

# ENERGY & POWER

## Summer Load To Be Tough To Deal With

- Concern Persists Over Shortage Of Natural Gas
- HFO-Based IPPs Cannot Operate Unless Dues Are Paid
- Rooftop Solar Can Help BREB Reduce Losses, Say Experts



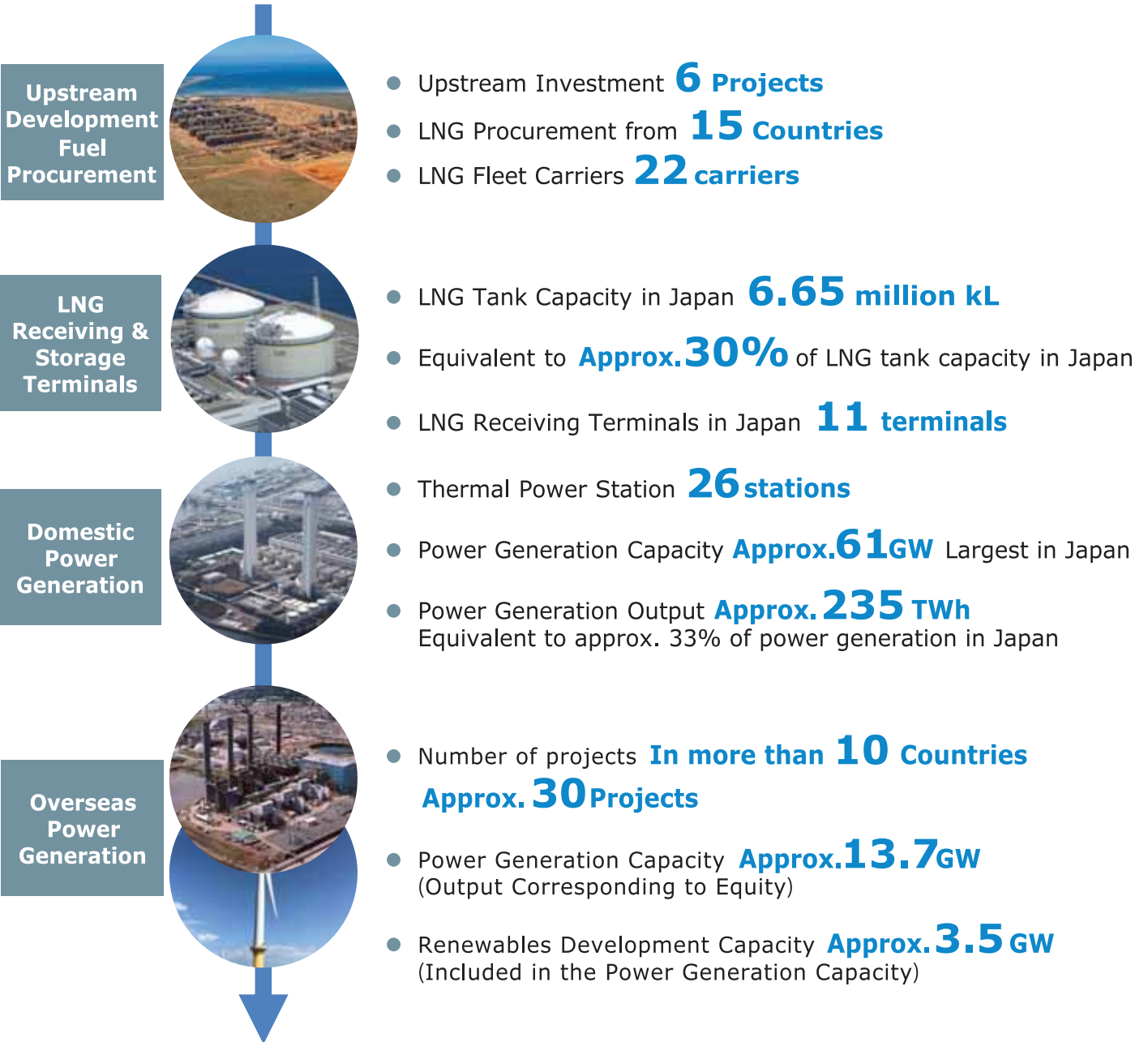
# JERA MEGHNAGHAT POWER LIMITED



718MW CCPP at Meghnaghat, Narayanganj – largest gas based IPP in Bangladesh

## About JERA

Japan's largest power generation company, producing about 30% of the Japan's electricity



### Mission

To provide cutting edge solutions to the world's energy issues

### 2035 Vision

Clean energy platform of renewables and low greenhouse gas thermal power

Goal: Zero CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 2050



# IE4 Increased safety M3GP 200-450 Ex ec & Ex t motors

## High efficiency, reliability and safety for hazardous areas



With IE4 Increased Safety M3GP 200-450 motors you can increase energy efficiency, save money, and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. ABB's IE4 Increased Safety M3GP 200-450 motors are easy to use. They offer certified safety and are always matched to customer needs and applications in hazardous areas.

### Introduction

ABB low voltage Increased safety Ex ec and Dust ignition proof Ex t motors are a safe choice for potentially explosive atmospheres.

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- Safe choice for potentially explosive atmospheres
- Increased safety Ex ec design is certified for gas group IIC and temperature class T3
- Dust ignition proof Ex t design is certified for dust groups IIIB or IIIC and temperature class T100°C...T150°C

### Motor scope

IE4 Increased safety M3GP Ex ec and Ex t motors	
Frame sizes	200-450
Poles	2-6
Voltages	690V/400V/415V/50Hz and 460V/60Hz
Markings	Ex ec IIC T3 Gc for Zone 2 Zone 21 – Ex tb IIIC T100°C...T150°C Db Zone 22 – Ex tc IIIC T100°C...T150°C Dc



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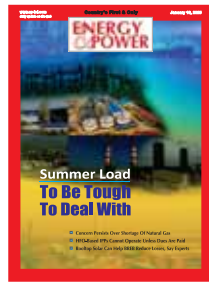
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**Price**

Bangladesh: Tk 100, SAARC: US\$ 9,  
Asia: US\$ 12, Europe: US\$ 15, North  
America, Africa & Australia: US\$ 21



EDITORIAL

As another scorching summer approaches, Bangladesh is on the brink of yet another power crisis. Households, businesses, and industries are all bracing for prolonged power cuts, knowing that the electricity demand could reach an overwhelming 18,000MW. The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) can produce 27,820MW on paper, but in reality, fuel shortages and financial constraints make this number largely theoretical. For years, Bangladesh has relied heavily on imported fuel to keep the lights on. But with mounting unpaid bills and an ongoing dollar shortage, this dependence has become a costly burden. Petrobangla struggles to supply enough gas, coal plants are waiting on overdue payments, and private power producers are warning that their plants cannot generate power without immediate clearance of dues. Meanwhile, Adani Power's supply from India hangs in the balance, contingent on settling outstanding debts. The hard truth is that planned load-shedding is inevitable. Instead of scrambling when power shortages hit, we must prepare now. That means prioritizing funds and ensuring efficient use of fuel. Short-term fixes, however, will not solve the underlying issue. The government must invest in domestic energy sources, expand LNG import capacity, and fast-track overdue reforms in the power sector.

This summer will not be easy, but it can be a turning point. If we take the right steps—accepting short-term sacrifices while planning for a sustainable future—Bangladesh can emerge stronger. The time to act is now before another year of crisis becomes just another statistic.

highlights

COVER



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Investment in power generation is not an offense. We, the private sector entrepreneurs investing in power generation under government policies, generate and supply power alongside other businesses. We supply power at comparatively lower prices than foreign companies. Hence it is not fair to blame us as partners of money plundering of the immediate past government ...David Hasanat tells EP

There is a challenge of real-time demand forecasting. Power system management would become difficult in case of any forecasting error. In Germany, the authorities are confused about connecting renewables to the grid. When a huge number of solar panels are connected to the grid and demand drops, the distributor will backtrack from the system operator. .... More in EP Special

The country's peak demand for electricity this winter ranges between 9,500-11,000MW. BPDB has no issue managing the demand even after restricting the oil-based plants. However, the demand is set to rise significantly in summer to around 18,000 MW, straining supply despite an installed capacity of 27,820 MW. BPDB has already started planning different strategies to manage the summer demand.



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Energypac has achieved the prestigious status of **Superbrands 2023-2024**



Encouraged by the readers and patrons, the EP would continue bringing out Green Pages to contribute to the country's efforts in its journey towards environment-friendly energy.

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## India's Adani Green CEO to Step Down



energy business.

Amit Singh, who has previously worked as a director at the oilfield services company SLB, was appointed as Adani Green's CEO in May 2023.

Adani Green Energy's chief executive officer Amit Singh will step down to take up the role of the chief of the international energy business of the Adani Group, the renewable energy firm said recently.

He will be replaced by Ashish Khanna starting April 1, who is the current CEO of the group's international

The transition comes a month after US authorities accused group founder Gautam Adani and some top executives of Adani Green of being part of a scheme to pay bribes worth \$265 million to secure Indian power supply contracts. The Adani group has called the charges "baseless".

## Austria's OMV Agrees to Supply Romanian Gas to Germany



general slowdown in energy purchases made by the European Union from Moscow because of its invasion of Ukraine.

The contract volume would represent about 1.5% in Germany's imports of gas in 2024. This is the first agreement to support the long-awaited project for deepwater exploration, which has been in the works since Romania's Black Sea section was discovered more than 10 years ago.

Three people with knowledge of the deal said that Austria's OMV will supply Germany's Uniper gas from its Black Sea Project from 2027. This comes as Europe looks for new ways to increase energy security following the breakup with Russia.

The deal, which was not disclosed before, is for a five-year supply of 15 terawatts of natural gas to be delivered by the Neptun Deep Project. This comes after Russia stopped gas deliveries via Ukraine last month and a

Neptun Deep is one of Europe's largest natural gas reserves. It holds approximately 100 billion cubic meters (bcm), or 100 billion cubic feet of recoverable gas.

## Russia Stops Gas Exports via Ukraine to Europe

Gas exports from Russia via Ukraine have been stopped as the transit agreement has expired, according to Gazprom.

The closure of Russia's longest gas route to Europe brings an end to a decade-long fraught relationship sparked by Russia's 2014 seizure of Crimea.

The TurkStream pipeline, which runs along the Black Sea bed, is still used by Russia to export gas.

After the start of the conflict in Ukraine, in 2022, the European Union increased its efforts in order to reduce its dependency on Russian energy by looking for alternative sources.



The gas transit agreement between Russia and Ukraine, which lasted five years, expired on Jan. 1, 2025. Kyiv has said repeatedly that it will not extend the deal amid the war.

Gazprom announced in a Telegram message that "Gazprom has been deprived of its technical and legal capability to supply gas to transit through Ukraine as of January 1, 2025" due to the Ukrainians' repeated and clear refusal to renew the agreements.

## S Arabia Top Buyer of Russian Fuel Oil in Nov

Saudi Arabia was the top destination for Russian sea-borne fuel oil and vacuum gasoil (VGO) exports in November, according to LSEG data.

Total fuel oil and VGO exports from Russian ports last month rose by 6 per cent from October to about 4.26 million metric tonnes, according to calculations based on LSEG data.

Since the European Union's full embargo on Russian oil products went into effect in February 2023, Asian countries became the main destination for Russia's fuel oil and VGO supplies.



Direct fuel oil and VGO shipments from Russian ports to Saudi Arabia increased in November by 29 per cent month-on-month to 0.85 million tonnes.

Russian fuel oil and VGO loadings to India declined last month by 5 per cent to around 0.47 million tonnes, while dark oil products supplies from Russian ports to China decreased by 25 per cent to 0.32 million tonnes.

## Mobil Jamuna to Expand with Oil Tanker, Land Purchase



The company's board of directors has approved the purchase of a second-hand Aframax oil tanker, MT Nissos Delos, for \$45.3 million.

With a carrying capacity of 115,690 tonnes, the 12-year-old vessel will replace the aging MT Omera Legacy,

according to the company's disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website.

In a separate notification on the DSE website, MJL Bangladesh PLC revealed plans to acquire a 209-decimal industrial plot in Shajahanpur, Bogura for future expansion.

The land, valued at Tk 18.81 crore, will be purchased through a tender process facilitated by Agrani Bank.

## Bashundhara LP Gas Recognised as 'Best Brand' for 5th Time



For the fifth consecutive time, Bashundhara LP Gas has received the prestigious 'Best Brand Award' for maintaining the highest standards in the liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sector.

Over this achievement, Bashundhara Group Vice Chairman Shafiat Sobhan expressed his sincere gratitude to the countless customers, distributors, retailers, officers, and employees who work behind the brand.

Bangladesh Brand Forum (BBF) in association with nSearch awarded 60 brands, including 44 'most loved brands', at a function held at

InterContinental Dhaka recently.

On behalf of Bashundhara LP Gas, Head of Sales and Marketing Redhwanur Rahman along with other officials received the award.

Bashundhara Group Sector-A Chief Financial Officer Mahbub Alam, AGM Sales Ataur Rahman, Manager Asit Sutradhar, and deputy managers Mainul Hasan and Masum Billah were present on the occasion.

Bangladesh Brand Forum has been honoring successful brands in the country through the 'Best Brand Award' for the past 16 years. The main goal of this award is to showcase and celebrate the success achieved through hard work and quality service.

## Petrobangla Gets New Chairman

Additional Secretary Md Rezanur Rahman has joined as Chairman of Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla) on deputation on January 2.



DDLG in field administration.

He served as Additional Secretary in the Power Division before taking over as the Chairman of Petrobangla. He belongs to the 17th batch of Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) cadre in 22nd February, 1998.

During his long and versatile career, he served as First Class Magistrate, Assistant Commissioner (Land), Upazilla Nirbahi Officer and

He also served in the Ministry of Health, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in different positions.

He did his graduation degree in Department of Mechanical Engineering (ME) from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) And Professional Master's degree in ITC, Netherlands.

## Call to Shut Rampal Power Plant

Protesters gathered in Bagerhat's Mongla recently, demanding the immediate shutdown of the Rampal Thermal Power Plant, citing its detrimental impact on the Sundarbans and the adjacent Pashur River.



Organised by Dhriti Rokkha Amra (Dhora) and Pashur River Waterkeeper, the rally urged the government to replace the coal-based plant with sustainable solar energy systems.

The event at Narikel Tala was presided over by environmental activist Mohammad Noor Alam Sheikh, coordinator of Sundarban Rokkha Amra.

Chief guest Abdullah Harun Chowdhury,

professor of environmental science at Khulna University, highlighted alarming findings from government studies.

"The Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services [CEGIS] has reported mercury levels in the Pashur river to be 10 times the permissible limit. This pollution endangers aquatic life and the livelihoods dependent on the river," he said.





## Payra 1320 MW TPP

### 1<sup>ST</sup> Ultra Super Critical Power Plant of Bangladesh

- ✓ Plant Capacity - 1320MW (2 X 660 MW)
- ✓ Boiler Technology - Ultra-Super Critical  
27 MPa / 600 / 610 c
- ✓ Heat Rate - 8746.35 kJ/kWh  
@Full load
- ✓ Primary Fuel - Sub - Bituminous/  
Bituminous Coal
- ✓ Coal Supplier - (1) PT Bayan Resources Tbk  
(2) PT Multi Harapan Utama
- ✓ Coal Transporter - Oldendorff, Germany
- ✓ Commercial Operation Date - 15 May, 2020 (Unit - 1)  
8 Dec, 2020 (Unit - 2)
- ✓ Shareholding Structure of BCPCL - NWPGL : 50%  
CMC : 50%

### Grand Opening

of

Payra 1320 MW TPP (1st Phase)  
21st March, 2022

### Eco Friendly Features

- ✓ Flue Gas Desulfurizer (FGD) with  
93% efficiency to capture SO<sub>x</sub>
- ✓ Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP) with  
99.60% efficiency to capture ash
- ✓ Low NO<sub>x</sub> Burner
- ✓ 220 meter Chimney
- ✓ Covered Coal Dome
- ✓ Covered Coal Conveying System



### Contribution to National Grid

About **10%** currently

### Facilities at Resettlement Area

- ✓ Technical School with a big playground
- ✓ Multiple Foreign Language Training Facility at BCTI
- ✓ Mosque & Graveyard
- ✓ Tube-well- 48 (Forty-Eight) nos.
- ✓ Pond- 02 (Two) nos.
- ✓ Community Centre & Health Clinic



## **BANGLADESH-CHINA POWER COMPANY LIMITED**

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## Bangladesh Keeps LPG Costs Steady Despite Fall in Global Prices



BERC, announced recently.

The new pricing structure takes effect from 6pm on January 9.

For January, the price of LPG per kilogram has been set at Tk 121.19.

Despite a slight drop in global prices, the Bangladesh government has opted to keep domestic prices for liquefied petroleum gas, or LPG, unchanged in January, citing the ongoing depreciation of the local currency.

The cost of a standard 12kg LPG cylinder, widely used in households, remains at Tk 1,455 -- the same price set in November and December, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, or

The prices for cylinders of other sizes have been adjusted accordingly. Meanwhile, the price of autogas for vehicles has been fixed at Tk 66.78 per liter, and reticulated gas at Tk 117.37 per kg.

According to the prices announced by Saudi Aramco, the average price of propane and butane in the international market for January has been set at \$618.50, which was \$631.75 for December.

## Summit Power Appoints Monirul as New MD

**M**aj General (Retd) Dr Monirul Islam Akhand, ndc, psc, PhD has been appointed as the Managing Director of Summit Power Limited (SPL).



General Akhand was commissioned in the Corps of Infantry of the Bangladesh Army in December, 1987.

He has had a unique blend of command, staff and instructional assignments in Bangladesh Armed Forces.

Besides commanding infantry companies, battalion and brigade, he also worked as the Director Overseas Operations/AHQ, DG

Intelligence/AFD, College Secretary/NDC etc. General Akhand has participated in two UN Peace Keeping Missions in former Yugoslavia and Liberia respectively.

He worked for HQ the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), Florida, USA for over 2 years. Dr Akhand is an Adjunct Faculty in the North South and BRAC University.

## ACC Sues Ex-Minister Nasrul, 2 Family Members



decision in front of its headquarters in the city.

Deputy director Mostafizur Rahman filed the cases with district coordinated office, Dhaka-2.

**T**he Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) recently filed three cases against former state minister for power, energy and mineral resources Nasrul Hamid, his wife Seema Hamid and son Zareef Hamid on charge of acquiring wealth beyond known sources of income.

ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain disclosed the

Earlier on August 20, the bank accounts of Nasrul Hamid and his wife were frozen by the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU).

Day after the freezing notice, law enforcement agencies conducted a drive at a building owned by Nasrul Hamid in Banani and seized TK 1 crore, a weapon and 50 rounds of ammunition.

## HC Orders Immediate Action to Halt Illegal Brick Kilns in CHT

**T**he High Court has directed authorities to take immediate steps to prevent the operation of illegal brick kilns in the hill districts of Bandarban, Rangamati, and Khagrachhari.



The Deputy Commissioners of these three districts have been instructed to take action within one week of receiving the order.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debashish Roy Chowdhury passed the order recently.

They have also been asked to submit a report on their actions within two weeks.

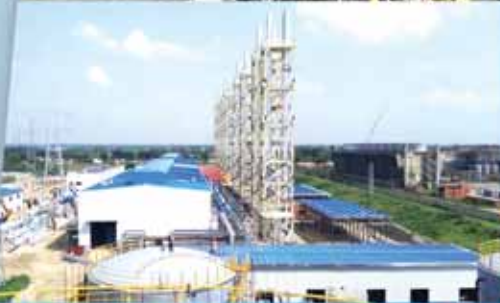
Senior Advocate Manzil Morshed, along with Advocates Sanjay

Mondal, Eklas Uddin Bhuiyan, Nasrin Sultana, and Selim Reza, represented the petitioners. Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Md Tanim Khan appeared for the state.

In 2022, Advocate Md. Sarwar Ahad Chowdhury, representing Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), filed a writ petition in the public interest to halt the operation of unlicensed and illegal brick kilns in the three hill districts.

# Summer Load To Be Tough To Deal With

Mollah Amzad Hossain



Bangladesh's electricity demand is set to rise significantly in summer to 17,500–18,000 MW, straining supply despite an installed capacity of 27,820 MW. The key challenge is ensuring an adequate fuel supply—gas, coal, and furnace oil—amid financial constraints. Gas and coal could generate 12,000 MW, leaving a 6,000 MW shortfall. Indian imports may help, but furnace oil-based power (5,885 MW) remains critical. Experts warn of worsening power shortages, advocating for planned load-shedding as a short-term solution. Immediate relief will depend on effective load management and financial support to sustain power generation.



Summit Power International is transforming Bangladesh's infrastructure with innovative solutions across sectors. Backed by global partnerships and foreign investments, we set new standards in development. At Summit, we empower communities and build a stronger, more prosperous future.

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**T**he country's peak demand for electricity this winter ranges between 9,500-11,000MW.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) has no issue managing the demand even after restricting the use of furnace oil-based power plants. However, BPDB has already started planning different strategies to meet and manage the expected high summer demand from March to August. The forecast of peak demand during that period is estimated to be 17,500-18,000MW. The installed generation capacity of the grid-connected electricity is 27,820MW. Yet, the major challenge is ensuring an adequate supply of gas, coal, and furnace oil, and for this to meet the energy, the government needs enough money in dollars and taka. Alongside making payments of due bills, dollars are required to purchase coal and liquid fuel. For managing the gas supply, dollars are needed to facilitate LNG imports and make payments for IOCs' share of gas. It is also urgent to pay the huge outstanding bills against electricity imported from India. But the problem is officials at the BPDB, Petrobangla, and Energy and Power divisions, cannot say how and when the outstanding payments would be made. It is being mentioned that these can be made as and when the finance ministry allocates and releases the funds.

The installed generation capacity of grid-connected power is 27,820MW. Gas-based generation capacity is 12,413 MW or 44.62% of the total generation capacity. Petrobangla needs to supply 2420 MMCFD gas to meet the capacity demand of gas-based power. BPDB has requested Petrobangla to supply at least 1,500-1,600 MMCFD consistently to manage the summer demand. Petrobangla had a marginally higher production capacity last year. Yet it was not possible to supply more than 1,150-1,200 MMCFD last year. A senior executive on condition of remaining unanimous mentioned that the extent of gas supply to power from March to



August will largely depend on the volume of LNG imports during that period. It needs to be mentioned that Petrobangla owes US\$470 million to the suppliers of LNG under long-term contracts and spot supply. On the other hand, Petrobangla gets Tk28,000 crore from the power sector. The outstanding payment of a private sector company is Tk800 crore. Chevron and Qatar Gas have already written to the Energy and Mineral Resource Division (EMRD) to realize the payments. A source at Petrobangla claimed that it will be possible to supply gas to the level of last summer if two FSRUs consistently supply 1,100 MMCFD RLNG to the gas grid. Subject to getting 1,150-1,200 MMCFD gas like last year, BPDB will be able to generate 6,000-6,500MW gas-based power. It will be possible to generate 8,000MW gas-based power if a 1,500 MMCFD gas supply is available. The power grid has some constraints too – evacuation of electricity. Three Companies – Zera of Japan and Bangladesh's Summit Power and Unique Group – have three fuel-efficient modern power plants of 1,800MW combined capacity. Even if gas is supplied to these plants, it may not be possible to evacuate more than 1,000MW from these plants due to power grid constraints. BPDB management is optimistic about generating up to 6,500MW from gas.

The second reliable fuel for power is coal. The capacity of coal power including 1,800MW supply from Adani Power Plant at Jharkhand is 7,169MW. Beyond this, the 660MW unit of the 1,320MW capacity RPCL-Norinco JV power plant is ready to commence operation. On condition of BPDB making outstanding payments, the 1,320MW capacity Payra Power Plant, 1,244MW Bashkhali Power Plant, 1,200MW Matarbari Power Plant, and 307MW Barishal power plant can generate up to 85% of the plant capacity. However, the operation of the 1,320MW Rampal Power plant is regularly impacted by technical glitches. As such BPDB is not optimistic about getting a capacity power supply from Rampal even if the coal supply is ensured. On the other hand, due to draft issues of the Ramnabad channel, coal transportation to Payra and RPCL plants may be affected. The Adani group may supply up to 1,400MW from the Jharkhand plant. But BPDB owes US\$845 million to the Adani Group. They requested a schedule of repayment from BPDB. If the payment issues are not resolved, it may not be possible to get 1,400MW power from Adani Group consistently. There will not be any issue of evacuation of 660MW power from the RPCL-Norinco plant. A 400 KVA power transmission line can evacuate power

from both Payra and RPCL power plants. However, there exist some technical issues at the Aminbazar substation. If required dollars and taka are available on time, up to 7,000MW of coal-based power generation is possible during the ensuing summer. But the BPDB expects to generate up to 5,500MW.

It appears that up to 12,000MW generation may be possible from gas and coal. If the BPDB estimate of the highest peak demand of 18,000MW is considered, up to 6,000MW will be required to come from other sources. Imports and furnace oil will have to contribute to this. There is a 230MW hydropower generation capacity. During summer it may not be possible to get more than 100-120MW from there. From India, through Bheramara and Tripura connectivity, it is possible to import up to 1,160MW. Here too, there are significant outstanding payments. On condition of reducing the outstanding dues, 1,000MW import may be possible. This possibility may still leave a 4,500-4,800MW supply shortage. The third option is furnace oil-based generation having a capacity of 5,885MW, including 4,600MW belonging to the private sector. The entrepreneurs import furnace oil for the plants. These are peaking plants. But at times these require to be operated as base load plants. BPDB will require up to 4,000-4,500MW supply coming from HFO-based plants during peak summer. But BPDB owes Tk9,000 crore outstanding bills to the IPPs. The BIPPA has been lobbying with BPDB and the Power Division since November 2024 to realize the payments. BPDB and the Power Division are sincere about making payments. But they have no money to pay. Until they get an allocation from the Finance Ministry, the outstanding payments can not be made. David Hasanat, President of BIPPA, informed EP that they apprised the BPDB and Power Division about their inability to keep their plants operational unless the outstanding payments were made.



The President of BIPPA informed the BPDB that they cannot operate their plants during the ensuing summer unless at least Tk2,500 crore of the outstanding payment is made within the next 10 days. He also mentioned that it usually takes up to 45 days to bring furnace oil to the power plants from getting payments, opening LC, and importing the fuel. A lot of delays have already been made. Further delays may make it extremely difficult to get any supply from the HFO-based power plants during the summer.

Engr. Rezaul Karim, Chairman of BPDB, while talking about the outstanding payments with EP, said the total outstanding payment of BPDB now is Tk35,000-3,6000 crore. BPDB has never stopped payments. If not full, some payments are regularly made. BPDB cannot pay Tk2,500 crore within 10 days. Power plant owners must realize this. We are sincerely endeavoring to resolve this matter. Apart from making these outstanding payments, we also owe a huge outstanding payment to Petrobangla for gas supplied.

One BPDB executive on condition of remaining anonymous informed that there exist 114 power plants in Bangladesh. Of these 52 base load plants have a total generation capacity of 19,229MW. The remaining 92 peaking plants can generate

8,505MW. On 30th April 2024, the highest generation recorded was 16,477MW. The deficit was the bare minimum on that day. During the ensuing summer from March to August, the peak demand from 6 pm to 11 pm may be 17,500-18,000MW. Gas, Coal, and power imports may contribute up to 13,000MW. But to meet the 18,000MW peak demand power system will up to 5,000MW from furnace oil-based plants. But this is not possible. Maximum generation will depend on how quickly BPDB makes substantial payment of the outstanding dues. Power supply from Adani Power Plant may also be reduced due to payment issues. Considering all these, load-shedding will be unavoidable; load management must be given priority. Planned load-shedding should be done to restrict the use of HFO plants. The chairman of BPDB assured that there should not be any issue in meeting the day-peak demand.

The power and energy sector is now trapped in the circle of crisis. In 2010, Dr. M Tamim through analysis had alerted that unless the policymakers stress upon exploration and exploitation of domestic primary fuel resources, the country may become 90% dependent on imported fuel by 2030. However, the policymakers of the former government hardly heeded the suggestion and continued growing

big in fuel imports. In 2025 the system depends 50% on imported fuel. During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, fuel prices in the global market skyrocketed. Experts suggested introducing planned load-shedding to reduce reliance on imported fuel. But the Energy Adviser and state minister for energy of the past regime chose to ignore it too. Consequently, the expenditure in the energy sector kept growing. Subsidy and outstanding payments kept on accumulating. Bangladesh lost the capacity for importing fuel from the global market because of fund shortage though the price of fuel reduced to a much lower level in the global market. The government owes 9-month equivalent payments to power suppliers. The former government could not pay for power from July 2023 to February 2024. The situation did not improve even after the fall of the former regime. BPDB alone now owes Tk35,000-36,000 crore to the power suppliers. Petrobangla owes US\$470 million to IOCs and LNG suppliers. The situation has aggravated to such a stage that power cannot be generated up to the desired level unless the payments are made. Load-shedding cannot be avoided during summer if the required fuel supply cannot be made.

Prof Dr M Tamim, Vice Chancellor of Independent University, Bangladesh while talking about the power sector situation mentioned that there is no off-the-shelf solution or a magic formula to solving the present and emerging crisis. The crisis is intense. It will not be possible to meet the summer demand unless the outstanding huge power bills are paid. But in the present situation, the government does not have enough dollars and taka for making payments. There is not even enough money to make part payments and keep all plants in operation. Hence, before the summer sets in, plans must be made for load-shedding and executed with prior intimation as far as practicable. That will somehow reduce stress on the power system for relying on imported fuel.

Engr. Mizanur Rahman, a former member of BERC, suggested that



austerity in use must be preferred to increased reliance on expensive and dirty liquid fuel. Planned load-shedding will be the unavoidable option. He said the former government did not listen to this. The summer demand will peak at 18,000MW. Bangladesh can generate that. But Bangladesh does not have the required fuel for that. Imports of expensive fuel from the global market will be essential. Mr. Mizan believes that introducing planned load-shedding during the day and night can minimize the use of expensive furnace oil. Otherwise, the cost of generation would continue to remain high. The power system will be further burdened with outstanding payments. People will rather accept the pains of planned load-shedding. He said there is no issue with generation but fuel supply is the main challenge. We must conserve fuel, he said.

Energy sector analysts observed that initiatives taken to increase fuel supply, particularly own gas would take at least 3-4 years to deliver dividends. A project for the evacuation of about 2Tcf gas stranded at Bhola Island to the gas grid has been initiated. It may also take 4 years to accomplish. Our capacity for low-cost, gas-based power generation is 12,000MW. LNG price in the global market is now at a comfortable level. However, Bangladesh does not

have the required infrastructure to increase LNG imports. The government is working on two new FSRUs and a land-based LNG terminal. FSRUs may take 3 years and the LBT may take 5-6 years to commence operation. Furnace oil-based power generation will continue till then. The cost of generation and obligations of higher payments cannot be avoided. There exists a 7,800MW coal-based power generation capacity. But for the dollar crisis, coal imports are disrupted from time to time. There are issues with coal transportation as well. Bangladesh cannot utilize the full capacity of coal power as such.

Virtually, the power and energy sector is sinking under the burden of debt. Around Tk41,000 crore has been allocated as a subsidy in FY25. But that is proving not enough to bail out the sector from the crisis. The use of expensive fuel to meet the summer demand will increase the debt payment obligations. Experts observe that the use of expensive fuel must be minimized as far as practicable. For this, there is no option but to go for austerity. Planned load-shedding will be the best option. There should be no debate over preferring planned load-shedding to bearing the burden of huge outstanding payments.

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# Managing Energy Supplies Smartly In 2025

Saleque Sufi

**E**nsuring a smooth fuel supply is the main challenge of the interim government in 2025. Irrigation, Ramadan, and summer will create a peak demand of 17,500-18,000MW. Regarding the generation capacity, power evacuation, and distribution facilities, there are no major issues. But the challenge is ensuring a sustainable supply of required fuel. The previous government unfortunately lost focus on exploring and exploiting domestic fuel resources. Without properly assessing the risks and challenges of fuel import, the previous government preferred imports. The volatile global fuel market created price challenges, and import infrastructure created transportation

issues. By 2024 power generation became almost 50% dependent on import. Fuel supply shortage caused about 4,500-5,500MW generation capacity to remain idle, still requiring huge capacity charges. All these increased costs of generation significantly. State-owned enterprises became burdened with about US\$ 5.0 billion in outstanding payments for electricity and fuel. The government tried addressing the situation by increasing power tariffs and fuel prices on several occasions. Even then the government struggled to pay huge subsidies. The interim government after taking over office following the fall of the previous regime inherited a trouble-

prone, chaotic power and energy sector. The crisis of the power and energy sector is so deep and diverse that it will not be possible to address all challenges and manage the situation in a limited time of the interim government. But the immediate task of the government would be arranging fuel for the generation of power through intelligent choice of fuel mix – local and imported. Maximum emphasis must be given to the economic utilization of own gas and arranging required funds for the import of coal, LNG, and liquid fuel on time. The government will have to arrange the required funds to meet the huge overdue payments of SOEs. The IPPs, IOCs, fuel suppliers, and electricity exporters may resort to contractual provisions to reduce supply or even suspend. The government must also do everything possible to eliminate system loss, and pilferage, and manage the demand side through austerity and efficient use. Here we will discuss the optimum use of fuel.

**Challenge:** The previous government under the Speedy Power Supply Act 2010 set up different fuel-based power plants without bothering to ensure the required fuel supply. The installed capacity of grid power reached 27,840MW. Private sector power policy and IPP policy facilitated generous investment from local and foreign investors. A huge reserve margin was created without bothering the



obligations of capacity charges. The former government also did not develop the power transmission grid or modernize distribution networks commensurate with the massive increase in power generation capacity. For all these, the highest demand served on 30th April 2024 was only 16,477MW. On that day load-shedding was required too. For all the constraints and challenges, it is not possible to generate 15,000MW consistently.

The government implementing its political vision has extended the power grid across Bangladesh, putting the burden on the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) with huge investment. Now for the power supply deficit, the BREB and its Polli Bidyut Samity suffer the most. Regions outside Dhaka, even the BREB franchise adjacent to Dhaka city suffer from massive load-shedding. Power systems start suffering in late February and early March with the commencement of irrigation. This year Ramadan will start in March and the weather will also start warming up. BPDB sources inform us that in 2025 peak power demand may reach 17,500-18,000MW. With all the shortcomings mentioned above, it will not be possible to cater to the peak demand. Even to manage the supply of 15,500-16,000MW consistently, the government must implement well-thought-out action plans.

Fuel supply is the major challenge. Let us review the gas production and supply situation. For reasons best known to policymakers of the previous government, exploration, and development of own petroleum resources onshore and offshore was not given proper attention. Virtually, nothing is done offshore apart from resolving maritime disputes with Myanmar and India. The BAPEX-only policy for onshore exploration did not bring any dividends. For a while gas production increased from 1,800 MMCFD to 2,700 MMCFD mainly due to the development of Bibiyana and Maulavibazar gas fields operated by IOC Chevron. Now production is depleted to 2,000 MMCFD. The government went for the import of LNG letting two private-sector companies –

Excelerate Energy and Summit – set up FSRUs at Maheshkhali coast. The two FSRUs can supply 1,100 MMCFD. At this moment the gas system has a total capacity of 3,000-3,100 MMCFD. Bangladesh imports about 70% of LNG from Qatar and Oman under long-term contracts. 30% is imported from the volatile spot market. For various reasons, LNG imports and operations are impacted. Against the national demand of 4,200-4,500 MMCFD, there exists a 1,000 MMCFD deficit all the time. Gas is used for power generation, fertilizer production, industrial, commercial, and domestic use, and CNG.

From Petrobangla's daily gas production and supply report for January 1-2, 2025, we find Petrobangla supplied 750 MMCFD gas for power generation. In winter, peak power demand is not more than 10,000-11,000MW. Come February 2025, the power demand will start growing and by mid-March, it may reach 1,500MW and keep growing. The system must try and supply gas to some highly fuel-efficient gas-based power plants and Meghnaghat. Hope by then the under-construction Bakhrabad–Haripur 42-inch gas transmission pipeline will also be commissioned. Commissioning of the first unit of the Rooppur nuclear power plant will be a major event sometime in 2025. But for that grid security must be a top priority.

### **Fuel Mix for Power Generation**

The power system has 11,997MW gas-based power generation capacity. This alone requires 2,200 MMCFD gas. Some industries also use gas for captive power generation. Petrobangla suspending gas supply to fertilizer plants and rationing gas to CNG can supply 1,150-1,200 MMCFD gas to power. There is no way that this year it may be different. For this also, Petrobangla needs to ensure that there is no issue with LNG imports and that FSRUs operate without interruption. BPDB must smartly use 1,200 MMCFD gas for the most fuel-efficient plants. If done about 9,000MW gas-based power generation may be possible. Even for commencing power generation from the first unit of the Rooppur nuclear

power plant, 8,000-9,000MW redundant power must be available consistently. Petrobangla must also ensure that there are no major disruptions in any of the under-production gas fields. BAPEX must complete drilling works of development wells in Titas, Bakhrabad, Rashidpur, and other gas fields on a priority basis. The government must also review whether surplus power from gas-based captive power plants can be evacuated to the grid.

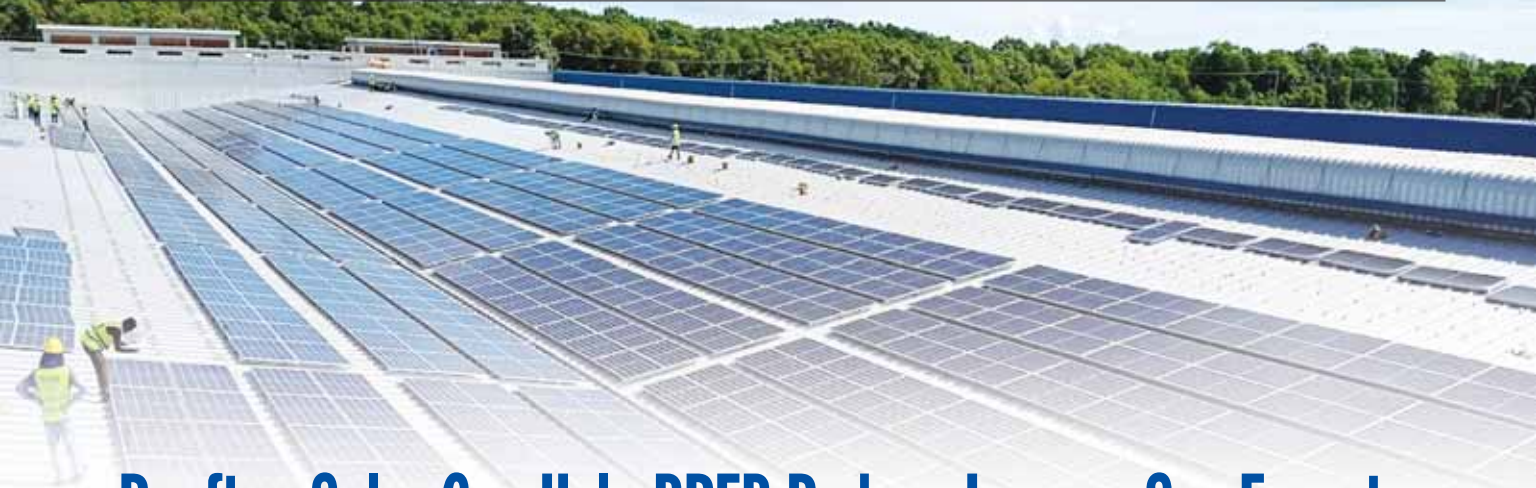
The next priority will be ensuring at least 5,000MW of coal-based power can be consistently generated from March-August 2025. BPDB must reduce outstanding payments to coal generators facilitating them importing coal on time. Barapukuria mine-mouth power plants must also operate without interruptions.

Bangladesh imports 2,656MW of power from Adani Group and other Indian suppliers. Here again, there are issues of outstanding payments. For effectively managing peak demand, the government requires ensuring that payment does not create impediments to the import of power.

Now come to the case of liquid fuel-based generation. Even after all the above, at least 2,500-3,000MW liquid fuel-based power generation will be required for summer peak shaving. IPPs must be paid regularly to make it happen.

We must bear in mind that it is not that easy to arrange funds for meeting the outstanding payment obligations and purchasing fuel. Systems must do their best to reduce losses and ensure efficient use. Strict austerity measures must be introduced and monitored to economize the use. Irrigation cannot be affected at all. During Ramadan, power interruption must be avoided during Iftar, Tarabi, and Sheheri. Gas and electricity supply to industries must be improved. Arranging funds, in my opinion, will be a major challenge. Hope, the government through good governance will manage smartly. **EP**

**Saleque Sufi**  
Energy Expert



## Rooftop Solar Can Help BREB Reduce Losses, Say Experts

### EP Report

**B**angladesh Rural Electrification Board (REB) can minimize its losses by adopting a household rooftop solar model in areas where there are fewer industrial electricity connections, experts said.

“Out of 80 Palli Bidyut Samity, only 13 are profitable in the areas where industrial connections are more. However, the authority can adopt rooftop or other solar-based models to reduce the cost of operations and minimize the loss of public funds,” M Tamim, vice-chancellor at the Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) told a recent discussion.

Energy & Power magazine organized a discussion titled ‘Rooftop Solar: Investment and Policy Support for Industries’ over a virtual platform recently.

Prof M Tamim was the chief guest while Solaric Director Naznin Akhter made a keynote presentation on the challenges and opportunities of rooftop solar systems. Energy & Power Editor Mollah Amzad Hossain moderated the discussion.

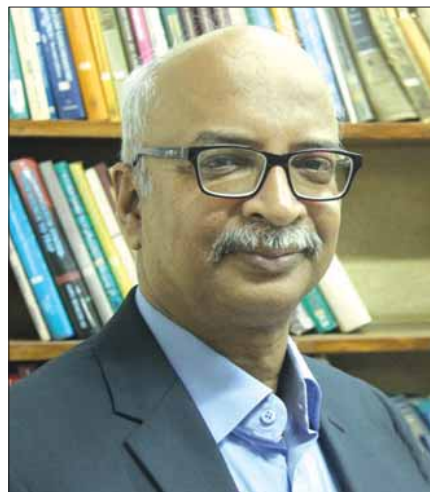
Addressing the session, M Tamim urged the authorities to move with renewable energy by developing specific guidelines for rooftop solar systems.

“There is a challenge of real-time demand forecasting. Power system management would become difficult in case of any forecasting error. In

Germany, the authorities are confused about connecting renewables to the grid. When a huge number of solar panels are connected to the grid and demand drops, the distributor will backtrack from the system operator. In California of USA, we find such example,” he said.

In the keynote, Engineer Naznin mentioned solar energy represented around 79.7 percent of 1,449 megawatts of power generation from renewable sources.

“There has been no significant growth in solar trends in the last two years. The grid-connected utility-scale consumption will be 993 megawatts and 112 megawatts on rooftops by the end of December 2024. So, around 1105 megawatts of utility come from



Prof. M. Tamim

renewable. Solar is yet a promising sector where there is a space to push the growth,” she said. The Solaric official made the urgency of a positive business case to fetch more investment from local and foreign ventures.

“Solaric has been operating an IDCOL-funded project for the last six years. There is no example of default for a single month. There is a responsibility of SREDA to set a definition of a standard by setting a benchmark of quality,”

Engineer Naznin has made the urgency of a clear guideline for finance to solar projects to show the way for local and foreign investors to gain a return on investment.

“We are saying that 4.8-gigawatt electricity generation can be possible through rooftops that should be portrayed from different sectors to tap the opportunities. Then the investors will get a comfort zone to raise funds,” she said.

There is a lack of skilled workforce in management and workforce in renewable energy sector which can be addressed through setting up an independent institute for training and capacity building, according to the practitioner.

“As a business entity, we think about investing in human resources. If we only train people and then they leave the office, the ultimate loser is the entity. So, a body can be developed to upskill workforce for the sector,” she said.

She further mentioned that there are complexities in importing raw materials for renewable energy and rooftop solar projects.

“There should be a clear definition and benefits for the investors in rooftop solar as they invest in the OPEX model. Besides, the authorities can fix a rate of electricity purchase annually considering both sides in the business,” The keynote speaker further mentioned that the electricity producer should be given space to connect 100 percent generation to the grid to make the business viable. “There should not be any capacity burn,” she added.

The industry insiders suggested making space for industrial rooftop investors to turn the project into an independent power producer to promote the sector. SREDA Director Engineer Mozibur Rahman said that the authority is now working on two policies on renewable energy and net metering guidelines.

The embargo of 70 percent generation to the grid is withdrawn in the new net-metering guideline. Besides, if the production is higher than demand, the company can sell the electricity at the same rate, he said.

The net metering guideline is almost prepared as SREDA has conducted a high-level policy meeting recently where the policy was discussed, according to the SREDA official. “There are some minor observations at utility level which have been addressed in the process,” he said. The SREDA official agreed on the adoption of technology to support storage systems in power generation from solar panels.

“There was a small project of the government to generate 2 megawatts per hour. The project is not completed due to a minor error. The synchronization between storage and grid is in process. The technical issue will be addressed soon,” he added.

Enamul Karim Pavel, head of renewable energy at IDCOL, said that the government wants to increase private sector involvement in renewable energy.

“We have been encouraging the



Engr. Naznin Akhter



Mohammad Alauddin



Mostafa Al Mahmud

private sector to invest in the OPEX model. The public-private partnership will enable entities to better maintain the panels. Banks and financial institutions can contribute here. There is a big chance to make a jump from here. We can reduce dependence on fossil fuel by promoting solar electricity generation,” he said.

Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association (BSREA) President Mostafa Al Mahmud said that solar energy or renewable sources can contribute to the economy by saving foreign currency spent to import fossil fuel or coals.

“We also pay huge subsidies in the power and energy sector apart from import-based energy consumption. If we can adopt renewable energy, the inflationary pressure can be softened gradually,” he said.

Mahmud appreciated the point of keynote speaker Engineer Naznin who mentioned 4.8 gigawatt opportunities in the rooftop solar sector.

“Rooftop has full potential to grow. We need roofs. When we meet with different stakeholders, we urge the infrastructure owner to allocate rooftops

to set up panels. Then IDCOL can connect the bank with us to run the business and grow together. If we can increase the number of rooftops, the energy crisis will be addressed gradually,” said the BSREA chief.

The BSREA president also urged SREDA to provide a unique document through the ministry for OPEX model investment for faster growth of the rooftop solar sector.

BSREA has been involved in policy advocacy since 2010, however, there has been no significant progress in expansion of the renewable energy over the period.

“We have two points for the policymakers. The first is policy support to drive business and the other is easing access to finance to support new investment,” he added.

Mohammad Alauddin, rector at Bangladesh Power Management Institute, shared a challenge in roof-top solar that the system won’t work with an off-line grid.

“Recently, I learned about a new technology of hybrid inverter. The inverter can store power when the grid goes offline. There is no option for a stand-alone battery. We are planning to incorporate some new points including an incentive to inspire investors in the solar grid which comes into order soon,” he said.

Power generation companies should be brought under a regulation to inspire them to generate a minimum of 1.0 percent from renewable sources including solar, according to Alauddin, former chairman of SREDA.



Md. Enamul Karim Pavel



Engr. Md. Muzibur Rahman



# Smartly Addressing Energy Sector Priorities

Khondkar Abdus Saleque

**T**he energy sector needs to be smarter and more efficient in confronting and managing the emerging crisis that may affect energy security from March 2025 onwards. Petrobangla and its companies must ensure continuing operations of the gas supply infrastructures at optimum levels without interruptions, expediting all exploration and development projects, importing LNG, and evacuating to the national transmission grid. Petrobangla companies must also ensure the elimination of system loss, theft, and pilferage, and improve the efficient use of gas. Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation and its companies must also improve efficiency in importing and supplying liquid petroleum products. The issues with the Single Point Mooring and Chattogram-Dhaka liquid fuel pipeline must be resolved, and efficient transportation of petroleum products must be ensured. Fuel supply will be a major challenge for Bangladesh in managing energy security for the next 3-4 years.

## Challenges of Petrobangla

The failure of the bureaucracy-dominated energy sector to explore domestic petroleum and mineral resources is among the main reasons for

the present crisis. A significant quantity of superior-quality coal reserves remain unexploited and a substantial volume of potential petroleum resources in onshore and offshore areas remain untapped. One of the major challenges of the interim government is revitalizing Petrobangla and its companies and creating dynamism. Some critical changes have been made in Petrobangla and companies. The boards of directors of the Petrobangla companies have been reorganized. However, experts observe that experienced professionals with past proven track records have not been included. As such no qualitative change may happen. Companies like BAPEX, TGTDC, GTCL, and RPGCL need people on their boards who have institutional memories and in-depth technical knowledge to make qualitative changes.

Petrobangla desperately needs to increase its gas supply by increasing gas production from its gas fields and increasing the import of LNG. Petrobangla through BAPEX is implementing two major projects of drilling 48 wells by 2025 and 100 wells by 2028. Judging from the records of the recent past, these appear highly ambitious. There is hardly any

alternative to put the best efforts to achieve as much as possible through strengthening BAPEX and providing all support to them. A recent endeavor of Petrobangla to engage IOCs for offshore exploration through PSC failed to get any response. The EMRD and Petrobangla must do everything possible to establish confidence in IOCs through proactive engagement with them. IOCs have no issues with the fiscal incentives provided in the model PSC, and resource potential of the Bay of Bengal. However, the political instability and some actions like the cancellation of signed contracts might have left the wrong message to the investment community. Petrobangla must reengage with IOCs and ensure that in the changed environment all processes of PSC will be dealt with fairly and transparently, and decisions will be taken as promptly as possible. The present gas production from the domestic gas fields has depleted below 2,000 MMCFD. Two FSRUs, if run in tandem can supply 1,100 MMCFD. A maximum of 3,000-3,100 MMCFD gas supply is possible now. But at peak summer the coincident peak demand is 4,300-4,500 MMCFD. The power sector alone needs 2,300 MMCFD. There is no way Petrobangla can meet this supply. There is no way that our



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own gas production can be increased significantly in less than 3-5 years. There is no way that LNG imports can be increased in less than 3 years at least. The government should think seriously based on experts' opinions before canceling the contract of the 3rd FSRU and putting an end to negotiations with potential contractors for supplying LNG. In the present situation like offshore bidding, no more investors may be interested in participating in fresh tenders. In the recent past, there has been little response to Petrobangla's tender for the supply of LNG from the spot market. Petrobangla and RPGCL must complete all outstanding work to start construction of the planned land-based LNG Terminal (LBT) at Matarbari.

The gas system will require at least 200-300 MMCFD of new gas by 2026 to get out of the crisis. For this, the interim government must launch some contingency actions. BAPEX's drilling rigs must be deployed in executing drilling of development wells and workovers at Titas, Bakhrabad, Rashidpur, Koillashtila, and other under-production gas fields from where additional gas can be immediately evacuated to the gas grid. Without wasting any time, an international tender for the construction of a gas transmission pipeline from Bhola to Khulna via Barishal must be floated. Local contractors cannot build this pipeline which will have to traverse across some mighty tidal rivers. The government must declare exploration by BAPEX as a top-priority national project. The company must be given all assistance in expediting land acquisition and procurement of materials. DPPs of the projects must be approved as soon as possible. GTCL must ensure the completion of construction of the 42-inch OD gas transmission pipeline from Bakhrabad-Shiddhirganj by March 2025. This will allow flexibility for the gas systems to supply to the three fuel-efficient modern power plants. GTCL must also plan to set up a CGS in the Meghnaghat area from where TGTDCCL can distribute gas to all power plants and Japanese EPZ in the region. This will do away with the



system loss controversy prevailing between GTCL and TGTDCCL.

Petrobangla and its companies must do everything possible to increase the gas supply and ensure evacuation through the gas transmission and distribution network smartly. Alongside BAPEX, IOCs must also be engaged through PSC onshore. We understand Petrobangla is updating MPSC for that. A seminar on the draft updated MPSC can be organized in Dhaka inviting interested IOCs and further fine-tuning the document before going for bidding. Petrobangla got a new Chairman. Director (PSC) has been made Director (Operation). One of the issues in Bangladesh is the lack of competence in PSC management. Petrobangla traditionally failed to develop data management systems. Very important geological and geophysical data of Bangladesh gas resources were not preserved properly. Neither did Petrobangla negotiate PSC smartly and impartially. The director (PSC) must be a person of competence. Petrobangla representatives in JOC and JVC must be smart and efficient.

The BERC Act amendment that restricted its sole authority of determining power tariffs and fuel prices has been rescinded. BERC should now review gas prices fairly and transparently. The reorganized BERC is now better authorized to determine prices and ensure compliance of its licensees with all acts, policies, and

regulations. BERC must carry out efficiency audits. The immediate task of BERC should be settling the disputes regarding system loss in the gas sector. Bangladesh relies heavily on a smooth supply of Petroleum products not only for energy generation but also for irrigation and transportation. Sadly, in 53 years, Bangladesh could not set up a second refinery or modernize and upgrade ERL. The Single Point Mooring project constructed with great difficulties is not yet fully operational. The liquid fuel pipeline constructed under the management of the Bangladesh Army should be commissioned as early as possible. We are not very sure whether smart sensing devices for policing unauthorized tapping into the pipeline have been installed properly. Managing liquid pipelines in Bangladesh can be a huge problem. We hope the interim government will check and confirm the integrity of the project before commissioning.

In conclusion, the government may include at least one retired gas sector expert on each board of Petrobangla companies to transfer their knowledge and experience. A retired chairman of Petrobangla can be included in the Petrobangla board as well. Everything possible must be done so that by 2028 gas supply chain gets out of the chronic supply crisis.

EP

*Engr. Khondkar Abdus Saleque*  
*Energy Analyst and Consultant*



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- \* গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র, গ্রিড লাইন ও টাওয়ার জাতীয় সম্পদ, তা রক্ষা করা সকলের দায়িত্ব।
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- \* 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।







## OPEC Cuts To COP29

# Global Energy Market In 2024

The global energy landscape has witnessed a series of developments in 2024: a surge in renewable energy adoption, transformative geopolitical strategies, and the continued efforts of leading oil-producing nations to stabilize prices through voluntary cuts.

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East significantly impacted the energy landscape. This prompted countries to diversify their energy sources and strengthen their energy security, while the European Union announced new sanctions packages throughout the year, according to reports by international media.

This year, during COP29, over 30 nations pledged to use nuclear energy to achieve a climate-neutral globe and increase nuclear energy's role in the global energy mix.

Türkiye supported this goal, endorsing a declaration to triple nuclear energy by 2050 and progressing with its Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, with the first power generation expected in 2025.

OPEC+, consisting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and some non-OPEC producing countries, extended production cuts

through 2026, signaling continued efforts to stabilize oil markets.

Below are the key events shaping the year in energy:

On Jan. 18, China announced the discovery of a lithium mine with nearly 1 million tonnes of reserves in Yajiang, Southwest China's Sichuan Province. The discovery is expected to help raw material supply for China's sprawling electric vehicle sector.

On Jan. 26, the Joe Biden administration in the U.S. decided to temporarily halt the approval process for LNG exports in response to pressure from environmental groups.

On Feb. 15, the EU approved 6.9 billion euros (\$7.4 billion) in state aid for infrastructure projects to increase the supply of renewable hydrogen.

On March 21, representatives from 30 nations pledged to collaborate on extending the life span of existing nuclear reactors, fostering investments, building new nuclear power plants, and installing small modular reactors. The countries also agreed to build new capacity to meet climate targets and ensure reliable energy supplies.

On May 14, U.S. President Biden signed a bill banning the import of enriched uranium from Russia.

On Aug. 31, Jordan took a major step toward energy security with the construction of its first LNG plant. This project will develop Aqaba's port facilities and establish an onshore liquefaction plant, boosting the country's energy independence.

On Sept. 11, Kadri Simson, the EU Commissioner for Energy at the time, said that following two record years for renewables installations, in the first half of 2024, wind and solar have risen to new highs, overtaking for the first time fossil fuels in the bloc's electricity mix.

On the same day, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan resumed construction work on the Afghan section of a multibillion-dollar Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, ending an eight-year pause.

On Sept. 30, the U.K. became the first G-7 nation to go coal-free with the closure of its last coal-fired power plant.

On Oct. 4, the U.K. signed its first carbon capture, usage, and storage (CCUS) project targeting emissions stemming from industries in the East Coast Cluster area.

On Oct. 10, an MoU was signed to possibly increase Russian gas supplies to Hungary.

On Nov. 11, the annual UN climate

summit COP29 started in Azerbaijan's capital Baku, with finance and trade on the agenda. At the summit, rich countries set a new target of mobilizing at least \$300 billion annually for developing countries by 2035.

On Nov. 13, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Nigeria, and Türkiye join countries at COP29, endorsing a declaration to triple nuclear energy by 2050.

On Nov. 21, the U.S. administration imposed sanctions on Moscow's Gazprombank to prevent Russia from using the international financial system.

On Dec. 2, Russian energy giant Gazprom announced that Russian gas deliveries to China via the Power of Siberia pipeline had been ramped up at China's request, reaching maximum capacity.

On the same day, the 5,111-kilometer (3,176-mile) "Eastern Route" pipeline, designed to deliver Russian natural gas from Eastern Siberia to China's populous north and east, began operations.

On Dec. 3, Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) announced that Libya's crude oil and gas production exceeded 1.6 million barrels per day (bpd), the highest level since 2013.

On Dec. 5, OPEC+ decided to extend its 2 million bpd production cut until the end of 2026. The group also decided to extend the voluntary production cut of 1.65 million bpd implemented by some OPEC+ member countries until the end of 2026.

Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria, and Oman voluntarily agreed to an additional production cut of 2.2 million bpd until the end of March 2025. The voluntary production cuts will be phased out between April 2025 and September 2026.

On the same day, Russian President Vladimir Putin canceled an obligation to pay Gazprombank for Russian gas exports. Accordingly, companies are no longer obliged to make payments for

Russian gas to Gazprombank, while payments can be made through third-party banks.

On Dec. 16, the EU adopted a new sanctions package, aiming to further restrict Russia's ability to continue its "illegal, unprovoked, and unjustified" war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU also imposed sanctions on Russian defense and shipping companies, including those transporting crude oil and oil products.

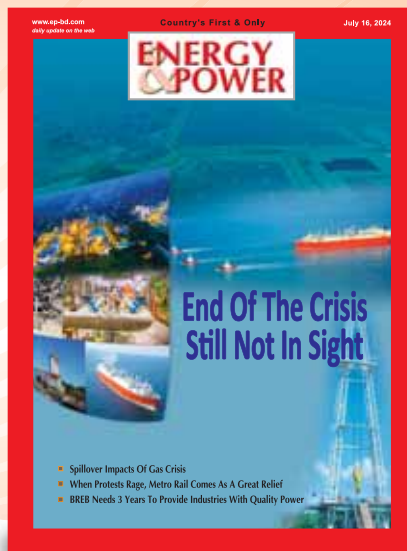
On Dec. 17, the U.K. announced new sanctions on 20 vessels, as part of the so-called "shadow fleet," carrying Russian oil and two key entities, 2Rivers DMCC and 2Rivers PTE LTD, which have facilitated the trade of Russian oil.

On the same day, the U.S. Department of Energy unveiled a highly anticipated study on the economic and environmental impacts of LNG exports. The study comes nearly a year after outgoing President Biden paused all pending decisions on U.S. LNG export projects in January. **EP**



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## Rational Gas Pricing A Challenge Of Rejuvenated BERC

Saleque Sufi

The Energy Adviser of the interim government has informed the media that increasing power tariffs and gas prices was not among the vision or priorities of the government. The government canceled the BERC amendment, restoring its sole authority to determine electricity tariffs and fuel prices. The government reorganized the BERC by posting a former chairman of Petrobangla as the chairman and engaging sector experts and academics. The BERC now has the exclusive authority to determine power tariffs and fuel prices after reviewing proposals of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and holding public hearings with stakeholders. From media reports, it

appears that upon the advice of the EMRD, Petrobangla has submitted a proposal to BERC for reviewing gas prices because of the fluctuation of LNG prices in the global market.

If the Petrobangla proposal is approved by BERC, the industrial and captive power consumers would soon have to pay a much higher tariff for gas usage. We are not aware of the rationale of the decision by the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources to implement a new pricing structure to reflect the fluctuating global market. Bangladesh imports LNG about 20% of the country's natural gas supplies. A major portion of the import is done through long-term contracts with Qatar

and Oman. The remainder is imported from the spot market. LNG price in the spot market is much lower now than last year. The market projection does not indicate a major change in the foreseeable future. Industrial consumers already pay the highest price of gas for use as fuel and captive power generation. Industries pay regularly and they also suffer most from poor quality gas supply.

Media reports suggest that industries would have to pay Tk 75.72 per cubic meter for their gas use beyond the sanctioned load. At present, they pay a flat rate of Tk 30.75 per unit. New industrial and captive connections will have to pay Tk 75.72 per cubic meter. Prospective consumers who got the primary approval for new connections will have to pay 50 percent of their bills of sanctioned load at the existing rate and the rest at the new rate.

Petrobangla proposed that the gas price may be determined by the cost of LNG imports calculated on the average expenditure of the previous three months' total costs -- including operational, transmission, and distribution charges -- as well as contributions to gas development, energy security, and research funds. 15 percent VAT would be imposed too.

The BERC technical committee will now review the proposal and present

### Gas Price Hike to Fuel Inflation: Abdul Awal Mintoo

An increase in prices of gas for industrial use would invariably lead to price hikes in consumer goods, Abdul Awal Mintoo, former President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), has said in an interview. He urged the government to cut illegal gas pipelines and prevent wastage. "We don't want



the government to continuously subsidize liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices, but at the same time, we don't want the price hike of natural gas for industries. Rather, we want prevention of gas theft, illegal usage, and wastage." He suggested intensifying the drive against illegal gas connections.

EP

their recommendations for discussion and debate at the public hearing with stakeholders.

We all know that Bangladesh's energy sector is suffering from an acute crisis of fuel deficit and mainly gas supply. A significant volume of gas-based electricity generation capacity remains idle and BPDB accounts for huge capacity charges. Industries suffer from poor power and gas supplies. Many SMEs and some large industries are on the verge of shutting down businesses. Export-oriented industries struggle to meet export schedules. The previous government had assured supplying quality gas on an uninterrupted basis as an excuse to increase gas prices a few times even after taking over the price adjustment authority from the BERC. But the situation did not improve.

Experts and representatives of a consumer body on several occasions advised the government to reduce losses and increase efficiency to cut costs. The present government has taken some initiatives like canceling the controversial Speedy Power Supply Act 2010 (special act). Many ongoing negotiations with parties for projects based on their unsolicited offers have been canceled. In the long run, these will bring benefits in rationalizing the costs of development. Now at a time when the global market price of LNG is on the lower side, it is not convincing to even consider a price increase of gas

## Increase in Gas Prices to Discourage New Entrepreneurs: M Tamim

Energy expert Prof M Tamim has said gas price hike for industries would undoubtedly discourage new entrepreneurs from investing in gas-based industries. If the proposal is implemented, existing industries using more than their sanctioned supply would have to pay an additional Tk45 per unit, but



new entrepreneurs would have to pay Tk75.72 per unit, keeping the newcomers out of competition even before they join it. The newcomers can never survive with such an exorbitant rate, he told a conversation. "I am confident that the BERC will speak in favor of the business community." **EP**

for industries. There is a case with captive generation. Power distribution utilities should now be in a position to ensure quality power supply to industries. Why don't industries use grid power and phase out gas-using captive power plants?

We are sure BERC will consider all aspects of gas use in industries including the background of Petrobangla's request for the gas price increase. We do not feel that Bangladesh has reasons for going into market-based gas pricing yet as there exists a huge deficit of gas supply. Industries cannot remain competitive absorbing the proposed gas price. Bangladesh desperately needs to ensure

a congenial environment for industries to operate smoothly. Ensuring a sustainable supply of electricity and fuel to industries must be the priority. Higher gas prices will make industries sick. Industries under operation and prospective investors need to know about rational power tariffs and gas price structures. We have noticed that not only the FDI but also investment from the local private sector almost stalled now. This may have long-term adverse impacts on export earnings and the employment situation.

BPDB and BCIC owe huge outstanding payments to Petrobangla. If EMRD can ensure payment of a significant portion of this, Petrobangla would not have issues importing LNG from the global market or paying its outstanding bills to LNG suppliers and IOCs. Moreover, stern actions for eliminating system loss and enhancing the efficient use of gas will reduce the cost of operation of gas companies. BERC can work towards ensuring the improved efficiency of its licensees. At this stage, we do not think the gas price hike will be necessary. Even if it is done, it must be cost-reflective and marginal. The EMRD and Petrobangla should make appropriate contingency plans for confronting emerging challenges of gas supply during the March-August period of 2025. **EP**

*Saleque Sufi*  
Energy Expert

## Gas Price Hike to Affect Industrial Production: Prof Mustafizur Rahman

Any increase in gas prices for industries would affect production line expansion, fears Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). The people, industries, and policymakers now have to pay the price for Awami League's misdeeds. During its more than 15-year tenure, Awami League rulers



preferred exorbitantly costly LNG imports and piped fuel purchases from neighboring India to make illicit gains and serve interests of the malign foreign actors. Now the country is suffering from the accumulated problems. The government must immediately go for land-based and offshore fuel exploration. **EP**

## Chevron Targets \$6-8b Growth in Free Cash Flows Next Year: CEO



**M**ichael Wirth, CEO of Chevron, said recently that the company is in a position to increase its cash flow from free to \$8 billion and to reduce expenses "by a couple of billion dollars".

The U.S. oil producer No.2 expects to benefit from the start of new or expanded oil production projects in

Kazakhstan, U.S. shale and offshore Gulf of Mexico.

The No. 2 U.S. Oil Producer expects to see positive results from new or expanded oil projects in Kazakhstan, U.S. Shale and offshore U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

Wirth, in his remarks at the Goldman Sachs Energy, CleanTech & Utilities Conference, Miami, said that oil production in the Gulf of Mexico would increase to 300,000 bbls of oil per day by 2026, from 200,000 barrels last year. **EP**

## Toshiba Delivers Fuel Cell System to Ship



**T**he provider of energy solutions industry Toshiba (TOSYY) Energy Systems & Solutions Corporation (Toshiba ESS) announced that the company has delivered a mobile 30kW hydrogen fuel cell system, which volume per unit power output is reduced to 1/3 compared to the stationary fuel cell systems, to a fuel cell ship.

The fuel cell ship, which passed the Temporary Navigation Permit Inspection of Japan Craft Inspection Organization on October 30, has started demonstrations of the verification by NREG

Toshiba Building Corporation and Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT).

The newly mobile 30 kW pure hydrogen fuel cells system developed by Toshiba ESS will be available to install for vessels, railways and trucks.

Hydrogen is used as fuel, allowing electricity to be generated without CO2. The system makes lower noise compared to standard ship engines, and it starts generating power in one minute at the shortest.

This time, Toshiba ESS can reduce the volume per unit power output to 1/3 compared to the stationary fuel cell systems due to its simplified design and package improvement. **EP**

## Titas Gas Disconnects 16,827 Illegal Lines in 4 Months



**S**everal employees of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution PLC and some policemen were injured in an attack during a drive to disconnect illegal gas lines in Sonargaon of Narayanganj recently.

An organized gang attacked a Titas team while they were attempting to disconnect an illegal 2-inch diameter line adjacent to Mirertek Bazar.

Mohammad Shahabuddin, Deputy General Manager of its Regional Marketing Department in Sonargaon, was seriously injured in the attack, according to Titas Gas.

Titas Gas authorities disconnected a total of 16,827 illegal gas connections in the last four months since September 2024, it said.

These removed illegal connections were used to supply gas to 40,916 burners

of 16,596 residential users, 145 industries, and 86 commercial ventures, according to Titas Gas.

The disconnection drive will save 11.113 mmcf/d gas worth approximately Tk 51.65.

Besides, 86 km of pipeline was also removed during the drive against illegal connections in Moishtek, Mirertek, Sonargaon of Narayanganj.

Fazle Wahid, Senior Assistant Commissioner and Executive Magistrate of the Energy and Mineral Resources Division led a mobile court to remove illegal gas connections in those areas. **EP**

## Turkey Eyes Role in Reviving Syrian Oil, Gas Production



**T**urkey said it wants to help increase oil and natural gas production in Syria, the latest step in Ankara's overtures for deeper involvement in the reconstruction of the war-torn country.

Turkish authorities are also working on ways to meet Syria's electricity needs after more than a decade of conflict damaged the country's infrastructure, Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said recently.

"We are also studying the use of crude oil and natural gas for reconstruction of Syria. We plan to tell our counterparts how we can make contributions in that sense," Bayraktar said. "Our objective is to develop these projects." **EP**



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## Excelerate Completes 3,000th LNG Ship-To-Ship Transfer Operation



**E**xcelerate Energy, Inc. (NYSE: EE) has announced that on December 28, 2024, the company safely completed its 3,000th LNG ship-to-ship (STS) operation since the start of STS operations in 2007.

The milestone was achieved onboard Excelerate's floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) Excellence at the Moheshkhali Floating LNG (MLNG) terminal in Bangladesh.

"This milestone is a testament to our unwavering commitment to safety, reliability, and innovation in

the LNG industry. It is not just a number. It symbolizes years of relentless effort, continuous improvement, and the highest standards of operational excellence," said David Liner, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

President and Chief Executive Officer Steven Kobos added, "I am pleased that we completed our 3,000th ship-to-ship operation in Bangladesh, where we are helping fuel economic growth by delivering more than a third of the country's natural gas needs. I want to congratulate the Excellence's outstanding crew, our Bangladeshi partners, and every member of the Excelerate Energy team for making this accomplishment possible." **EP**

## Saudi Aramco Keen to Build Oil Refinery in Bangladesh: Envoy



**S**audi Arabia's state-owned oil giant, Aramco, has expressed interest in setting up an oil refinery in Bangladesh, which could significantly impact the Bay of Bengal region, Saudi Ambassador Essa Youssef Essa Al Duhailan said recently.

"We are talking about Aramco, the biggest oil company in the world. They

are willing to come to Bangladesh to build a refinery here," he said.

The envoy made the remark while speaking at launching of a report titled "Enhancing Saudi-Bangladesh Economic Engagement: Trends, Key Challenges & Long-Term Growth Prospects" at the foreign ministry here.

The proposed refinery is expected to meet Bangladesh's growing demand for petroleum products and serve the broader regional market, bringing transformative changes to the energy landscape, the ambassador noted. **EP**

## Govt Okays Purchase of Refined Fuel Oil for 6 Months

**T**he government has decided to procure 14.25 lakh tonnes of refined fuel oil to meet national demand for the first half of this year.

The refined oil will be purchased through G2G agreements with state-owned entities from Thailand, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India. The estimated cost for procuring the refined fuel oil is Tk11,479 crore.

The proposal for the procurement was approved on 2 January during the first meeting of the Advisory Council Committee on Government Purchase this year, held at the Cabinet



Division conference room in the Secretariat, with Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed in the chair.

According to sources at the meeting, the plan for the purchase was initially approved in principle at a meeting of the committee on 24 October last year. The refined oil is being procured to meet the country's demand from January to June. **EP**

## LNG Supply Period Extended for 7 Companies

**T**he Advisory Council Committee on Economic Affairs (ACCEA) has approved the extension of the LNG (liquefied natural gas) supply contracts for seven companies.

These companies will continue to supply LNG from the international spot market.

Petrobangla, the state-owned company, has been importing LNG from these companies under the Master Sale and Purchase Agreement (MSPA).

As part of the proposal, the ACCEA also approved the use of LSP software for



LNG imports until March 2025.

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed presided over the meeting.

According to meeting sources, Petrobangla has been importing LNG from 23 listed companies that have signed MSPAs and operate in the international spot market.

The LNG is imported through international tenders under Rule-85 of the 'Public Procurement Rule (PPR)-2008'. **EP**

## Rosatom Welcomes 2025 on an Optimistic Note in Bangladesh



The outgoing year 2024 was a very successful year for Rosatom State Corporation in Bangladesh. Construction and installation work of one of the two power units of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (Rooppur NPP) have been completed and are getting ready for start-up next year.

The second power unit of the country's maiden nuclear power plant has also achieved significant progress in construction and installation.

"We have entered the final straight in terms of preparation of Rooppur NPP Unit 1 for the physical start-

up. This is an important stage, under which we must carry out a large scope of works and tests to prove the operability of the process systems in all the operating modes", pointed out Andrey Petrov, First Deputy Director General for Nuclear Energy of State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, and President of ASE.

For power unit-2, concreting of the outer containment was completed ahead of schedule. A passive heat removal system deflector was installed. Other construction and installation works are underway to prepare the unit for commissioning and start-up.

Both the units have received automated radiation monitoring systems (ARMS), developed especially for the Rooppur project to meet its specific requirements. **EP**

## India Reviews \$30b Sulfur-Cutting Program for Coal Plants



India is reviewing a decade-old \$30 billion program requiring coal-fired power plants to install equipment to cut sulfur emissions after government-backed studies showed they had little impact on curbing pollution, according to a document.

Nearly 540 power plant units were required by 2026 to install flue-gas

desulfurization (FGD) systems that remove sulfur from the plants' exhaust gases but only about 8 percent have done so, including those run by state-run NTPC and privately held JSW Power.

The government previously said expensive foreign technology and manpower were some of the hurdles in achieving the target. But with cities like New Delhi and Kanpur some of the most polluted in the world, India's government is under pressure to reduce the impact of the sector's emissions. **EP**

## If Voted to Power, BNP will Review Power Sector Pacts: Mirza Fakhrul

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir recently said there was massive corruption in power and energy sector during the deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's regime.

"If we go to power getting people's mandate, we will review the Awami League government's all agreements in power and energy sector to take necessary measures," he told a press conference at BNP chairperson's Gulshan political office in Dhaka.

BNP organized the press conference to reveal its analysis titled "Money

looting and laundering through irregularities and corruption in the power and energy sectors in the last 15 years of Awami League regime".

BNP Standing Committee member and former state minister for power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku presented a written statement at the press conference. Standing Committee member Nazrul Islam Khan was also present. **EP**



## China Plans 330m Tonnes of Coal Imports in 2025

China confirms its central role in the Asian coal market with a forecast of 330 million tons of coal imports in 2025, according to an Australian report.

China continues to assert its strategic importance in the Asian thermal coal market. According to the latest Resources and Energy Quarterly report published by Australia's Department of Industry, Science, and Resources, Chinese coal imports are expected to reach 330 million tonnes in 2025, reinforcing the country's position as the leading thermal coal consumer in the region.

The increase in Chinese coal imports comes amid fluctuations in domestic production. In the early

months of the year, stricter safety protocols reduced internal supply.

However, China is expected to partially meet winter demand with high stock levels and increased domestic production.

China's hydroelectric production also played a key role in these dynamics. After a notable increase in April and May due to heavy rains, prolonged heat waves led to a surge in energy consumption and, consequently, imports. **EP**





## Intraco Shows Interest in Open Tender for Bhola Gas Transport Expansion



Intraco officials held a press conference at a hotel in Dhaka recently to share their experiences in gas transportation.

The interim government repealed

the Energy Act, also known as the quick rental law, enacted in 2010 by the Awami League government.

Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Advisor Fouzul Kabir Khan said no contractor will be appointed without an open competitive bidding process.

After discussions with several companies, state-owned Sundarban Gas Company Limited, or SGCL, chose Intraco on May 21, 2023, to transport and distribute natural gas found in island district Bhola to industrial Zones around Dhaka. **EP**

The Intraco Refuelling Station, which was responsible for transporting 5 million cubic feet of gas daily from Bhola in CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) form during the previous government's tenure, has shown interest in expanding its capacity to transport an additional 20 million cubic feet of gas per day.

The company, which signed the earlier agreement under the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act, has welcomed the government's new initiative to select contractors through open tender.

## Asian Spot LNG Prices Gain on Europe Gas Outlook Uncertainty



Asian spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices rose recently to a one-month peak, as the expiry of a transit deal for Russian gas through Ukraine caused uncertainty in Europe's gas outlook.

The average LNG price for February delivery into Northeast Asia LNG-AS was \$14.60 per million British thermal units (mmBtu),

industry sources estimated.

Ukraine had allowed Russia to keep pumping gas across its territory despite nearly three years of war, but Kyiv refused to renew a five-year deal that expired on New Year's Day.

"While this risk was predictable, the European gas balance remains uncertain in the first quarter. A key concern is the relatively high withdrawals from European gas inventories, which are currently 16% lower year-over-year due to stronger gas demand," said Siamak Adibi, analyst at consultancy FGE. **EP**

## BPC to Save Tk760cr in Fuel Oil Import Premiums

The Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) will save approximately Tk760 crore in premiums for fuel oil imports during the first six months of 2025.



This saving stems from reduced supplier transportation costs achieved through relaxed tender conditions and strong negotiations.

While fuel prices for consumers will not decrease, the savings are expected to alleviate some of the financial strain caused by rising expenses, according to BPC officials.

According to the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources and BPC, the corporation has targeted the import of 25.65 lakh tonnes of fuel oil from January to June 2025.

Of this, 14 lakh tonnes of refined oil will be purchased

through negotiated premiums.

The revised premiums are expected to reduce costs by \$2 to \$3.98 per unit compared to the rates from the previous six months.

The premium for diesel, the most imported fuel accounting for 65-70% of total imports, has been reduced to \$5.11 per barrel from \$8.75 per barrel in the previous period of July to December 2024.

Regarding the impact of these savings on consumer prices, BPC Chairman Md Amin Ul Ahsan said that due to cost reductions, there will be no need to increase oil prices for the time being. **EP**

## US Data-Center Power Use could Triple by 2028

US data center power demand could nearly triple in the next three years, and consume as much as 12 percent of the country's electricity, as the industry undergoes an artificial-intelligence transformation, according to a Department of Energy-backed report.

The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory report comes as the US power industry and government agencies attempt to understand how the sudden rise of Big Tech's data-center demand

will affect electrical grids, power bills, and the climate.

By 2028, data-center annual energy use could reach between 74 and 132 gigawatts, or between 6.7 percent and 12 percent of total US electricity consumption, according to the Berkeley Lab report.

The industry standard-setting report included ranges that depended partly on the availability and demand for a type of AI chip known as GPUs. Currently, data centers make up a little more than 4 percent of the country's power load. **EP**

## Monthly Natural Gas Trades in India Shoot Up 129% in Dec



supply concerns in international markets amid a strong winter in Europe and ongoing tensions with traditional supplier Russia.

An increase in gas prices in the international market and a reduction in Administered Price Mechanism (APM) gas allocation to city gas distributors (CGD) led to monthly gas volumes traded on the Indian Gas Exchange Limited (IGX) rising by 129 percent sequentially to 5.7 metric million British thermal units (mmBtu) in December, the company said recently.

IGX is the only national-level gas exchange for the physical delivery of natural gas.

Global gas prices rose due to increased demand and

Geopolitical tensions in West Asia have also contributed to the price surge, with fears of skirmishes between Israel and Iran reigniting as US President Donald Trump assumes office on January 20.

The Gas Index of India (GIXI) for December stood at Rs 1,215 or \$14.3 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBtu), marking a 10 per cent rise from November. All spot international gas benchmark prices also recorded increases compared to the previous month, IGX stated. **EP**

## US, UK Unveil Widespread Sanctions against Russia's Energy Sector

The United States and Britain recently announced sanctions against Russia's energy sector, including oil giant Gazprom Neft, just days before outgoing President Joe Biden leaves office.



The US Treasury Department said it was designating more than 180 ships as well as Russian oil majors Gazprom Neft and Surgutneftegas, fulfilling "the G7 commitment to reduce Russian revenues from energy."

At the same time, the UK government announced sanctions against the two companies, saying their profits were "lining (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war chest and facilitating the war" in Ukraine.

"Taking on Russian oil

companies will drain Russia's war chest -- and every ruble we take from Putin's hands helps save Ukrainian lives," UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy said in a statement.

"Putin is in tough shape right now, and I think it's really important that he not have any breathing room to continue to do the god-awful things he continues to do," Biden told reporters Friday at the White House.

Gazprom Neft slammed the sanctions as "baseless" and "illegitimate," Russian state news agencies reported. **EP**

## bp Flows First Gas at Greater Tortue Ahmeyim LNG Project



bp has begun flowing gas from wells at the GTA Phase1 liquefied natural gas (LNG) project to its floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) vessel for the next stage of commissioning.

GTA, offshore Mauritania and Senegal, is one of the deepest offshore developments in Africa, with gas resources in water

depths of up to 2,850 meters.

Once fully commissioned, GTA Phase 1 is expected to produce around 2.3 million tonnes of LNG per year. In 2021, it was declared "a project of strategic national importance" by both host governments.

The announcement marks an important milestone towards realizing the potential of Mauritania's and Senegal's gas resources, with the possibility for the countries to become an important LNG production hub. **EP**

## IPPs Seeks Payment of Half the Dues to Avert Ramadan Blackout

Local independent power producers (IPPs) have urged the government to clear at least half of their outstanding dues, approximately Tk9,000 crore, within 10 days to prevent power shortages during the upcoming Ramadan in March and the subsequent irrigation season.

During a meeting with Power Division Secretary Farzana Mamtaz at the Secretariat on 7 January, IPPs warned that failure to settle dues promptly would hinder their ability to import fuel oil necessary for running power plants.

They said up to 2,500MW of

heavy fuel oil (HFO)-based power generation capacity could remain idle during Ramadan if fuel imports are delayed. This would result in significant load shedding at a time when demand will grow significantly.

Highlighting the gravity of the situation, Bangladesh Independent Power Producers' Association (Bippa) President KM Rezaul Hasanat, said, "Approximately Tk18,000 crore in bills remain unpaid [in the power sector], with payment delays now exceeding six months, compared to the 45-day limit stipulated in contracts. **EP**

## Solar Pumps Revolutionize Farming in Northern Region



the development organization BRAC, aims to provide farmers with a sustainable and cost-effective solution.

Solar pumps made water management more efficient, allowing farmers to irrigate their fields without the financial burden of traditional systems.

Farmers in the northern region, particularly in Rangpur and Dinajpur districts, have long faced water scarcity, making farming a challenging task.

The heavy reliance on irrigation coupled with unreliable water sources and high costs of traditional irrigation methods are causing struggles for crop producers. A groundbreaking project, however, involving solar-powered irrigation pumps is revolutionizing farming in these areas.

This project, funded by Standard Chartered Bank and implemented by

The introduction of solar-powered pumps has significantly reduced irrigation costs. In areas like Rangpur, where farmers previously relied on diesel-powered pumps, operational expenses were a major concern.

A diesel pump would cost up to Tk 5,000 to irrigate 60 decimals of farmland, but with solar-powered pumps, this cost dropped to around Tk2,500.

Additionally, solar pumps are eco-friendly and more reliable than traditional methods. **EP**

## Aker Solutions, ABB Partner for North Sea Green Volt Wind Study

Aker Solutions and ABB will conduct the first-phase FEED for the 560-MW GreenVolt floating offshore wind project in the central UK North Sea, 80 km from Peterhead, eastern Scotland.

This is a joint venture between Vergrünn and Flotation Energy.

Aker Solutions will lead the design of the high-voltage offshore



substation (HVAC), and the overall system design, and work on the onshore HV equipment.

The work scope includes the engineering design of the electrical infrastructure; integration of renewable energy from the floating wind farm that will provide power to North Sea oil and gas facilities and the UK grid; design of the large jacket substructure; and planning for the transport and installation of the substation.

ABB will lead the electrical infrastructure development, including integrated automation and telecommunications systems for the offshore platform and onshore substation. **EP**

## Turkey Seeks to Invest in RE



and construction.

This was revealed during a meeting between Turkish Trade Minister Prof Dr. Omer Bolat and Commerce Adviser Sk. Bashir Uddin at the Ministry of Commerce in Dhaka recently.

During the meeting, bilateral issues such as the potential for increasing trade volume, Turkish investment opportunities in Bangladesh, obtaining halal food certification, and forming an Economic Commission, were discussed. **EP**

Turkey has shown a strong interest in investing in Bangladesh's diverse sectors, including renewable energy, automobile manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, information and communication technology, logistics,

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)

## Consist Apparels Limited Earns Platinum LEED Certification



**C**onsist Apparels Limited has become the first RMG factory this year to receive the prestigious Platinum LEED certification.

This recognition, awarded by the US Green Building Council (USGBC), underscores the factory's

commitment to sustainability through energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction initiatives.

With this achievement, Bangladesh now boasts 233 LEED-certified factories, including 93 Platinum and 126 Gold-rated facilities, said former BGMEA director Mohiuddin Rubel.

This achievement aligns with Bangladesh's ongoing push for greener practices in the textile and garment sectors. **EP**

## UK Electricity Cleanest on Record in 2024: Study



**B**ritain produced its cleanest electricity on record last year with output of fossil fuels at an all-time low and renewables reaching a record high, a study showed.

Oil, gas, and coal together produced 29 percent of the UK's electricity in 2024 while renewables -- including wind and solar power -- made up 45 percent, according to an analysis released recently from the climate and energy website Carbon Brief.

Britain's last coal-fired power station closed in October, making the UK the first G7 country to end its reliance on the fossil fuel for

electricity.

The Labour government followed this up in November with plans to ban new coal mines.

Carbon Brief added that nuclear energy was used to produce 13 percent of Britain's electricity last year. A total of 11 percent of Britain's electricity was imported.

Gas-fired power stations remained the UK's single-largest source of electricity in 2024, the analysis found.

However, Carbon Brief forecast that the island nation's wind power would likely generate more electricity than gas this year.

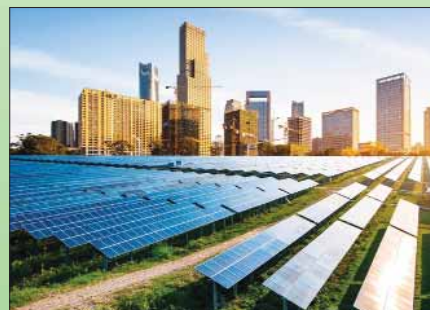
Prime Minister Keir Starmer's government has pledged to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 81 percent on 1990 levels by 2035, as part of plans to reach net-zero by 2050. **EP**



## ACWA Power Expands into China with 1GW of RE Projects

**S**audi utility giant ACWA Power has announced its successful expansion into China, securing over 1 gigawatt of renewable energy projects.

The portfolio includes solar photovoltaic and wind energy initiatives, which will be jointly



owned by ACWA Power and leading Chinese renewable energy firms.

In a statement to Tadawul, ACWA Power confirmed that the projects are spread across several Chinese provinces and are in advanced stages of development.

This milestone represents the company's formal entry into China's renewable energy sector, positioning ACWA Power for future growth in one of the world's largest clean energy markets.

The expansion aligns with ACWA Power's broader ambitions in China. Earlier this month, Yunhe Lyu, head of ACWA Power's China operations, shared plans to invest up to \$50 billion in renewable energy projects across the country by 2030.

The company aims to acquire clean power assets with a capacity of up to 20 GW and to develop 1 million tonnes of green hydrogen. **EP**

## JERA Wins Rights for 615MW Wind Project Offshore Japan



Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism”, JERA said in an online statement.

The consortium is called Tsugaru Offshore Energy Community.

“Leveraging their respective expertise and strengths to create synergies as a consortium with sufficient capabilities and achievements, the three companies will realize a long-term, stable, and efficient power generation business”, JERA said.

Targeted to start operation June 2030, the project “is one of the largest offshore wind power generation projects” in the East Asian country, JERA said. **EP**

**A** consortium led by JERA Co. Inc. has secured the rights to develop and operate a 615-megawatt wind generation project offshore Aomori Prefecture in the Sea of Japan.

The power utility, Green Power Investment Co. Ltd. and Tohoku Electric Power Co. Inc. “were selected as the Project’s business operator by Japan’s Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry and



## India Adds Record 24.5GW of Solar in 2024

**I**ndia installed a record 24.5 GW of solar capacity in 2024, marking its highest annual additions to date.

India added 24.5 GW of solar and 3.4 GW of wind capacity in 2024, doubling solar installations and increasing wind capacity by 21%



from 2023, according to JMK Research & Analytics.

These additions brought India’s total renewable energy capacity to 209.44 GW, with solar accounting for 47%.

The nation’s 24.5 GW of solar capacity additions included 18.5 GW of utility-scale PV, 4.59 GW of rooftop systems, and 1.48 GW of off-grid installations, according to JMK Research.

“This growth can be attributed to the launch of the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana,” said the consulting firm.

Utility-scale additions nearly tripled from 2023, while rooftop and off-grid installations rose 53% and 197%, respectively, driven by the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, which spurred 700,000 rooftop installations in 10 months. **EP**

## World’s Largest Compressed Air Energy Storage Facility Commences Full Operation in China



utilizes the caverns of an abandoned salt mine, reaching up to 600 meters of depth, as its gas storage facility.

This allows for a gas storage volume of nearly 700,000 cubic meters, translating into a

single unit power output of up to 300 MW and a storage capacity of 1,500 MWh.

The system conversion efficiency is about 70%. It can store energy for eight hours, release energy for five hours every day, and generate about 500 GWh of electricity annually. **EP**

**A** 300 MW compressed air energy storage (CAES) power station utilizing two underground salt caverns in central China’s Hubei Province was successfully connected to the grid at full capacity, making it the largest operating project of the kind in the world.

The “Energy Storage No. 1” project

## Youth Must Lead Sustainable, Nature-Centric Development: Rizwana



Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has emphasized the importance of youth leadership for sustainable development.

She stated that the development model must shift to prioritize nature conservation. Changes in lifestyle are essential, and the excessive consumerist approach should be abandoned.

She shared these remarks while virtually addressing the

"Environment and Innovation Summit and Awards 2024," organized by Mission Green Bangladesh and JCI Dhaka Metro, held at Dhaka University's TSC Auditorium recently.

The advisor further said that the environment is an integral part of our lives, as essential as the air we breathe. She urged young people to work on eco-friendly designs and energy-efficient practices. They should think about low-cost solutions for environmental improvement.

During the event, 10 individuals and organizations were awarded for their contributions to environment and climate-resilient innovations. **EP**

## ADB to Provide \$1.0b Annually for Bangladesh's Development



Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide US\$ 1.0 billion to Bangladesh annually in concessional financing over the next five years.

ADB Country Director Hoe Yun Jeong came up with the assurance when he met Environment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan at the Forest Department recently.

During the meeting, they discussed ADB's commitment to supporting Bangladesh's climate resilience and environmental sustainability.

Rizwana emphasized ADB's increased focus on climate-focused and socially inclusive activities over traditional infrastructure projects.

Highlighting her government's ambitious plans to restore eight major rivers across the country's eight divisions, she urged ADB to prioritize river cleaning initiatives around Dhaka. **EP**

## Youth Urged to Lead Climate Adaptation Efforts in Ctg Hill Tracts

Experts and local leaders have emphasized the crucial role of youth in addressing climate-related challenges and driving locally-led adaptation in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT).



Rangamati district participated in the event.

The event marked a significant step in mobilizing youth participation to safeguard the region's future and address the pressing climate challenges facing the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

Agriculturist Kajol Talukder, chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council, attended as the chief guest, while Md Shahzahan, Deputy Director of the Youth Development Authority, joined as the special guest. **EP**

During an inception meeting of the youth group under the Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC), held at Rangamati Hill District Council recently, speakers stressed the urgent need for young people to take action in safeguarding water sources, promoting sustainable bamboo cultivation, and phasing out harmful teak plantations.

Around 120 young leaders from various parts of

## Thailand's PTT Struggles to Go Green as EV Project Flops

State-run energy giant PTT's decarbonization efforts have hit a roadblock, as work on a joint EV factory with Taiwan's Hon Hai Precision Industry that was to be the lynchpin of its strategy has been halted by sluggish demand for new vehicles.



PTT had been building an electric vehicle assembly plant in Chonburi province in eastern Thailand since 2022 through Horizon Plus, a joint venture between its EV-related subsidiary and Hon Hai, also known as Foxconn.

The plant, with a total investment of about 37 billion baht (\$1.1 billion), was scheduled

to be completed in 2024, with an expected production capacity of 50,000 units per year.

The aim was to undertake contract production for Chinese EV manufacturers that do not have production facilities in Thailand. However, PTT said last month that it is looking to lower its stake in the joint venture, and local media reported that the company was suspending construction of the factory. **EP**

## EU, EIB Pledged Support for Bangladesh's Environmental Protection Priorities: Rizwana



**E**nvironment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan has said that the European Union (EU) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) will support Bangladesh in its environmental protection efforts, aligned with government priorities, including technical assistance, renewable energy initiatives, the introduction of electric public transport, capacity building for officials and measures to combat air and water pollution.

Adviser Rizwana Hasan shared this during a meeting

with an EU-EIB delegation led by Nicola Beer, Vice President of the EIB, at her office in the Bangladesh Secretariat recently.

The adviser emphasized Bangladesh's urgent need for international support in addressing critical issues such as air pollution control, river cleaning, renewable energy adoption, improved sewage and water management, establishment of an elephant sanctuary, biodiversity conservation and monitoring capacity enhancement.

She highlighted the government's commitment to engaging youth in environment and biodiversity conservation. **EP**

## BIPSS Stresses National Policy Urgency to Address Climate Security Risks in Bangladesh



**B**IPSS President Major General (Retd) ANM Muniruzzaman has emphasized the necessity of developing a comprehensive national policy to address rising temperatures, sea-level

rise, and other climate-induced risks, which could result in catastrophic consequences, including the loss of 20% of Bangladesh's landmass and mass displacement.

He made the remarks while addressing at a workshop on "Climate Change and Security: Addressing Potential Instabilities in Bangladesh" hosted by Bangladesh Institute of Peace

## Climate-Smart Agriculture, Water Management to Enhance Crop Output Stressed

**E**xperts at a recent workshop in Rangpur stressed on ensuring climate smart agriculture and water management to make irrigation water available to enhance crop output for ensuring food security amid climate change.

They viewed this at the workshop on "Formation of an ad hoc committee for water management team" of the Telipara Low Lift Pump Irrigation Sub-project held at Telipara village in Debiganj upazila of Panchagarh district.

The Deputy Chief Extension Office of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Thakurgaon organized the event for farmers under the Climate Smart Agriculture and Water Management Project (CSAWM).

Speaking at the workshop, Deputy Chief Extension Officer of BWDB Thakurgaon, Rafiul Bari, said that the Power Block-3 light



irrigation pump project was built in 1963 to expand irrigation facilities to the local farmers of the area.

"At that time, the project was taken up to increase irrigation facilities of the farmers by lifting water from the river Karatoa through pumps to provide irrigation facilities to farmers during the Kharif-1, Kharif-2 and Rabi seasons," he said.

Due to lack of regular renovation works, only one kilometer of irrigation canal out of the nine kilometers was so far being used to provide irrigation facilities to farmers.

Renovation works of the remaining eight kilometers of the irrigation canal already began in the current fiscal year. **EP**

and Security Studies (BIPSS) with the support from the European Union.

The event brought together researchers, journalists, NGO officials, and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ansar and Village Defense Party, Bangladesh Fire Service & Civil Defense, Border Guard Bangladesh, Navy Headquarters, Coast

Guard, Police Staff College, Bangladesh Police, Defense Services Command and Staff College, and other security agencies.

The President of BIPSS highlighted the growing importance of addressing climate change as a national and regional security issue due to its potential to destabilize societies and exacerbate existential threats. **EP**



## Thrust on Enhanced Bangladesh-China Cooperation in Environmental Management



Rizwana made these remarks at a seminar titled "Analysis of Environmental Sustainable Development and Management in China and Bangladesh" organized by the

Center for China Studies, University of Dhaka, at the virtual classroom of the Vice Chancellor Suite.

"We must remain honest in our sustainable development efforts. Decades of activism are needed to protect the environment," she said.

"We cannot win a race against nature; instead, we need to redesign development patterns and hold polluters accountable. Destroying rivers for the leather industry or flattening hills for unregulated development is unacceptable," the environment adviser said. **EP**

**E**nvironment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan recently said Bangladesh and China can collaborate effectively in air quality management and sustainable development by learning from each other's policies, innovations, and community-driven approaches.

The adviser underscored the need for sharing comprehensive information on common rivers and fostering stronger people-to-people connections to achieve mutual goals.

## DoE Realizes Over Tk 1.0cr in Fines in Drive against Pollution

**T**he Department of Environment (DoE) conducted four mobile court operations across the country on January 7, imposing a fine of Tk 1.14 crore on 20 illegal brick kilns.

During the operation, the activities of 11 brick kilns were shut down, and two others were ordered to close.

In this nationwide operation, strict actions were taken against illegal brick kilns, charcoal factories, vehicle emissions, noise pollution, plastic use, open construction materials, and hazardous waste management.

A mobile court imposed a fine of Tk 1 lakh on the owner of a charcoal factory and demolished one factory completely. A lead factory was fined Tk 1 lakh, and two individuals were sentenced to 3 months and 6 months in prison.

In order to ban plastic shopping bags, the Department of Environment, under the initiative of Mathbaria, Pirojpur, conducted a mobile court and seized approximately 11 tons of illegal plastic shopping bags from two warehouses, collecting Tk 3 lakh in fines through two cases. **EP**

## Climate Change Brought Extreme Weather, Heat in 2024: UN

**C**limate change sparked a trail of extreme weather and record heat in 2024, the United Nations said recently, urging the world to pull back from the "road to ruin".



The outgoing year is set to be the warmest ever recorded, the UN's weather and climate agency said, capping a decade of unprecedented heat.

Meanwhile, emissions of greenhouse gases grew to new record highs, locking in more heat for the future, the World Meteorological Organization said.

"Climate change plays out before our eyes on an almost daily basis in the form of increased occurrence and impact of extreme weather events," WMO secretary general Celeste Saulo said.

"This year we saw record-breaking rainfall and flooding events and terrible loss of life in so many countries, causing heartbreak to communities on every continent.

"Tropical cyclones caused a terrible human and economic toll, most recently in the French overseas department of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean.

"Intense heat scorched dozens of countries, with temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) on a number of occasions. Wildfires wreaked devastation." **EP**

## 2024 was Hottest Year on Record for Norway's Arctic

**T**he Norwegian Meteorological Institute said recently that 2024 was the hottest year ever recorded for mostly Arctic northern Norway.



Last year was the third hottest and the third wettest since records began in 1901 for the Scandinavian nation, which is a major oil and gas producer.

But the country's three northernmost regions, which mostly lie north of the Arctic Circle, were 1.3 to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.3 to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above normal, according to the weather agency.

The far north has seen

temperatures increase faster than the rest of the world due to a phenomenon known as "Arctic amplification".

Rising temperatures melt sea ice which in turn contributes to accelerated warming in the region, as dark sea water absorbs more solar radiation and thus helps to heat up the atmosphere, which then further accelerates the melting of the ice. **EP**

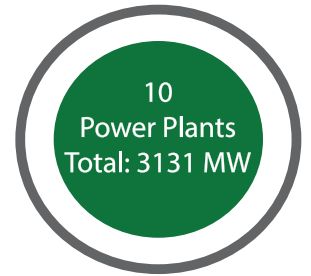


# North-West Power Generation Company Limited

(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

### Market Share

- ✓ 3131 MW generation capacity.
- ✓ Highest among all govt. companies.



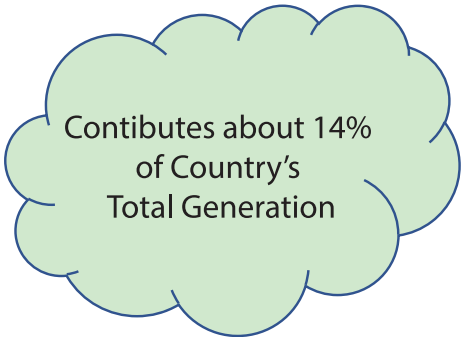
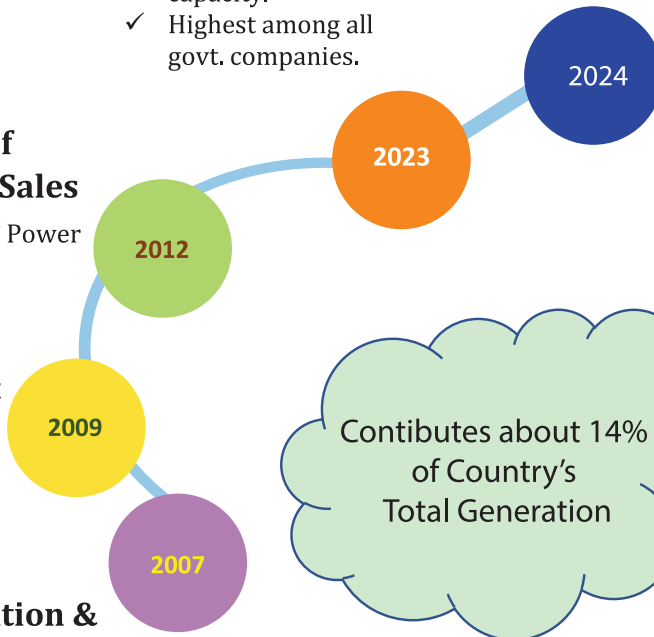
### Start of Electricity Sales

- ✓ COD of 1<sup>st</sup> Power Plant

### Commencement of Business

- ✓ Started with 02 development projects.

### Registration & Incorporation

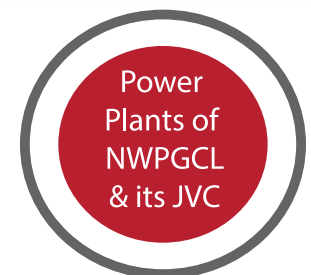


# NWPGCL

*Enlightening Life  
Enlightening Bangladesh*



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



# HFO-Based IPPs Cannot Operate Unless Dues Are Paid

Investment in power generation is not an offense. We, the private sector entrepreneurs investing in power generation under government policies, generate and supply power alongside other businesses. We supply power at comparatively lower prices than foreign companies. Hence it is not fair to blame us as partners of money plundering of the immediate past government. However, if any entrepreneurs have unfairly exploited the provisions of the government policy, they may be taken to task by fairly establishing their faults. On the other hand, local private sector entrepreneurs are on the verge of turning bankrupt from not getting paid for the power supplies for a long time. Furnace oil-based power plants cannot continue to operate during the ensuing summer unless the entrepreneurs are paid at least 50% of the outstanding bills within 10 days.

David Hasanat, President of Bangladesh Independent Power Producers Association (BIPPA) and Chairman of Midland Power, said this in an exclusive interview with Mollah Amzad Hossain, Editor of Energy & Power magazine.

***Irrigation, Ramadan, and summer are forthcoming. IPPs have a significant role during this period. How prepared are you for this?***

Entrepreneurs have their back to the wall now. But summer is knocking at the door, power demand will significantly increase for irrigation and Ramadan. There is no alternative but to keep the private sector furnace oil-based power plants in operation. However, IPPs cannot keep plants in operation as they have not been paid for the power supplied over the past several months. We have been asking for the bills since November 2024.

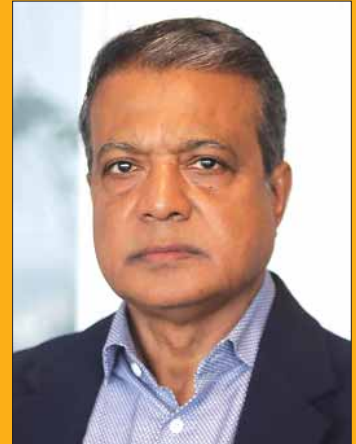
BIPPA had several rounds of meetings with the officials of the Power Division and the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB). They are sincere about making payments but cannot pay until they get funds from the Ministry of Finance. Please note that it usually takes about 45 days to import furnace oil after opening the letter of credit from the time of getting the due payments. IPPs have about Tk5,000 crore overdue payments. The power plants cannot run at full capacity unless at least Tk2,500 crore is paid immediately.

***It learned that BPDB started imposing Liquidated Damage (LD) for not supplying power as per demand. BPDB could not pay for the power. Still, they imposed LD. Why?***

You have been rightly informed. Yes, LD has been imposed and adjusted with the bills of some companies. Such actions are in the process for other companies too. IPPs supply power and get paid under a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Due to the financial crisis, many IPPs cannot operate at capacity now. As per PPA, IPPs are due to be paid for the power they supply within 45 days of submission of the bill. But BPDB has failed to do that. Still, BPDB is imposing LD. Under these circumstances, taking the opinion of legal advisors, we have submitted it to BPDB. We requested BPDB to take the opinion of their legal counsel. But they did not do it. Rather they have continued imposing LD.

We are partners of BPDB. We have no intention of going for a legal tussle. BPDB must also understand our position that we cannot continue our business if we are not paid according to the PPA provision.

***In the recent past, BIPPA had a few rounds of meetings and discussions***



David Hasanat

***It is not fair to blame private sector entrepreneurs indiscriminately as the partners of money plundering by the former government. No investor is above the law. If there is any genuine complaint against any or many investors, those must be established through an authentic probe. Only after that, punitive actions can be taken as per the law of the land.***

***with the Power Division and BPDB regarding payment issues. What kind of assurances did you get for the payments?***

The outstanding payments of IPPs are about Tk19,000 crore. Of this, furnace oil-based IPPs get Tk5,000 crore. We requested a payment of at least Tk2,500 crore as soon as possible. The Power Division Secretary and BPDB Chairman are sincere about the payment. We learned that they are in constant parleys with the Ministry of Finance for the allocation. However, the allocations have not been made yet. As such we have not received any assurance from the BPDB when the payments will be made.

***Will the BIPPA members be able to continue operating furnace oil-based power plants during summer***

**unless BPDB pays the outstanding bills?**

Please note that nonpayment of bills is a long-standing issue. We operate the plants by importing furnace oil on our own. IPPs accounted for Tk8,500-9,000 crore losses for not making payments against LCs on time as we also did not get payments from BPDB as per PPA. As such the financial capability of almost all IPPs has depleted to zero. Unless we get paid, maybe a few IPPs can continue operation marginally. But most will have to close the business. The system has a 5,500MW furnace oil-based generation capacity, including 4,500MW in the private sector.

**People have various complaints about private sector entrepreneurs in the power sector. Many allege that they are the plundering partners of the previous government. Why such perceptions have been created?**

Great that you raised this matter. Let me respond. As a president of BIPPA, I can't know all the details of all PPAs the private sector companies have with the BPDB. I am the Chairman of Midland Power. We have three power plants. We won contracts for the two through a competitive bidding process. The third one was negotiated based on an unsolicited offer. But the tariff was one of the lowest. I can challenge that nothing unfair was done at all in our case.

It is not fair to blame private sector entrepreneurs indiscriminately as the partners of money plundering by the former government. No investor is above the law. If there is any genuine complaint against any or many investors, those must be established through an authentic probe. Only after that, punitive actions can be taken as per the law of the land. Otherwise, blame games will create a lack of confidence among the investor community.

**There is another perception that in the name of capacity charge huge money is being plundered. Is there any way other than a capacity charge for getting private sector investment in the power sector?**

Private sector entrepreneurs have invested in the power sector under the

IPP policy that requires a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Capacity charge is an integral part of the PPA. It is guaranteed against the rate of Return on Investment (ROI). Guaranteed offtake can be an option. Under this, a 65% minimum offtake can be ensured. Otherwise, a take or pay system may be introduced. But in that case, the tariff may be higher.

Capacity charge is an instrument for attracting private sector investment. There is no justification for tagging it as a tool for plundering. BIPPA is ready for an informed debate about it.

**The White Paper report stated Tk 40,000 crore in capacity charges against the unnecessary over-capacity power generation plants over the past 15 years. What are your views?**

Please note that the White Paper only gave a preliminary perception. To establish this perception, authentic works should be done to identify which power plants and how much capacity development was unnecessary. It will also establish how much capacity charges were given for these. There is ample scope for disagreement with the perceptions provided in the White Paper. BIPPA has surveyed the actual power generation capacity and reserve margins of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Grid-connected power generation capacity of Bangladesh now is 27,734MW and the highest generation was 16,447MW. The reserve margin is 63%. The generation capacity of Vietnam is 80,555MW and the actual generation is 46,348MW. The reserve margin is 73.80%. The generation capacity of India is 441,970MW, and the highest generation was 243,271MW. The reserve margin is 81.70%. Pakistan has a generation capacity of 42,131MW and the highest generation was 22,000MW. The reserve margin is 91%. However, Pakistan has issues with power transmission and distribution. Sri Lanka has a generation capacity of 4,381MW and the highest generation was 2,708MW. The reserve margin is 61.80%. This study is based on figures from 2023-24.


The above information evidences that other than Sri Lanka, all other regional

countries have higher reserve margins than Bangladesh. Hence there is a genuine reason for disputing the perception of unnecessary power generation capacity development.

**The White Paper report also alleged that there was a scope for renegotiating the rental charges while extending the tenure of the rental power plants. By not doing that waste of government money has been done. What is your observation?**

My response here also will have two dimensions. The contract of one of my 15-year rental IPPs has been extended on a no power, no payment basis. There is no capacity charge. The tariff has also been reduced by 20%. I am not supposed to know how the contract with the plants of the other members of BIPPA has been extended. It is our humble request to the interim government to establish if any irregularities have been committed while extending the tenures of rental plants through authentic probes. It is unfair to raise allegations of irregularities by BIPPA members and pass indecorous opinions indiscriminately without proof.

**An environment of lack of confidence has been created among the investor community of the power sector. What initiative BIPPA is going to take to change this perception?**

Please note that any investor in any business in any country takes the investment risk to make a profit. This profit must be higher than what they can achieve leaving the money idle in the banks. We must bear in mind that the local private sector has taken the lead in increasing the power generation capacity. If this had to be done by foreign investors, tariffs would have been much higher. However, a lack of confidence among investors has been created for not letting out correct data and information. In the past, BIPPA also did not make public appropriate information about local investment, expenditure, and comparative statements of local and foreign investment in the power sector. BIPPA will ensure doing that now. 

# CONCERN PERSISTS OVER SHORTAGE OF NATURAL GAS

Reverse Swing



Farid Hossain

**N**ot unsurprisingly the country has once again been in the grip of a gas crisis. According to a latest report, the authorities can now supply up to 2500-2700 MMCF of natural gas a day against the demand of 3800 MMCF. At least a daily production of 3000 MMCFD is needed to manage the demand somehow. But the current gap between the need and the supply is quite staggering resulting in the disruption in industrial production and household consumption. But for the winter when the demand for power-producing gas goes down, the crisis could have been even more severe. The summer when the electricity demand will go up along with increased demand for gas will start in full swing soon amid fear of exacerbating the gas trouble.

The shortage of natural gas is nothing new. Bangladeshis have been familiar with it for the past several years. As recently as in 2018 the country produced 2700 MMCFD of natural gas, nearly enough to manage the demand with not a big disruption.

Since 2018 the production started declining as the reserve for natural gas went down. The then Awami League government went for import of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) to meet the shortage disregarding concern about the high price and vulnerability in ensuring a steady supply. In the LNG imports the then-government opted for long-term purchases (like that from Qatar) and the spot purchase from the Singapore market. The interim government that took over after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government has continued with the arrangement with the Advisory Committee on Government Procurement approving the import of two cargoes of LNG from Singapore's Gunvor Singapore Private Limited at a cost of over TK12,89,748,0960 in October last year. When the previous AL government went for LNG imports instead of putting in sincere efforts at exploring the country's own probable gas reserves inland and the sea it faced criticisms. The outcry against the policy focused on the argument it makes the country dependent on

imports and the vagaries related to it. Even if the interim government wants to change the policy it can't be done overnight. Consider the lack of response from foreign companies to Bangladesh's bid to explore the natural gas in its Bay of Bengal blocks. Patrobangla, the state-run agency responsible for dealing with the job, is reportedly planning to float new tenders to get foreign companies into the task. While the offshore drilling for natural gas becoming uncertain for now the report from the onshore drilling front has been hardly encouraging. The plan to drill at least 50 wells over the years until 2025 has fallen flat. The past three years saw the drilling for only 16 wells under the plan. The absence of well-thought-out planning and the competence of the manpower involved in its implementation is being blamed for the poor performance.

The industries and the household consumers have been bearing the brunt of the crisis. Consumers in large parts of the capital Dhaka and neighboring Gazipur and Narayanganj complain that they spend sleepless nights getting their food cooked as the gas for their burners is available only for a while at night. The incidents of low pressure in the supply have been a common complaint. Many are complaining that they are forced to eat their meals in restaurants as the burners remain idle for lack of piped gas supply. Many residents have been forced to use electric cooker and even cylinder LNG despite paying the bills for the burners. This has been happening on top of the disruption in the factories due to a lack of dependable gas supply. Reports that the government will go for another hike in the gas price for industries come at a wrong time.

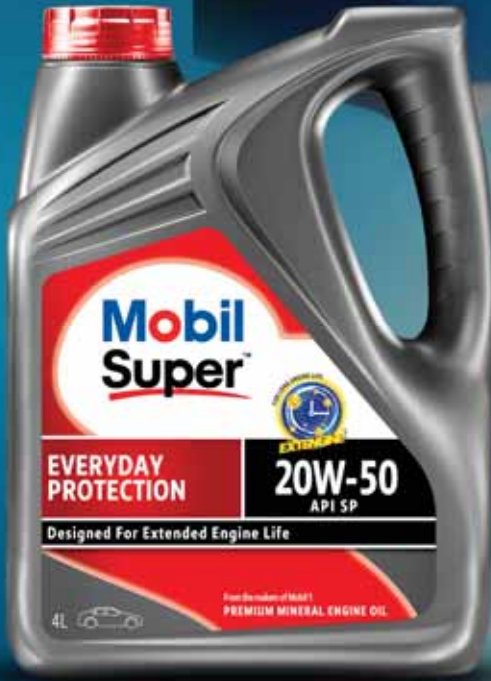
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