, claimed the official.

However, the domestic fuel prices could have witnessed a decline if the automated fuel-pricing formula had been implemented a couple of months ago when the plan was initiated, he added. **EP**

Matarbari Power Plant Successfully Completes Trial Production

The trial production of the Matarbari Ultra Super Critical Coal Fired Power Plant has successfully been completed.



The trial production of the first unit of the plant has been completed in the first week of September after test of over one month generating 600 MW power, said Engineer Abul Kalam Azad, Project Director.

The trial production will again begin within the next 15 days, he said, expecting that the first unit of the plant would go on full production in November when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is likely to open it.

The Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited

(CPGCBL) is implementing the plant. The second unit with 600 MW capacity is expected to be added by March 2024, he said.

CPGCBL, a state-owned enterprise of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, developed the project at a cost of Tk 51,854.88 crore.

If the plant goes to commercial operation, the entire plant will require 10,000 tonnes of coal every day, each unit requires 5,000 tonnes. **EP**

Govt Plans Electric Train on Dhaka-Ctg Route

Railway Minister M Nurul Islam Sujan recently said the government has a plan to operate electric train service on Dhaka-Chattogram route.



"Bangladesh Railway has been working for providing cost-effective safe and comfortable transport service to the people of the country," he said while replying to a star-marked question made by treasury bench lawmaker M Mamunur Rashid Kiron of Noakhali-3 at the question-answer session tabled at the Jatiya Sangsad.

To this end, the minister said the government has already taken a feasibility study

project aiming to operate electric train service between the capital Dhaka and the port city of Chattogram.

Even, an agreement for appointing consultant for conducting feasibility study and completion of detailed design for introducing electric traction from Narayanganj to Chattogram via Dhaka has been signed on July 16, 2023.

Sujon said, "We hope that the feasibility study project will be concluded by April 2024." **EP**

PRIDE IN
BANGLADESHI
INFRASTRUCTURE



CIL PRODUCTS

STEEL

- | STEEL POLE
- | STREET LIGHT POLE
- | TRANSMISSION TOWER
- | TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER
- | PRE ENGINEERED BUILDING/STRUCTURES
- | HARDWARE AND POLE FITTINGS
- | STEEL BRIDGE

TRANSFORMERS

- | SINGLE PHASE DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER
- | THREE PHASE DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER
- | THREE PHASE POWER TRANSFORMER

GEO TEXTILES

- | GEOBAGS
- | GEOMATS
- | GEOTUBES

PRECAST

- | SPC POLE
- | SPC PILE
- | RAILWAY SLIPPERS

CIL SERVICES

RIVER DREDGING

RIVER BANK PROTECTION

EPC (ENGINEERING PROCUREMENT & CONSTRUCTION)

Phulbari Movement: Conspiracy on to Restart Coal Mine Project



company to resume the project, he said while speaking at a rally marking 17 years of the Phulbari movement in Nimtala area of the upazila town.

"The ones who believe that the movement has waned are mistaken. The locals are vigilant even today," added Anu Muhammad who was present as the chief guest.

Urging the authorities to take preventive measures, he said that the people will reunite if the foreign companies conspire again. **EP**

Conspiracies are still afoot to reinitiate the Phulbari coal mine project, said Anu Muhammad, member secretary of National Committee for Protection of Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports.

Asia Energy, a London-based company contracted to implement the project, has partnered with a Chinese

Global High-Voltage Switchgear Market to Reach \$30.3b in 2027: GlobalData

The global high-voltage (HV) switchgear market is forecast to reach \$30.34 billion in 2027 from \$25.02 billion in 2022, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.54% between 2023 and 2027, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's latest report, "Switchgears for Power Transmission, Market Size, Share and Trends Analysis by Technology, Installed Capacity, Generation, Key Players and Forecast, 2022-2027," reveals that in 2022, the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region held the largest share of the market for HV switchgears globally, with a share of 44.60%.

The region's market share is expected to increase to 48.24%, in 2027, higher than

the growth expected in all other regions.

According to GlobalData's 2023 Switchgears Market Report, the HV switchgear market in the EMEA region was estimated to be \$11.16 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach \$14.63 billion, registering a CAGR of 5.03% over 2023-27. The economic boom in countries in the Middle East led to an increase in demand for power, contributing to the growth of the market.

In 2022, Asia-Pacific's market value stood at \$10.77 billion, accounting for a share of 43.05% in the global HV switchgear market. The HV switchgear market in the Americas is expected to reach \$3.11 billion by 2027, as the grid requires upgrades to replace aging assets and to accommodate the increasing sources of renewable energy. **EP**

Dhaka, Jakarta Sign MoU on Energy, Health Cooperation

Bangladesh and Indonesia have signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the two countries in the energy sector.



A separate bilateral MoU on agricultural cooperation between the two countries was also signed.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen and his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi in Jakarta signed the MoUs recently.

Bangladesh urged Indonesia to ease the market access for Bangladeshi readymade garment products in Indonesia. **EP**

While the energy-sector MoU aims at promoting long-term sale and delivery of the conventional form of energy to and developing new and renewable energy sources and power plants in Bangladesh, the agriculture one is intended to foster collaboration in producing, marketing, promoting technology transfer and exchange of best practices in the field of agriculture, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **EP**

New Petrol Pain and Global Inflation Fears as OPEC Keeps Oil Curbs

Petrol prices and global inflation are likely to tick higher again as the OPEC+ group of oil producing countries will hold production at nine million barrels a day for the rest of the year.



This is the stark warning from Nigel Green, the founder of deVere Group, one of the world's largest independent financial advisory, asset management and fintech organizations, as Saudi Arabia announced it would maintain its production cut of one million barrels a day until December.

This maintains the country's output at nine million barrels a day, the lowest amount in

several years. Russia has also confirmed it would maintain its own cutback of 300,000 barrels a day for the same period.

Nigel Green comments: "OPEC+ is ramping up petrol price pain, triggering fresh and increasing concerns about rising global inflation - which was just beginning to ease - meaning central banks could possibly push higher-for-longer interest rates." **EP**

Chevron to Explore More Gas Using Sophisticated Technology



Chevron will explore more gas from its existing facilities using world-class technological know-how.

Eric M. Walker, President and Managing Director of Chevron Bangladesh, made these statements during a session titled "Geology for Non-Geologists" organized at the company's office in the capital recently.

Chevron Bangladesh is entering a new era in the country as the company looks to build upon its partnership with Petrobangla to unlock further gas supply from exist-

ing facilities using the company's world-class technological know-how, he said.

He also said the company plays a key role in Bangladesh's energy sector by ensuring an affordable, reliable, and clean energy supply to the nation, according to a press release.

Chevron Bangladesh has been a reliable partner and trusted investor in Bangladesh for over 28 years.

Chevron Bangladesh values its long-standing relationship with Petrobangla and the government of Bangladesh, according to Eric. "We are committed to working with the government to help achieve the nation's energy goals and ensure that Chevron Bangladesh is the partner of choice," he said. **EP**

Generation at Karnaphuli Power Station Rises as Kaptai Lake Swells



Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Power Station is generating 203 MW of power per day due to the rise in Kaptai Lake water level.

Heavy rainfall and onrush of water from the upstream has contributed to the rise in the lake's water.

Sources said this is the highest power generation of the power station this year.

Engineer ATM Abdus Zaher, manager of the Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Power Station, said power is being generated from all five units.

According to the rule curve, Kaptai Lake was initially expected to reach 99.60 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) but the current water level has reached 109 feet MSL, indicating the significant impact of the ongoing rains.

If the water level of the Kaptai Lake increases further, then there is a possibility of further rise in power generation, he added. **EP**

Govt Sifting ExxonMobil Offer of \$30b Investment in Offshore Exploration

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid has said the government is considering the proposal of ExxonMobile, the global energy giant US oil company's proposal, that offered to invest up to \$30 billion for deep-sea oil and gas exploration in the Bay of Bengal.

Following a meeting with the US-Bangladesh Business Council members, Nasrul Hamid told reporters that the US investors have shown "passionate" interest to invest in Bangladesh's energy sector, there is no concern among US businessmen about the political situation here.

"Two major oil companies have offers us with their investment plan in the Bay of Bengal to explore our hydrocarbon potential, the US company Chevron and Exceleat is working here,



they are world class and abide by law, which is a win-win situation for us," the State Minister said.

"US is the major partner in Bangladesh's energy and power sector, Bangladesh-US working together for last 30 years, now Chevron is producing country's 64 per cent energy (gas), Exceleat is supplying LNG and we are set to signed the second deal with this US company to ensure our energy security," the State Minister said.

He said that the US businessmen do not see any risk in spontaneous investment here and they are optimistic about Bangladesh's potential. **EP**

Three Subsidiaries to Merge with Parent Intraco Refueling Station

Three CNG refueling stations, which are among the five subsidiaries of Intraco Refueling Station Limited, are going to be merged with their parent company.

The subsidiaries to be merged are M HYE & Co CNG Refueling Station in Hobiganj, Nessa & Sons in Pabna, and Good CNG Refueling Station in Gabtoli.

After the merger, Intraco Refueling Station will be the only surviving entity. The merger is subject to approval by the company's shareholders, regulatory authorities, concerned banks, and also the court.

The three CNG stations are now operating on rented lands. Intraco holds more than 95% stake in each of these subsidiaries. **EP**

Smart Grid to Ensure Quality Power Supply in Dhaka: DPDC



Dhaka Power Distribution Company Limited (DPDC) managing director Bikash Dewan said that the introduction of the smart grids will help ensure quality and uninterrupted supply of power to consumers within four years in the capital city.

It will also help as a rapid action team after four years to solve the consumers' complaints rapidly, he added.

"The consumers now have to communicate with the power

distribution office. But after installation of smart grids, the power distribution companies will communicate with the consumers rapidly and be able to immediately solve the complaints."

Bikash Dewan was speaking at a seminar on "Exploring Smart Grids: Shaping The Future Sustainable Energy", jointly organized by DPDC, European Union, AFD France and NKSoft Corporation, USA at the and the United International University (UIU) campus in Dhaka.

He said that the DPDC is implementing a smart grid roadmap in three separate phases which will be completed by 2027. **EP**

Capacity Payments: Tk 1.05t Paid to Pvt Power Companies in Three Terms

The present government has paid a total of Tk 1.05 trillion to 82 independent power producers and 32 rental power plants as capacity charge or rental payment during its three terms.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid disclosed this in parliament recently.

Replying to a tabled question of opposition Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan, Nasrul said that the Bangladesh-China Power Company Plant was paid the highest Tk 74.55 billion among the 82 independent producers while Aggreko International Projects was paid the highest Tk 23.41 billion among the 32 rental power plants.

The state minister placed a list of the names of 82 IPP power plants and 32 rental power plants and the amount of money paid to them.

In his question, Mokabbir Khan wanted to know the amount of capacity charge the present government has paid to power plants during its three consecutive tenures.

The opposition MP also wanted to know the names of the owners of the power plants and the conditions of agreements with them.

According to the minister's information, the government paid capacity charges to 70 out of 82 IPP power plants.

Since 2009 to June 30 of this year, Tk 762.42 billion has been paid to these power plants due to capacity charges, Nasrul said. **EP**

Titas Aims to Bring 82% Households under Prepaid Metering in 5 years

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited has undertaken two new projects to bring 17.50 lakh additional household gas consumers under the pre-paid metering system in the next five years.

The costs of the projects have been estimated at Tk6,234 crore, of which Tk4,664 crore will be provided by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Once completed, the prepaid metering coverage for household users of the state-owned company will reach 81.79%, according to Titas officials.

The officials said the number of Titas' household connections is about 26.63 lakh. Around 8,600 meters have already been installed with ADB financing.

Additionally, 320,000 pre-paid meters have been installed under an ongoing project funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica). Now, under the ongoing project with Jica loan assistance, another 1 lakh pre-paid meters are being installed, the officials added.

The new projects are awaiting approval by the Planning Commission. **EP**

India Cuts Prices of Cooking Gas

India cut the price of cooking gas for households recently by about 18 percent to rein in inflation ahead of crucial state and general elections.

The government reduced the price by 200 rupees (\$2.42) on a 14.2-kilogram (33 pounds) cooking gas cylinder sold to 330 million households, Information Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters.

The decision will impact about 100 million low-income families who form a key voter base and have felt the pinch of the rise in food prices over the last few months, as India's annual inflation rose to a 15-month high in July.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has been criticized by the opposition over high inflation and the price of liquefied petroleum gas ahead of crucial elections in five states in the coming months and national elections in mid-2024.

The government will have to spend an additional 40 billion rupees for the enhanced cooking gas subsidy, in addition to about 76 billion rupees it has budgeted for the current fiscal year. **EP**



North-West Power Generation Company Limited

(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)



Market Share

- ✓ 3063 MW generation capacity.
- ✓ Highest among all govt. companies.

09
Power Plants,
Total: 3063 MW

Start of Electricity Sales

- ✓ COD of 1st Power Plant



Commencement of Business

- ✓ Started with 02 development projects.

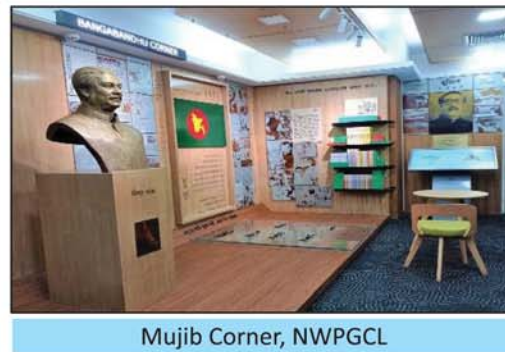
Registration & Incorporation

NWPGCL
Enlightening Life
Enlightening Bangladesh



ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Certified

ISO



Mujib Corner, NWPGCL

Power Plants of NWPGCL & its JVC

Green page

Mobile Solar Pump Boon for Kurigram's Char Farmers



In an effort to reshape the destiny of Kurigram char farmers, the Rural Development Academy (RDA) introduced a portable solar pump for irrigation that has brought much-needed relief to them.

With the support of the government funded portable solar pump, around 1500 farmers of Bajradiyar-Khata village of Chilmari upazila now can irrigate their lands and produce crops at a significantly reduced cost.

The farmers in this region have long been grappling with the challenges posed by both floods and droughts, and had to rely

on conventional shallow irrigation pumps for a long time.

The rise in diesel fuel prices for operating the conventional shallow machines, coupled with mechanical issues, has been a serious concern for a long time. The char area farmers are now rejoicing as the mobile solar pump offers them a cost-effective solution.

The advent of the solar pump has proven to be a dependable alternative, and ushering in positive changes.

The innovative mobile solar pump boasts a setup comprising eight strategically positioned solar panels mounted on iron frames. Through the use of a battery-less converter, farmers are able to harness water from nearby rivers and canals by employing plastic piping and an electric pump.

This approach has negated the need for cumbersome transportation, as the pump has been ingeniously designed to be mobile and transportable directly to the fields. **EP**

UN Chief Urges World to Make Africa RE Superpower



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently urged the international community to help make

Africa "a renewable energy superpower" as the continent hosts a landmark climate summit focused on drawing investment to projects to fight global warming.

"Renewable energy could be the African miracle. But we must make it happen," Guterres told the summit, asking leaders of the Group of 20 major economies in particular, who are meeting in India on the weekend, to "assume your responsibilities" in the fight against climate change. **EP**

Towards a Solar-Powered Future

Bangladesh's rapid ascent as a nation does not happen without adequate power generation, and with the country looking to only accelerate towards its eventual ambition of becoming a developed country in the next two decades, it is imperative that electricity generation remains top of mind.

However, with the threat of climate change worsening with each passing



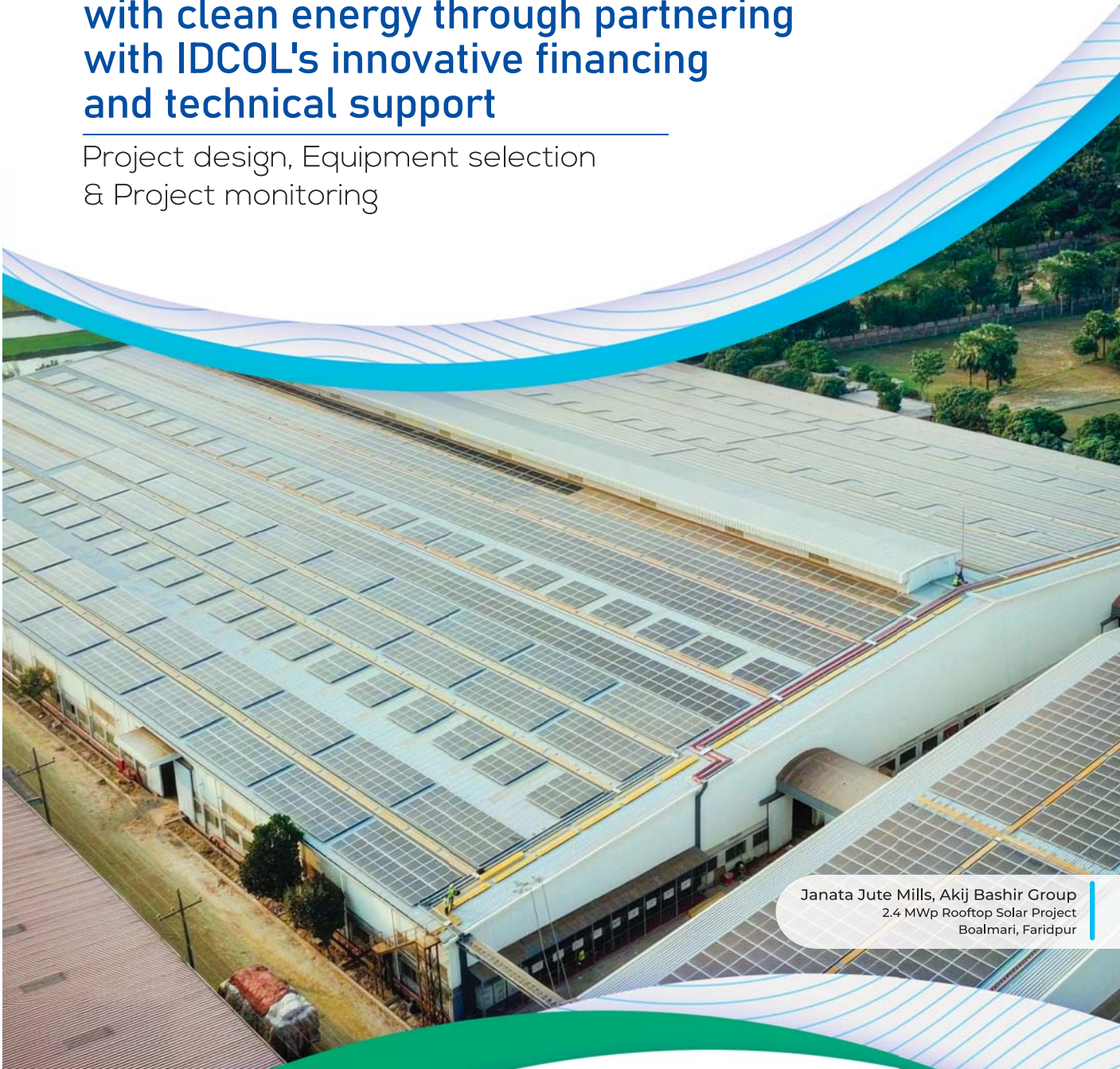
year, it is simply not feasible to generate all of our present and certainly future electricity from non-renewable sources such as fossil fuels.

While Bangladesh's current reality when it comes to electricity and power generation compels us to rely heavily on non-renewable sources, we must look to correct this and shift to renewable sources to the best of our abilities.

To that end, it is good news to learn of the solar power plant that has been proposed, in a location beside the Rampal coal-fired power plant. The initiative, which will be set up by a Saudi-Bangladesh joint-venture company, is a step in the right direction to power generation in the country. **EP**

Boost your industry performance with clean energy through partnering with IDCOL's innovative financing and technical support

Project design, Equipment selection
& Project monitoring



Janata Jute Mills, Akij Bashir Group
2.4 MWp Rooftop Solar Project
Boalmari, Faridpur

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 16653

Sonagazi 75MW Solar Plant to Come Online in Dec



The Sonagazi 75-megawatt solar power plant will start supplying electricity to the national grid in December, with the test run beginning this month, officials have said.

They said the power plant in Feni district was initially planned for 50 MW. However, the authorities decided to enhance the capacity to 75MW as some \$22 million could be saved from the total allocated fund and the required land was available nearby.

Now the work is almost completed, they added.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC)

recently approved a proposal regarding capacity enhancement and project tenure until June next year.

The state-owned Electricity Generation Company of Bangladesh (EGCB) is setting up the power plant at a total cost of Tk 8.75 billion. Of the total sum, the World Bank is providing a loan of Tk 7.25 billion, the government is providing Tk 875 million, and the EGCB is contributing Tk 626 million to implement the project.

The project cost has increased mainly due to the price hike of the dollar against the taka, enhancement of the capacity of the power plant, addition of new tasks, and extension of the project tenure.

Some 187,410 solar modules, a 230-kilovolt substation, two 230/33-kilovolt transformers, 13.33-kilometre 230-kilovolt power evacuation lines and a 230-kilovolt transmission bay extension were installed in the plant to generate electricity. **EP**

Huawei Fusion Solar Summit for Renewable Energy



Huawei Bangladesh Fusion Solar Summit 2023, organized by Huawei South Asia was held at Huawei Bangladesh Academy recently to shed light on the prospects and future of renewable energy in this country.

The attendees discussed the prospects of fusion solar technology and its transformative power and highlighted the collaborative efforts required to take the nation towards a future with sustainable energy in this event, says a press release.

Liang Weixing (Jack), Managing

Director of Huawei South Asia Digital Power Business Department and chief guest Engr. Md. Mijanur Rahman, Member (Planning and Development) of the Bangladesh Power Development Board were present at the event.

As an industry expert, Govinda Mozumder, General Manager of Sympa Solar Ltd, shared his practical insights. More than 120 industry leaders, experts, and stakeholders participated in the event.

Liang Weixing (Jack), Managing Director of Huawei South Asia Digital Power Business Department, said: "Renewable energy is the need of the hour.

By the end of June 2023, globally we had helped our customers generate 845.5 billion kWh of green power and save 35.5 billion kWh of electricity. **EP**

Summit Group to Invest \$3.0b in Clean-Energy Push

Bangladesh's Summit Group plans to invest \$3 billion in solar, wind and hydroelectricity generation projects in south Asia as a part of its clean energy push and efforts to diversify its fossil fuel-based business, its chairman said recently.

Summit Power International, the Singapore-based holding company for all power generation assets of Bangladesh's Summit Group in which Japanese utility JERA holds a 22% stake, will build 1,000 megawatts of solar and wind energy projects with battery storage in India, group Chairman Aziz Khan said.

"We have signed memorandums of understanding with large Indian companies. This will be the cheapest form of electricity for Bangladesh, cheaper than even natural gas-based power," Khan said in an interview at his office.

Summit, which operates over a dozen fossil fuel-based power generation units and owns one of the country's two floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) to handle imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG), also plans to build 700 megawatts of hydro power plants in Bhutan and Nepal, Khan said.

Khan said current global LNG prices were still high, adding they were continuing to destroy demand in key sectors in Bangladesh, impacting economic growth and leading to frequent power outages.

LNG had been central to Bangladesh's economic growth in the last decade, as millions gained access to the electricity grid for the first time. The super-chilled fuel, along with rapidly dwindling local gas reserves, generated about two-thirds of its electricity over the second half of the last decade. **EP**

Saudi-Bangladesh JV Gets Nod to Set Up 300MW Solar Power Plant at Rampal



A Saudi-Bangladesh joint-venture company will set up 300 MW solar power plant in a location beside the Rampal coal-fired power plant.

As per the proposal, state-owned BPDB will purchase electricity from the plant at a tariff rate of Tk 11.067 per kilowatt hour (each unit) over the period of 20 years.

According to official sources, this has been the highest ever tariff in recent years the BPDB accepted when the

generation cost of solar power is globally coming down.

Cabinet Committee Government Purchase (CCGP) approved a proposal in this regard recently in a virtual meeting with Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal in the chair.

The Power Division placed the unsolicited proposal on behalf of the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) in the meeting.

The Joint Stock Company's partners are (1) ACWA Power Company, Saudi Arabia; (2) Comfit Composite Knit Ltd. Bangladesh; (3) Viyellatex Spinning Ltd, Bangladesh and (4) Midland East Power Ltd. Bangladesh

The government will need to spend about Tk 10,761 crore for the entire tenure of the contract period. **EP**

Decline in IDCOL's SHS Sparks Loan Waiver Appeal

The government's various rural electrification initiatives have led to a sharp decline in the Solar Home System (SHS) program of the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), forcing the non-bank financial institution to seek loan waivers from the government.

In a letter to the Economic Relations Division on 25 July this year, the IDCOL requested a waiver of Tk210 crore for Grameen Shakti, a participating organization (PO) of the



SHS program and a leading social enterprise founded by Professor Muhammad Yunus.

Due to rapid grid expansion, free SHS distribution, and an unregulated SHS market have made it challenging for POs to collect payments from customers, and therefore they are facing a difficult situation to repay IDCOL loans, according to the letter.

The matter was presented to Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal for approval. However, the minister has yet to make a decision on the matter, according to finance ministry officials.

Earlier on 10 July, Grameen Shakti sent a loan waiver proposal to the IDCOL office, requesting a waiver of at least 50% of the outstanding balance of Tk420.51 crore. "Once this approval and process get formalised, in one instalment, we will pay Tk210.26 crore as per balance as of 31 December 2022," Grameen Shakti said. **EP**

174 Consultants, Overseas Trainings Schemed for EV Charging Stations



Some 174 consultants, numerous foreign-training programs and other less-important components constitute the panoply of a project planned for constructing seven electric-charging stations for vehicles, sources say.

Insiders say the 174 individual and company consultants will be hired for the project proposed by Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) for setting up the electric vehicle (EV)-charging stations. Besides, they add, both the government transport agencies have proposed huge expenditures for foreign trainings to teach public

servants about the EV charging and set aside a significant amount of funds for disbursement as honorarium.

Few officials involved with the project-approval process told the FE Sunday that BRTA and BRTC have proposed spending Tk 6.29 million for setting up seven EV-charging stations while the remaining Tk 15.73 million from the project funds for hiring consultants, foreign training, honorarium and other less-important purposes.

Meanwhile, the two entities have recently taken up a Tk 22.02-million technical-assistance project with the financial support of the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) for setting up the seven EV-charging stations and training up manpower.

Titled 'Bangladesh enabling electric vehicles adoption (BEEVA) in the framework of sustainable energy-based transportation', the project has been placed with the Planning Commission (PC) for approval. **EP**

PM Joins G20 Leaders in Launching Global Biofuels Alliance



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recently joined US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and five other world leaders in launching the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) to help cut down the world's dependence on fossil fuel.

The Global Biofuels Alliance is aimed at facilitating cooperation and intensifying the use of sustainable biofuels across sectors, including transportation. Modi urged G20 countries to join the GBA initiative with a plea to take ethanol blending with petrol globally to 20 percent.

Ethyl alcohol or Ethanol (C₂H₅OH) is a biofuel which can be produced naturally by fermenting sugar. While sug-

arcane is the usual go-to crop, it can be sourced from other food grains.

India launched the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) program, as part of its carbon emission reduction commitments, to mix this biofuel with petrol to reduce the consumption of fossil fuel.

"Today, the need of the hour is that all countries should work together in the field of fuel blending. Our proposal is to take an initiative at a global-level to take ethanol blending in petrol up to 20 percent," he said.

Besides India, the initiating members include Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Italy, Mauritius, South Africa, the UAE, and the US, while Canada and Singapore are observer countries. **EP**

ActionAid, BYS Holds Bangladesh Youth COP 2023

To mobilize and enhance youth voices from the grassroots to address the climate crisis and position their demands in the national and global



policymaking conversations for claiming justice, ActionAid Bangladesh and Brighters Youth Society (BYS) jointly organized Bangladesh Youth COP 2023 in hybrid modality from 6-8 September 2023, says a press.

The first day of the Bangladesh Youth COP 2023 was inaugurated in the Global Platform Bangladesh office, emphasizing the significance of youth-led initiatives and the Green Manifesto.

The need for prioritizing renewable energy, loss & damage fund, and gender justice in climate action also came out as the key asks of the youth.

On the first day of the Youth COP, 100 young people participated in a workshop

and voiced their demands on safe drinking water, coastal and wetlands crises, challenges of drought and flood affected areas, issues in the agriculture frontier, urban resilience and pollution, and gender justice and energy transition.

Young leaders shared their experience and perspectives on alternative practices, along the scope of innovation in carbon credit, transformation of pollution to sustainable solution and in agriculture & food security in the context of Bangladesh.

During the inaugural session, Farah Kabir, Country Director of ActionAid Bangladesh, remarked, "Young people have grasped the connections between climate justice and sustainable development. **EP**

BGMEA Looks to Cut 30% Carbon Emission by 2030

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) aims to reduce carbon emission by 30 percent, using sustainable raw materials in 50 percent of the cases and reducing use of groundwater by 50 percent by 2030. The Bangladeshi garment makers also target using 100 percent zero discharge of hazardous chemicals under its sustainability vision by 2030, BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said recently.

Under the sustainability vision, the BGMEA also has the target to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent, use of 20 percent renewable energy and reduce deforestation by 30 percent by the stipulated timeframe of 2030, Hassan said.

"Climate change is not a future threat, it's happening now. The best way one can make an impact in this regard is "doing-our-bits" to curb carbon emissions and reduce environmental pollution."



Hassan made the comment at the launch of a report titled 'The case for just transitions in energy, agricultural and RMG sector in Bangladesh' at the Six Seasons Hotel in Dhaka.

"When the brands are setting ambitious targets, it is their responsibility to make sure that no one is left behind in the supply chain," the BGMEA president also said. **EP**

Ministers, CEOs and Business Leaders Commit Action Towards Net Zero



Gastech 2023, the world's largest meeting place for natural gas, LNG, hydrogen, low-carbon solutions, and climate technologies, held recently welcoming record-breaking numbers to Singapore EXPO.

The first day featured a range of insightful contributions from policymakers, CEOs, and business leaders on the multiple, interconnected challenges facing the global energy sector. Delegates discussed the critical role of natural gas, LNG, and hydrogen as key enablers of future energy security and accelerators of the energy transition, in Asia and beyond.

Speaking at the Gastech 2023 Gala Dinner at Raffles Hotel yesterday, Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson, former Prime

Minister of the United Kingdom, Leader of the Conservative Party, Foreign Secretary and Mayor of London, said: "The complexity of today's geopolitical and economic climates have left governments

grappling with the dual challenge of addressing climate change and meeting increasing energy demand. This winter, businesses and families around the world face high inflation, high interest rates, and uncertainty over energy prices. At events like Gastech, the global energy community has a unique and important opportunity to align on collective action towards a cleaner, more affordable, and more secure energy future."

The Strategic Conference began with a high-level discussion between international energy ministers on how natural gas and LNG will enable the global energy industry to meet near-term demand for low-carbon energy. **EP**

Oil, Gas Sector Emission Pledges Stalling: Report

Oil and gas sector emission reduction pledges have stalled and in some cases gone backwards, a report said recently, warning that many corporate climate plans were not credible.



Fossil fuel use is set to be the main bone of contention at key UN talks aimed at curbing climate change, starting on November 30 in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates.

A report by financial think tank Carbon Tracker assessed and ranked emissions reductions commitments by 25 of the world's largest oil and gas firms, as measured by 2022 production volumes.

According to its criteria, all but one of the companies' emissions goals are not aligned with the 2015 Paris Agreement's aspirational target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. **EP**

The weakest commitments came from US major ExxonMobil and five majority state-owned oil firms: Saudi Aramco, Brazil's Petrobras and Chinese companies Sinopec, PetroChina and CNOOC.

Aramco was ranked at the bottom because it was the only company to limit emissions reductions targets to assets it wholly owns and operates.

It has only pledged to reduce emissions against amounts forecast under "business-as-usual" scenarios and set no baseline, Carbon Tracker said.

Some 16 firms only covered operational emissions and failed to take into account indirect emissions linked to the full life cycle and use of their products. **EP**

Renewables Competitiveness Accelerates, Despite Cost Inflation

The fossil fuel price crisis has accelerated the competitiveness of renewable power. Around 86 per cent (187 gigawatts) of all the newly commissioned renewable capacity in 2022 had lower costs than fossil fuel-fired electricity.

Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2022, published by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) shows that the renewable power added in 2022 reduced the fuel bill of the electricity sector worldwide.

New capacity added since 2000 reduced the electricity sector fuel bill in 2022 by at least USD 520 billion. In non-OECD countries, just the saving over the lifetime of new capacity additions in 2022 will reduce costs by up to USD 580 billion.

In addition to these direct cost savings, there would be substantial economic benefits from reducing CO2 emissions and local air pollutants. Without the deployment of

renewables over the last two decades, the economic disruption from the fossil fuel price shock in 2022 would have been much worse and possibly beyond many governments ability to soften with public funding.

IRENA's new report confirms the critical role that cost-competitive renewables play in addressing today's energy and climate crises by accelerating the transition in line with the 1.5°C warming limit. **EP**



Sweden, UNDP Ink Deal to Work on Climate Adaptation in Bangladesh



been working to build climate resilience in Bangladesh by emphasizing the importance of local leadership, innovations, and nature-based solutions.

Sweden has signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to provide continued support to the Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) project during a new two-year period, 2023-2025.

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Alex Berg von Linde and UNDP Bangladesh Resident Representative Stefan Liller signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations at the Sweden Embassy in Dhaka recently, a UNDP press release said.

LoGIC has been a vehicle for delivering climate adaptation finance and capacities to the poorest and most climate-vulnerable households, unions and upazilas of Bangladesh. The project has

Thousands of vulnerable women and households have been forming savings groups, cooperatives, and enterprises that help them overcome climate-induced disasters and negative impacts and thrive.

During the next two years, the project will be implemented in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and will continue being implemented in the seven most climate-vulnerable districts.

The project will also facilitate the institutionalization of the LoGIC modality for local adaptation financing within the Government's national planning, budgeting and allocation system to local governments and communities. **EP**

UN Experts Challenge Saudi Aramco over Climate Change

UN experts have written to oil firm Saudi Aramco and its financial backers challenging them on allegations that their activities are fuelling climate change-related negative impacts on human rights.

A cache of correspondence was published recently on a United Nations human rights special procedures website, exactly two months after it was sent.

The letters said UN experts had received information "concerning Saudi Aramco's business activities... which are adversely impacting the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change".

The allegations accused Aramco of "maintained crude oil production, exploration for further oil and gas reserves,



expansion into fossil fuel gas, and misrepresentation of information", the letters said.

"Such activities have negative impacts on the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment."

The letters to Aramco and its backers were sent by a number of experts including the UN working group on human rights and transnational corporations, as well as UN special rapporteurs dealing with rights and climate change; a clean and sustainable environment; management of hazardous substances; and on safe drinking water and sanitation. **EP**

Global Subsidies for Fossil Fuels Topped \$7.0t in 2022: IMF

Global subsidies for fossil fuels rose by \$2.0 trillion over the past two years to reach a record \$7.0 trillion in 2022, according to new estimates from the International Monetary Fund.

The soaring costs, driven by post-pandemic consumption growth and by rising energy costs stemming from Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, are straining budgets, adding to pollution and exacerbating global warming, the IMF said in a report.

"Subsidies for oil, coal and natural gas are costing the equivalent of 7.1 per cent of global gross domestic product," the IMF said. "That's more than governments spend annually on education (4.3 per cent of global income) and about two

thirds of what they spend on healthcare (10.9 per cent)."

It warned that implicit subsidies - the cost of damage from air pollution and global warming - account for the bulk of the costs and are likely to keep rising.

A variety of nations in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world have cut fuel subsidies in recent years due in part to rising debt and borrowing costs. Wealthier nations, where energy consumption is higher, face less financial pressure to cut subsidy costs.

Explicit subsidy costs - what governments pay directly to keep electricity or pump prices artificially low - have more than doubled since 2020, to \$1.3 trillion. **EP**



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মানসম্পন্ন বিদ্যুৎ নিরবচ্ছিন্নভাবে দেশের সকল মানুষের নিকট পৌঁছে দেয়াই আমাদের অঙ্গীকার

- * গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র, গ্রিড লাইন ও টাওয়ার জাতীয় সম্পদ, তা রক্ষা করা সকলের দায়িত্ব।
- * গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র, সঞ্চালন লাইন ও বৈদ্যুতিক টাওয়ারের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ যন্ত্রাংশ চুরি প্রতিরোধে সহায়তা করুন, বিদ্যুৎ বিপর্যয় থেকে দেশকে বাঁচান।
- * উচ্চ ভোল্টেজের বৈদ্যুতিক টাওয়ার ও লাইন হতে নিরাপদ দূরত্ব বজায় রাখুন।
- * বিদ্যুতের গ্রিড লাইন ও টাওয়ার হতে নিরাপদ দূরত্বে স্থাপনা নির্মাণ করুন।
- * বৃক্ষ রোপনে গ্রিড লাইন ও টাওয়ার হতে নিরাপদ দূরত্বে স্থান নির্বাচন করুন।
- * বিদ্যুৎ ব্যবহারে সাশ্রয়ী হোন। আপনি বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয় করলে তা অন্য একজন ব্যবহার করতে পারে। এমনকি সাশ্রয়কৃত বিদ্যুৎ গুরুতর অসুস্থ কারও জীবন বাঁচানোর কাজে লাগতে পারে।
- * বিদ্যুৎ অপচয় রোধে সচেতনভাবে ফ্যান, বাতি ও অন্যান্য বৈদ্যুতিক যন্ত্রপাতি ব্যবহার করুন।
- * বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয়ী (LED/CFL/T5) বাল্ব ব্যবহার করুন।
- * যথাসম্ভব দিনের আলো ব্যবহার করুন।
- * বিকাল ৫:০০ টা হতে রাত ১১:০০ টা পর্যন্ত সময়ে বিদ্যুতের চাহিদা বেশী থাকে। এ সময় দোকান, শপিংমল, বাসা-বাড়ীতে আলোকসজ্জা হতে বিরত থাকুন।



Grid-Tied Solar Plants May Greatly Help Cut Oil-Based Power Generation

Management inefficiency is a major handicap of the power sector. Present stagnant situation in the power sector has been progressively created for the failure in bringing competent leadership in the power sector in an unbiased manner and for parochialism. Decisions for putting inefficient power plants to planned retirement and increasing contributions of own coal and natural gas resources instead of imported fuel need to be taken from appropriate technical and economical considerations. Otherwise, the present chaotic situation of the power sector will grow into a major headache for the economy of the country.

Engr. Mohammad A. S. M. Alamgir Kabir, former Chairman of Bangladesh Power Development Board said this in an exclusive interview with **Mollah Amzad Hossain**, editor of Energy & Power.

Success of the power sector has now turned into a pain in the neck for the government. How will you evaluate this?

Ensuring proper check and balance is essential for creating sustainability of any sector. If not, a crisis will emerge at some point or other. It is true for the Bangladesh power sector. Efficiency and experience have long been overlooked in the power sector. Generation capacity of power was almost half that of demand when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina-led present government returned to state power in 2009. Upon her instruction liquid fuel-based rental

and quick rental plants were allowed as a contingency short, limited-term measure to redress the situation. It was essential to retire these plants as planned in 3-5 years. But that was not done.

The Power System Master Plan considers high, medium, and low growth scenarios. Works are done mostly based on medium growth scenarios. Our IPP policy was a world acclaimed great tool. Private sector entrepreneurs took the opportunity of increasing their share exploiting the weakness of public sector leadership through successfully bypassing the original plan. Consequently, the present situation of over capacity has emerged. As a result, the system requires paying capacity charges even using 10-15% of the capacity of some plants annually. This is completely unacceptable. This has gradually created financial stress in the power sector and reached the present unpalatable situation. There is no quick fix for getting out of the situation.

There is no way to deny the major contributions of IPPs to the success of the power sector. But now BPDB owes Tk 27,500 crore to the IPPs. There are apprehensions of interruptions in generation. How can the system address the situation?

It is more important how people look at it than what our views are. It is also important what the entrepreneurs who invested consider the situation? BPDB never in the past failed in making payments on time. But banks and



A. S. M. Alamgir Kabir

Yes, it is possible to add 2000MW solar power in one year. But for this the genuine companies need to be entrusted taking appropriate initiatives. The implementation must be intensively monitored. Similar urgency executed during 2009-2010 contingency plan management must be repeated. Reliance on liquid fuel-based power plants during the day can be avoided if this can be successfully implemented.

lending institutions are in serious tensions about present accumulated outstanding payments. The entrepreneurs are also in great trouble in keeping the operation going for non-payment. Power sector on a stand alone basis cannot get out of the situation until the global and Bangladesh economic situation improves for the better.

Many believe that the present crisis due to high-capacity charge payments created from capacity exceeding the demand by huge margin for setting up power plants one after another bypassing the Power System Master Plan (PSMP)

provisions. What are your views?

Please note that some short-term contingency plans taken up for addressing diabolic shortages should not have continued after successfully managing the crisis. These were not judicious strategies at all. Leadership could not avoid political decisions for setting up new power plants ignoring technical and commercial realities. Policymakers failed to provide right advice on time to the decision makers.

For this flawed policy, the capacity charge which is a usual provision given to private sector entrepreneurs has grown into a controversial issue. But it is not possible to completely negate the arguments that are given against capacity charge now.

Many also allege that the present crisis has also been created for setting up large power plants without making assured arrangements of sustainable supply of fuel. This has increased the dependence on liquid fuel-based power generation and increased the cost of generation consequently. What are your observations?

Allegations are logical. Energy sector could not keep pace with the growth of the power sector. At the same time, it cannot also be denied that policy makers have also failed to recognize and consider the suggestions and recommendations of experienced professionals and experts in formulating appropriate fuel mix for power generation. As for example, the PSMP 2010 stressed upon giving priority to coal, especially local coal for power generation. But the Prime Minister in consideration of probable environmental impacts of coal use did not want to go for local coal. But the global reality is that mining and use of coal continues all over the world. The Energy Division has failed to impress upon the PM the necessity of utilizing its own coal through producing credible recommendations supported by studies of foreign and local experts. Appropriate fuel mix cannot be made with economic use of own coal and

petroleum resources. Otherwise, present dependence on dirty and expensive liquid fuel will continue for a long time.

What actions should be taken to get out of the present tight situation?

Please note that there must be a reality check done by experts and efficient professionals for identifying mistakes done and evaluating them. A comprehensive and pragmatic plan must be formulated with correct assessment of actual future demand and appropriate fuel mix for power generation. Experts must be given freedom to work independently. Based on their recommendation appropriate political decisions should be taken for implementation. But these will take some time. But work must start without wasting any time.

Do you think that it is possible to add 2000 MW solar power by taking appropriate initiatives? Many believe that this can relieve power supply chains for over reliance on liquid fuel-based power during the day.

Yes, it is possible in one year. But for this the genuine companies need to be entrusted taking appropriate initiatives. The implementation must be intensively monitored. Similar urgency executed during 2009-2010 contingency plan management must be repeated. Reliance on liquid fuel-based power plants during the day can be avoided if this can be successfully implemented. From the savings, LNG import cost may be made for addressing the gas deficit for power generation and other users. Many gas-based power plants now going idle can be brought back into operation. The cost of generation will also be reduced.

Poor management is also being blamed for the crisis. You were in Power Sector Management for a long time. What are your views?

I have already mentioned that there is no scope for denial. Multidimensional crisis has been created in the power and

energy sector for not placing the right persons for the right positions. For getting out of this situation, professionals must be judged without any bias and personal likings and based on merits and commitments only. If right persons are not placed in right positions and allowed to work with reasonable freedom ignoring political, bureaucratic, and business syndicate pressures, the sector will continue to suffer.

All accumulated issues cannot be solved at a time. What suggestions do you like to give to the government for addressing on priority basis?

Dependence on imported fuel must be minimized as much as practicable. Actions must be taken for increasing efficiency of use of electricity. Peak demand must be rationalized through effective demand side management. Fuel-inefficient old technology-using power plants must be retired and phased out. These must be the priorities now. Policy makers after formulating pragmatic plans must sit with relevant stakeholders, experts every three months to evaluate implementation progress. The suggestions and recommendations must be evaluated and addressed.

What should be the roadmap for an environment-friendly and smart power sector?

Please note that low carbon power supply is a way to go now. Smart power sector concept is nothing new for Bangladesh. PM Hasina gave the necessary directives in 2009 for a smart power and energy sector. Now she has announced a smart Bangladesh. Smart Bangladesh cannot happen without a smart power and energy sector. We must develop the power sector giving highest priority to renewable energy and non-carbonized power and integrating smart technologies to implement the plan. But for these, we need smart men behind the machines. Efficiency and experience must be given highest priority.

EP

THE EU RESOLUTION ON JAILING ODHIKAR EXECUTIVES: IS IT FAIR?

Reverse Swing



Farid Hossain

The European Parliament has often been at odds with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government on the human rights issues. In this regard the EU has not been the only Western bloc to find fault with Bangladesh government with its practice of democracy and handling of the human rights issues and rules-based governance. The Western powers have raised their concern over what they call flagrant erosion of human rights and democratic values. The government has always responded with strong rejection and denouncing the critics as being partial and devoid of the reality check. Has Bangladesh really been backsliding in human rights and democratic values? Or do we find a deliberate campaign of misinformation against Hasina's government which boasts of governing the country for three consecutive five-year terms based on people's mandate?

Last week when a trial court in Bangladesh found two Odhikar (a rights group) executives Adilur Rahman Khan and ASM Nasiruddin Elan guilty of spreading misinformation against the government and sentenced them to spend two years in jail there came strong protests from international organizations and rights groups. They voiced their concern in a chorus which came as a surprise to many in Bangladesh given the fact that the duo was sentenced after a court trial. The EU went to the extent of adopting a resolution expressing its concern and urging the government for quashing the case and entire trial proceedings. The foreign ministry responded first and fast.

It expressed its "utter disappointment" at the adoption of a resolution by the European Parliament on the "Human rights situation in Bangladesh, notably the case of Odhikar." "The timing and language of the joint motion, tabled by some political groups in the European Parliament, for making judgemental comments over sub-judice matters and a court verdict on two

Odhikar officials delivered today in Dhaka is reflective of their intention of interfering into the independent judiciary of a sovereign state," read the foreign ministry statement.

The MOFA had done it right in denouncing the EU resolution highlighting Bangladesh's sovereign authority on matters that considered internal affairs. Well, few would argue with the conception that certain human rights issues are universal and have international recognition. But an organization like Odhikar can hardly be defended after it dished out lies and misinformation about the number of casualties when the law enforcement agencies evicted tens of thousands Hefazat-e-Islam activists through the use of non-lethal sound grenades at Motijheel commercial area in 2013. It invented the number of deaths first at 2,500 and then at 61 and then spread it internationally causing embarrassment for the government.

"The independent judiciary of Bangladesh continues to ensure that judicial proceedings are conducted openly and fairly and that the rights of the parties are fully respected." Bangladesh judiciary

decides matters before them based on evidence and in accordance with the law, without any restrictions, influences, inducements, pressures, threats or interferences, direct or indirect, from any quarter or for any reason," it said.

"The government of Bangladesh is appalled by the favouritism reflected in the European Parliament's resolution on Odhikar, a non-compliant politically biased entity with a proven record of circulating misinformation and an accomplice of vested quarters that promote terrorism and violent extremism.

"It is a fact known to all that Mr Adilur Rahman Khan, secretary of Odhikar, was appointed as deputy attorney general by the BNP-Jamaat government and worked in that capacity for five years from 2001 to 2006.

The MOFA had done it right in denouncing the EU resolution highlighting Bangladesh's sovereign authority on matters that considered internal affairs. Well, few would argue with the conception that certain human rights issues are universal and have international recognition. But an organization like Odhikar can hardly be defended after it dished out lies and misinformation about the number of casualties when the law enforcement agencies evicted tens of thousands Hefazat-e-Islam activists through the use of non-lethal sound grenades at Motijheel commercial area in 2013. It invented the number of deaths first at 2,500 and then at 61 and then spread it internationally causing embarrassment for the government. Had the law enforcement agencies not intervened to evict the rowdy Hefazatis the political situation could have turned to disaster. The government hard-line intervention into the rowdiness of the so-called protectors of Islam had save the country and its basic principles of democracy and secular non-communal values. The Western governments, instead of appreciating it, are firing the shots at the wrong target. Is it fair? **EP**

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আবাসিক জ্বালানির আধুনিক সল্যুশন

নতুন বাড়ি করছেন, কিন্তু গ্যাস নিয়ে চিন্তিত?

G-Gas নিয়ে এলো আপনার গ্যাস সমস্যার সহজ সমাধান।

রেটিকুলেশন সিস্টেমে সিলিন্ডার ব্যাংক থেকে পাইপলাইনের মাধ্যমে প্রত্যেক ফ্ল্যাটে পৌঁছে যাবে রান্নার গ্যাস।

নেই সিলিন্ডার টানার বামেলা, নেই গ্যাস ফুরানোর চিন্তা।

খরচ? একেবারেই সাধ্যের মধ্যে।

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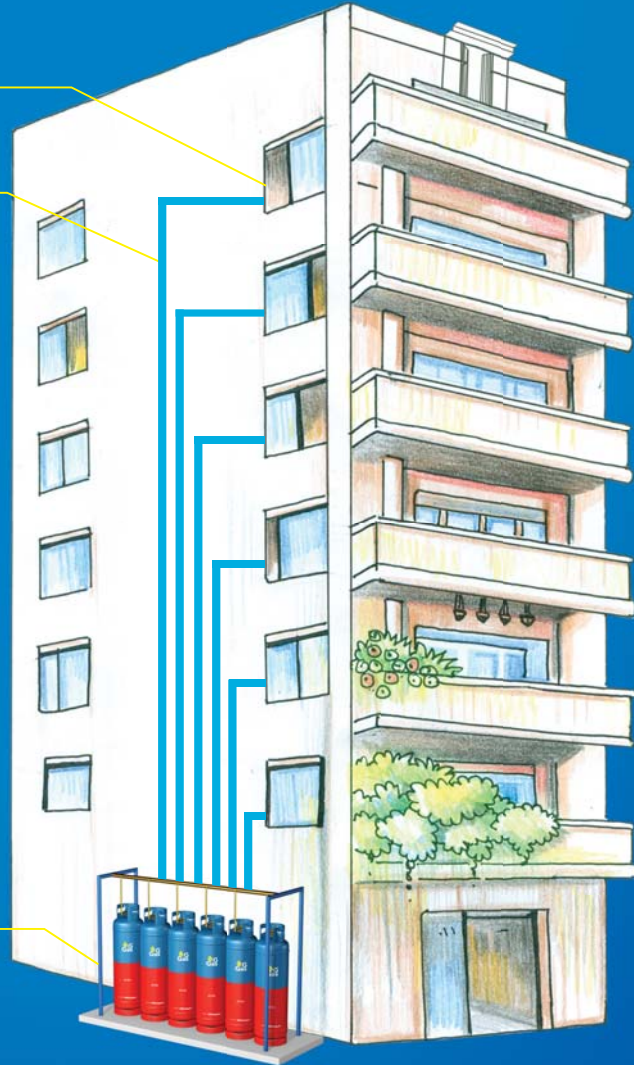
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