

# ENERGY & POWER

## The Forgotten Gas Frontier

- Not Just Public Funds, Climate Finance Must Evolve
- What The World Court's Landmark Opinion Means For Climate Change
- UN Report Details Record Global Temp, Surge In Climate Disaster Victims



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## About JERA

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Design & Graphics  
Md. Monirul Islam

Photography  
Bulbul Ahmed

Production  
Mufazzal Hossain Joy

Computer Graphics  
Md. Uzzal Hossain

Circulation Assistant  
Harunur Rashid

#### Editorial, News & Commercial

Room 509, Eastern Trade Center  
56 Inner Circular Road (VIP Road)  
Naya Paltan. GPO Box : 677  
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh  
Tel & Fax : 88-02-58314532  
Email: ep@dhaka.net  
energypower@gmail.com  
Website: www.ep-bd.com

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## EDITORIAL

Bangladesh's energy crisis is no secret. Every day, families and businesses feel the pinch as gas supplies fall short and demand keeps rising. While we rely heavily on expensive LNG imports and aging gas fields like Bibiyana, there's untapped potential much closer to home—in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The problem? For decades, this promising region has been left on the sidelines. Only a handful of wells have been drilled in over a century, even though neighboring areas like Tripura and Myanmar have discovered vast gas reserves with far more exploration. It's a missed opportunity we can't afford. It's time to rethink how we explore and develop these resources. BAPEX alone can't tackle the challenges in this rugged, complex terrain. We need to open the door to experienced partners through joint ventures or Production Sharing Contracts, and consider flexible government-to-government deals to fast-track progress. We also can't ignore the bigger picture. Choosing exploration partners isn't just about money and technology—it's about geopolitics and trust. And to get this right, we need a team of experts—academics, industry veterans, and policymakers—working together to guide decisions based on facts, not politics. The Hill Tracts aren't just another energy block—they could be a game-changer for Bangladesh's future.

Even if today's government can't act fully, laying the groundwork now means the next one can hit the ground running. Delaying any longer? That's a risk we simply can't take.

## h i g h l i g h t s

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Bangladesh must enhance its capacity and strengthen institutional preparedness to make the most of available climate funds. Developed countries are no longer expected to fund climate action solely from their public sectors. COP30 is expected to kick off a process to develop innovative financing mechanisms—currently the only viable path to accessing larger climate resources. ...  
Hafij Khan tells EP

Bangladesh's energy supply is at a crossroads. Even if it shifts entirely to imported LNG, efficiency demands that the transmission and distribution networks be overhauled using state-of-the-art technologies. This will require skilled, tech-savvy professionals—and an enabling work environment that attracts and retains the next generation.... More in Article

Petrobangla has prepared a draft version of the new Modern PSC 2025. This framework includes separate pricing formulas for gas extracted from the plains versus the hill regions. But for now, everything is on hold. Petrobangla is still waiting for the green light and finalize the rules that will shape the next chapter of exploration.



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## Greenpage

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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## Albert Manifold Appointed BP Chair



**B**P plc recently announced that it has appointed Albert Manifold to succeed Helge Lund as chair of the company. He will join the company's board on 1 September as non-executive director and chair-elect, and will take over as chair on 1 October.

At that point, Helge Lund will step down as chair and as a director of the bp board.

Albert was the Chief Executive Officer of CRH plc

("CRH") from January 2014 until December 2024. Under his leadership CRH strategically reshaped its portfolio and delivered superior growth and performance.

He has a strong track record of strategic leadership and operational delivery with a focus on cost efficiency, disciplined capital allocation and cash flow generation.

He is also a non-executive director at LyondellBasell, a global chemicals producer, listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and a non-executive director at Mercury Engineering, a leading privately-owned engineering consultancy.

## Saudi Energy Minister Urges Action to Address Energy Poverty

**S**audi Arabia's Minister of Energy, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, emphasized the urgent need to tackle global energy poverty during his address at the OPEC International Seminar in Vienna recently.

Highlighting one of the most pressing global energy challenges, the minister cited United Nations estimates that 1.2 billion people suffer from energy poverty — a figure he believes could be nearly three times higher in reality.

He noted that over two billion people still rely on traditional, unsafe cooking fuels, which contribute to



pollution and health hazards.

Prince Abdulaziz revealed that a dedicated Saudi team is actively working across Africa and Southeast Asia to address energy poverty, engaging directly with governments to implement practical solutions.

The minister underscored the Kingdom's consistent energy policies and its commitment to translating them into real-world outcomes.

## Uzbekistan Joins Rosatom's International Research Program



**U**zbekistan's Institute of Nuclear Physics (INP) has become a member of the consortium based on MBIR, a fast neutron research reactor which is under implementation by Rosatom in Russia. INP signed a formal agreement to this effect with the consortium in Moscow recently.

Participation of the Institute of Nuclear Physics in the international consortium will grant them access to advanced scientific research

and developments related to the use of next-generation reactors.

The Institute's scientists will be able to contribute significantly to the planning of experiments, the development of multilateral projects, and the coordination of joint scientific activities.

"Thanks to this cooperation, Uzbek scientists will have the opportunity to actively participate in advanced research and make a significant contribution to the development of the atomic industry," noted Stepan Kalmykov, Chairman of the MBIR International Research Center Advisory Board.

## EGAS Contracts Second FSRU for Damietta Terminal Offshore Egypt

**A** subsidiary of New Fortress Energy has signed a five-year agreement to deploy the Energos Winter floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) in the Egyptian sector of the Mediterranean Sea.

A subsidiary of New Fortress Energy (NFE) has signed a five-year agreement to deploy the Energos Winter floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) in the Egyptian sector of the Mediterranean Sea.

The 138,250-cu. m vessel will operate at Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Co.'s (EGAS) LNG import



terminal at Damietta. NFE added that the vessel, its second FSRU to be stationed in Egyptian waters, could join the Energos Eskimo next month.

EGAS Managing Director Yasseen Mohamed said the arrangement would contribute "to the security of natural gas supply for the Arab Republic of Egypt over the next five years."

## Tibet Hydropower Project won't Affect Downstream Countries: Chinese Ambassador



according to a statement of the foreign ministry.

Wen also said the project, which is solely for power generation, will not affect downstream countries.

**C**hina will not withdraw or use water from the Yarlung Zangbo river on which the country is implementing a hydro-power project, Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen said recently.

He made the comment when he called on Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain at the foreign ministry,

On July 19, Chinese Premier Li Qiang announced start of the construction of the hydropower project, the world's largest hydropower dam in Tibetan territory.

Bangladesh had earlier sought information about the project and its impacts in the lower riparian countries like Bangladesh.

## Bangladesh Plans to Import 3 More Spot LNG Cargoes in Aug



August 4-5, August 21-22, and August 28-29.

Each cargo will contain 3.36 million MMBtu and will be delivered to Moheshkhali Island in the Bay of Bengal, with discharge at ei-

ther of the country's two floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs) located there.

If the tender issued earlier proceeds successfully, Bangladesh will have secured a total of four spot LNG cargoes for delivery in August, said an official.

The country previously procured five spot cargoes in July and six in May—the highest in any single month so far.

**I**n a bid to tackle the country's worsening energy crisis, the government is planning to purchase three additional spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes in August to help meet the surging demand for natural gas across Bangladesh.

State-run Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Ltd (RPGCL) has floated a tender, seeking bids for the three LNG cargoes, scheduled for delivery during

## UPGDCL Receives SDG Brand Champion Award 2025 for Eco-Friendly Steam Innovation

**U**nited Power Generation and Distribution Company Ltd. (UPGDCL) has received the SDG Brand Champion Award 2025 for its groundbreaking Eco-friendly Steam

initiative—a sustainable energy solution that recovers waste heat from gas engines to reduce industrial carbon emissions.

Since 2014, the initiative has delivered over 294 million kg of green steam to industries in Dhaka and Chattogram EPZs, effectively preventing more than 49,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to traditional steam generation.



Md. Moinul Islam Khan, CEO of United Power, and Shish Swapnik, Head of Group Brand, received the award at the ceremony held at Radisson Blu Dhaka on Saturday night, according to a media release.

This recognition highlights UPGDCL's contribution to SDGs 7, 9, 12, and 13, reinforcing its commitment to cleaner and more responsible industrial energy.

## Ex-Chief Engineer of BPDB Jailed in Graft Case

**A**Dhaka court recently convicted and sentenced Md Shahidul Alam, 67, former Chief Engineer of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), to six-year rigorous imprisonment in a graft case.

Judge Md Zakaria Hossain of Dhaka Special Judge Court-6 pronounced the judgment and also fined the accused Tk 40,000, in default, to suffer six-month more behind bars.

The court sentenced him to three years imprisonment under section 26 (2) and three years imprisonment



under section 27 (1) of the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) Act. The two sentences of jail will, however, run concurrently.

The ACC on October 25, 2017, filed the case against Shahidul Alam for concealing information about wealth of Taka 24.42 lakh. The court on June 25, 2019, framed charges against the accused.





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## IDCOL Hands Over Tk 50 Cr to Govt from Its Net Profit



The state-owned financial institution Infrastructure Development Company (IDCOL) has paid a substantial dividend of Tk. 50 crore to the government recently from its profits in the fiscal year 2024.

The dividend check was formally presented to Finance Adviser Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed at the Ministry of Finance by key figures from IDCOL.

Md. Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Secretary of the Economic Relations Department (ERD) and Chairman of IDCOL, along with Dr. Md K h a i r u z z a m a n Mozumder, Director at IDCOL and Secretary of

the Finance Division in the Ministry of Finance, were pivotal in handing over this significant dividend.

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, the Finance Adviser, expressed admiration for IDCOL's role as a trailblazer in financing renewable energy, infrastructure, and energy efficiency projects in Bangladesh. He highlighted IDCOL as a driving force for inclusive and sustainable financing practices.

## Petrobangla Issues Warning against Fake Recruitment Letters



Petrobangla (Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation) recently issued a public warning regarding a fraudulent scheme circulating fake job offer letters using the corporation's name, address, and fabricated memo numbers and signatures.

The state-owned corporation announced that these deceptive letters, printed on plain paper, are an attempt

by an unscrupulous group to defraud individuals. Petrobangla has clarified that all its recruitment processes are conducted online.

Currently, the central recruitment process for Petrobangla and its subsidiary companies is underway, with the selection of initially recommended candidates being finalized.

Once this process is complete, final appointment letters will be issued and candidates will be notified via official announcements on Petrobangla's website ([www.petrobangla.org.bd](http://www.petrobangla.org.bd)) and through SMS to their registered mobile numbers.

## 220 MW Power Generated in Kaptai Hydro Plant

Due to a rise in the water level of Kaptai Lake, electricity generation at the Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Station has significantly increased.



With all five units of the plant currently operational, the station produced 220 megawatts (MW) of electricity recently — the highest recorded in the past year, said an official at the power station.

The last highest production

earlier this year was recorded on July 14, when all five units were operational and generated 218 MW, he said.

The maximum generation capacity of the Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Station stands at 242 MW.

## Gas Crunch Halts Production at CUFL

Production at the Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Limited (CUFL) has remained suspended since April 11 due to a persistent gas crisis, leading to significant financial losses for the government. The state-owned urea fertiliser company stopped

operations after Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited (KGDCL) cut off its supply, saying they cannot allocate gas to CUFL at present, as the available gas is being diverted to power plants to support the national grid during peak demand.

## Jet Fuel Sees Price Hike

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has increased the price of jet A-1 fuel -- commonly used in aircraft - for both domestic and international flights.



For international flights, the price was raised by 5.52 per cent to \$0.64 per liter, while for domestic flights, it went up by 4.75 per cent to Tk 98.02 per liter. Market insiders say the new price hike could lead to higher airfares for both domestic and international travelers.

In a press statement, BERC said the new price was set

based on several factors -- including global fuel price trends (Platts rate), the dollar exchange rate, LC settlement rates by state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), changes in diesel prices, and transport costs between June 5 and July 4.

The commission held a public hearing at its office before making the price adjustment.



and Cover of Hill Tract Districts of Bangladesh



# The Forgotten Gas Frontier

Mollah Amzad Hossain

Bangladesh faces a growing gas crisis, with declining domestic output and limited LNG capacity. While new exploration has resumed in the plains, the high-potential Chittagong Hill Tracts remain largely untapped due to legal, technical, and bureaucratic hurdles. Experts urge immediate exploration in key sites like Patiya and Sitapahar through joint ventures or PSCs. With global interest rising and past failures offering lessons, stakeholders stress the need for urgent, strategic action to unlock this long-neglected energy frontier.



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**B**angladesh is running low on one of its most vital lifelines—natural gas. From lighting homes and powering factories to keeping transport and kitchens running, gas fuels much of everyday life. But demand is rising fast, and supply just can't keep up. Even after maxing out the country's capacity to import liquefied natural gas (LNG), there's still a daily shortfall of about 1,200 million cubic feet. The situation is worsening—local gas production is declining by nearly 200 million cubic feet per year. Currently, domestic production stands at just above 1,800 MMCFD, with nearly half of it coming from a single source: the Bibiyana gas field. But even Bibiyana is showing signs of fatigue, its output steadily declining.

There is a glimmer of hope in Bhola, where a significant gas reserve is close to becoming operational. With a potential to supply 200 MMCFD, it could offer some much-needed relief. But there's a catch—Bhola isn't yet connected to the national grid. Until new infrastructure is built, that gas might as well be untapped. The earliest it can help ease the crisis is 2030.

Faced with this mounting pressure, Petrobangla decided it could no longer afford to wait. In 2022, after more than two decades of dormancy, it restarted onshore exploration with renewed urgency. The plan: drill 46 wells, including 18 for exploration, as part of a broader 50-well program. By

## Exploration Wells Drilled so far in The CHT

Well Name	Operator	TD (m)	Year of Drilling Completion	Status
Sitakunda-1	IPPC	762	1910	Gas show
Sitakunda-2	IPPC	760	-	Gas show
Sitakunda-3	IPPC	761	-	Gas show
Sitakunda-4	BOC	1,024	1914	Gas show
Patiya-1	PPL	3,102	1953	Gas show
Jaldi-1	OGDC	2,300	1965	Gas show
Jaldi-2	OGDC	3,360	1966	Gas show
Semutang-1	OGDC	4,088	1969	Gas Disc.
Jaldi-3	OGDC	4,500	1970	Gas show
Sitakunda-5	Petrobangla	4,005	1988	Gas show
Sitapahar-1	PSOC	211	1988	Blow out
Sitapahar-2	PSOC	1,560	1988	Gas show
Semutang South-1	Socar	3,020	2019	Gas Show

July this year, 20 wells had already been completed. Petrobangla and its affiliated companies—BAPEX, BGFL, and SGFL—believe the remaining 30 can be drilled by mid-2026.

And they're not stopping there. A far more ambitious 100-well program is now on the table, set to roll out from 2024. The first phase—19 wells—is expected to begin in July 2026. The goal is to drill 69 new exploration wells by 2028. Interestingly, three wells originally slated for the Chittagong Hill Tracts have been removed from both programs. Officials say exploration in the Hill Tracts will now proceed under a

different arrangement—the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) model.

To pave the way, Petrobangla has already prepared a draft version of the new Modern PSC 2025 with guidance from international consultants. This framework includes separate pricing formulas for gas extracted from the plains versus the hill regions. As with offshore PSCs, the proposed pricing will be pegged to the global Brent crude oil benchmark. But for now, everything is on hold. Petrobangla is still waiting for the Energy and Mineral Resources Division to give the green light and finalize the rules that will shape this next chapter of exploration.

## Oil and Gas Exploration in the CHT

Oil and gas exploration in the Chittagong Hill Tracts began under the PSC framework in the 1960s and 1970s. The most recent attempt came from the US-based company UMC, which had prepared to begin exploration. However, a sharp drop in global oil prices led the company to withdraw. Before pulling out, UMC expressed interest in partnering with Indian company GAIL, but the proposal failed to secure government approval.

In 2010, a Chinese company submitted a proposal to the Prime Minister's Office for exploration in the Hill Tracts. This prompted the Energy Division to propose a joint venture with BAPEX.



Petrobangla then reached out to several international firms, including Thailand's PTTEP, Malaysia's Petronas, and Russia's Gazprom. Five companies initially showed interest, and two submitted proposals. One was incomplete; the other, from Sinopec-Singlory, led to a preliminary agreement. Sinopec expressed willingness to invest \$100 million and proposed a gas price of \$2.70 per thousand cubic feet.

Their proposal estimated a 50% probability of discovering 5 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas across four structures. After lengthy negotiations with BAPEX, a draft joint venture agreement was submitted to the company's board. At the time, the board was chaired by the then Energy Secretary. Citing concerns over irregularities in the earlier Niko-BAPEX deal, the board ultimately declined to approve the proposal.

In 2015, BAPEX revived efforts to explore four structures. Four companies were shortlisted, with China's Geo-Jade Petroleum submitting the most promising bid, which included a larger equity share for BAPEX and secured ministerial approval. However, the company later withdrew before signing the final contract.

There is significant oil and gas potential in the three hill districts, but BAPEX cannot undertake this complex and capital-intensive task alone. One major obstacle is that the area comprises high-pressure zones, requiring high-capacity rigs and specialized technology. Additionally, BAPEX's ability to make timely decisions is hindered by cumbersome public procurement rules and internal governance structures, rendering such high-risk ventures nearly impossible under current conditions.

The current interim government appears to have taken these challenges into account. As a result, discussions are underway to proceed with exploration in the Hill Tracts under the PSC model. According to the Energy Division, government-to-government (G2G) proposals are being considered to speed up the process. If unsolicited proposals are received—without a



formal Expression of Interest (EOI)—they may still be taken under consideration. However, the finalization of the onshore PSC framework remains a prerequisite.

### **Action is Long Overdue—Work Must Start Now**

Former BAPEX Managing Director Murtaza Ahmed Faruque commented: "We've been facing a gas crisis for years, but exploration activities have been insufficient. Especially in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the massive potential remains untapped. Only 14 wells have been drilled in the last 110 years, with just one discovery—Semutang in 1969. The structures at Patiya, Jolodi, Sitapahar, and Kachalong hold immense promise."

Despite earlier efforts by Indian Oil, Burma Oil, and OGDC, BAPEX has never drilled a well in the Hill Tracts. Indian Oil drilled just 1,000 meters at Sitakunda due to geological constraints. An explosion occurred while drilling 2,000 meters at Sitapahar. Drilling Sitakunda-5 took four years due to various hazards. This region is geologically complex. The assumption that BAPEX can operate anywhere is flawed—it struggles in high-risk zones where quick, adaptive decision-making is vital. Internationally experienced partners are therefore essential.

There are 17 identified geological structures in the hill districts. To confirm their potential, multiple wells must be

drilled per structure—even dry wells are part of the process. Across the border in Tripura and in neighboring Myanmar, significant discoveries have already been made. Tripura alone has 11 gas fields and produces 150 MMCFD from 75 wells, with more drilling underway. In stark contrast, Bangladesh's Hill Tracts remain largely untouched.

Faruque added: "There's no alternative to exploration in the Hill Tracts if we want to address our gas shortage. Joint ventures or PSCs with experienced firms are the way forward."

Dr. Badrul Imam, a professor of geology at the University of Dhaka, said there are known gas indicators in Sitapahar and Patiya, but no steps have been taken to explore them.

Tripura drilled 160 wells and discovered 11 fields. We've drilled only 14. Political indecision has paralyzed our efforts. Exploration doesn't mean guaranteed discovery—it requires persistence. Data helps, but only drilling confirms the presence of gas. We must change our mindset—both among policymakers and operational teams—if we want success.

He also noted that Tripura is producing gas from syncline reserves, drilling from valleys between hills—a non-conventional approach Bangladesh has yet to adopt.

M. Farid Uddin, former Vice President of UMC's Bangladesh



operations, said Block 22 (now 22A and 22B), which includes the Hill Tracts, spans 3.3 million acres and holds over 20 world-class structures. UMC identified 14 of these with oil potential, though the focus later shifted to gas. In 2001, GAIL was approached as a partner, but Petrobangla showed no interest. Fields like Sitapahar-3 and Patiya-2 are believed to contain up to 5 TCF of gas. Detailed plans already exist, and since access to these fields is relatively easy, exploration should start immediately.

M. Jasim Uddin, CEO of Upstream and Downstream Services, said that drilling at Patiya stopped at 3,000 meters when the pipe got stuck, though gas was found between 1,500 and 2,000 meters. Signs of oil were detected below 3,000 meters. He also noted oil-bearing sandstone formations in Sitakunda.

Australian consultant John Hames, who visited the area, was the first to identify turbidite layers—special geological formations found in Afro-Australian regions—associated with oil and gas. He found eight such layers in the Hill Tracts and compared the region's geology to that of Assam.

### Conclusion

Among Bangladesh's untapped gas prospects, Chhatak stands out as a strong candidate for discoveries. But development there has been stuck in limbo for years, tangled in legal complications related to the Niko corruption case. While that issue remains unresolved, experts say the country cannot afford to ignore another region brimming with potential: the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Despite the technical and logistical challenges, the Hill Tracts offer some of the best chances for discovering new gas and oil reserves. Energy experts are nearly unanimous—Petrobangla and the Energy Division must stop stalling and prioritize exploration in this long-overlooked region.

That said, launching new exploration projects is easier said than done. Given



the current market conditions, many believe a traditional tender process under the recently drafted onshore PSC (Production Sharing Contract) is unlikely to attract strong competition from international bidders. Instead, they recommend a more flexible government-to-government (G2G) model or inviting unsolicited Expressions of Interest (EOIs). This approach, they argue, could get drilling started within a year if the right steps are taken now.

Of all the unexplored areas, Patiya and Sitapahar are seen as top priorities. Existing surveys and geological data already point to clear gas indicators. Experts believe exploration in these locations should begin immediately, either through joint ventures or under PSC arrangements. BAPEX, the state-owned exploration company, simply isn't equipped to handle such complex and high-risk projects on its own, especially under the rigid constraints of public procurement rules.

There's also a geopolitical angle to consider. Professor Ijaz Hossain emphasized that any partner selected for exploration in the Hill Tracts must be able to operate safely and without restrictions, given the sensitive nature of the region. "If a company from a particular country is chosen, we must assess whether they can operate freely and securely in this area," he noted.

To move forward smartly, several experts recommend that Petrobangla consult with interested international firms, many of which have already expressed interest and met with the agency. A well-curated shortlist of qualified companies could then be invited to submit formal proposals.

Some have even suggested a practical interim solution: let BAPEX initiate the early-phase work by hiring a capable contractor with the right equipment and experience. But ultimately, any long-term success depends on a coordinated and informed strategy.

For that, a technical advisory committee should be formed, composed of seasoned experts, respected academics, and former Petrobangla officials. This body could analyze all existing geological and logistical data on the Hill Tracts and provide grounded, strategic guidance for how to proceed.

Above all, one message is clear: the time for delay is over. Even if the current interim government cannot take major steps right now, Petrobangla and the Energy Division must act without hesitation, laying the technical groundwork so that a newly elected government can hit the ground running next year. Bangladesh can't afford to keep the Hill Tracts waiting any longer. The energy future depends on it. **EP**



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# Unlocking The Hidden Potential CHT Gas Reserves Can Be A Game Changer

Engr. Khondkar Abdus Saleque

It is well known that gas-prone Bangladesh, the largest riverine delta in the world, remains one of the least explored hydrocarbon basins. Over the years, limited exploration has been carried out—mostly in structural traps—in other words, only the low-hanging fruits have been plucked. Yet, almost two-thirds of the onshore area and the entire offshore region remain virtually unexplored. Even extensive seismic surveys have not been conducted. The proven recoverable reserves of natural gas are on the verge of complete depletion. Bangladesh's gas-based economy continues to struggle with a chronic supply shortage.

With its fragile economy, Bangladesh cannot sustain an exclusive dependency on imported fuels. It must explore and exploit the potential gas basins—both onshore and offshore—systematically and professionally. The highly prospective Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) could be a game changer if exploration is prioritized. Geologists and engineers have consistently recommended further exploration at Sitapahar, Potiya, Kasalanga, and Jholdi. But due to a lack of commitment from policymakers and the absence of dynamic leadership at Petrobangla, little to nothing has been done so far.

Now, with a looming gas famine, exploration in the CHT must receive top-priority attention. Earlier limited explorations revealed gas shows, and some discoveries have been reported in the adjacent Tripura region of India. One study found that the Chittagong Hill Tracts feature anticlinal structures like the Sitakund, Sitapahar, Bandarban, and Teknaf anticlines, along with a major fault on the western flank and associated gas seepages—factors that had attracted various oil and gas companies to consider drilling in the area. Nonetheless, these folds remain poorly studied in terms of surface and subsurface geologic analysis. Some encouraging leads and prospects were identified.

Leading international oil company Shell had to abandon its exploration campaign after engineers were kidnapped for ransom. Shell had initially found promising prospects at Sitapahar. United Meridian and Ocean Energy also carried out some work. However, due to a combination of geopolitical factors and law-and-order issues, these IOCs withdrew their operations. Petrobangla, too, has remained uncertain about how to advance exploration efforts in the region.

There is a firm belief among geologists

and engineers that, if competent drilling companies are engaged, it may be possible to discover 3–5 TCF of gas within 3–5 years. As the region is not far from the national gas grid, evacuating the gas via new pipelines should not pose major difficulties. However, the main challenge remains ensuring political stability and a secure law-and-order situation in the hill districts.

## *Geology and Advanced Technology*

A study on CHT prospects by Md. Rajeun Islam and Janifar Hakim Lupin of Dhaka University revealed that, beyond exploration in conventional plays, alternative approaches could target unconventional and stratigraphic traps. These are not formed by folding structures, but by inherent lithological changes (known as facies changes) within subsurface rock layers—making them difficult to identify.

Future exploration in the Chittagong Hill Tracts should focus not only on conventional stages but also on unconventional targets. These include deeper synclinal (trough-like) valleys, channel sands, clay diapirs with over-pressured shale in the deeper subsurface, and thinly bedded plays. None of these have been seriously targeted in Bangladesh. Due to intense folding and faulting, source and reservoir rocks are often ex-

posed at the surface, and many anticlines have been breached by erosion (USGS–Petrobangla, 2001).

As these major structures have eroded, promising exploration targets are likely to be found along the noses of plunging anticlines where the structures descend below the surface. With the introduction of modern exploration technologies, unconventional plays are beginning to demonstrate their potential. To reach a mature stage of exploration, this region must now be brought into active consideration.

It appeared from the study report that the traps in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are structural traps—specifically, folded anticlines. Generally, anticlines are affected by one or more faults. In some of the folded anticlinal traps, multiple faults cause compartmentalization of the reservoirs, thereby disrupting their continuity. In the extreme eastern part of the fold belt, the anticlinal structures are severely disrupted by major thrust faults, often accompanied by diapiric intrusions in the subsurface.

Anticlines are considered prospective for petroleum accumulation worldwide. However, the Chittagong Hill Tracts are highly disturbed due to faulting and diapirism, as evidenced by several studies. For instance, the structural composition of the Sitakund anticline is quite complex. The western flank is affected by a longitudinal fault running close to and almost parallel with the axis. Due to this complex faulting mechanism, hydrocarbons are unable to accumulate in this region. For example, Sitakund Well-1, drilled in 1990 by Burmah Oil Company (BOC) in the central portion of the Sitakund anticline, failed due to heavy faulting.

Ultimately, all the anticlines in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and adjacent areas are affected by thrust faults and diapiric intrusions. Therefore, the crestal parts of those anticlines are unlikely to serve as prospective hydrocarbon traps.

**The study referred to above identified 14 anticlines in the greater Chattogram and CHT**

Anticline Name	Length KM	Width KM
Sitakund	70.00	11.00
Semutang	19.25	06.87
Chottogram	24.50	04.50
Sardina	26.25	05.00
Shishak	21.25	05.00
Jampai	43.25	07.50
Kasalang	21.32	03.95
Balasari	26.25	04.37
Gobamura	41.87	03.75
Barkal	31.25	05.50
Sitapahar	38.75	04.37
Patiya	25.75	06.00
Jaldi	26.75	06.25
Gilasari	27.00	05.00

Instead, the prospects lie in the noses of the structures.

It is uncertain whether Petrobangla and BAPEx can successfully manage the exploration challenges in this region on a standalone basis. Taking such risks independently may not be worthwhile. However, at the same time, Bangladesh cannot afford to sit idly and do nothing.

#### **Petrobangla Initiatives**

We believe that Petrobangla retains a wealth of data and information left behind by the IOCs that once operated in the region. BAPEx made some initial efforts to launch an exploration campaign by forming strategic partnerships with interested foreign companies. However, due to geopolitical influences and shifting government alignments with various regional powers, those BAPEx initiatives ultimately faltered.

Recently, Petrobangla and BAPEx have taken fresh steps toward issuing tenders to engage drilling contractors. It is important to bear in mind that BAPEx has very limited experience in exploring stratigraphic traps and tight, high-pressure structures. Therefore, selecting strategic partners through a transparent process is strongly advisable. BAPEx should consider forming long-term strategic partnerships with leading international oil companies—not only for exploring identified struc-

tures but also for developing the entire Hill Tracts region. At the same time, extensive seismic surveys must be conducted to identify new prospects. Given its limited experience in handling exploration in complex geological settings, BAPEx may not be well-positioned to manage international drilling contractors operating in the area.

Bangladesh is currently facing a chronic gas crisis. Against a demand of over 4,000 MMCFD, Petrobangla can supply a maximum of 2,800 MMCFD. Production from domestic depleting fields has fallen below 1,900 MMCFD. Within three years, this may decline further to below 1,500 MMCFD. The prolific Bibiyana field is depleting at an alarming rate.

Currently, the initiatives taken by Petrobangla and BAPEx are insufficient and too late to address the growing supply deficit. Moreover, there is no immediate scope for additional LNG imports before 2028. However, planned exploration in the CHT prospects could potentially add 2–3 TCF of new gas within 2–3 years. We hope the interim or the next elected government will treat CHT exploration with the priority it deserves. If GAIL and ONGC can discover gas fields in the adjacent Tripura region of India, there is no reason why Bangladesh cannot do the same in similar geological settings. This will require smart energy diplomacy. One must also remember that the CHT is a politically sensitive region.

If Bangladesh can initiate a systematic and comprehensive exploration campaign across the greater Chattogram and Chittagong Hill Tracts region—while effectively managing risks and challenges—it could prove to be a game changer. Over the next 3–5 years, there is a strong possibility of discovering 3–5 TCF of gas. There may also be potential for crude oil discoveries.

**EP**

**Khondkar Abdus Saleque,**  
*International Energy Consultant*



# What The World Court's Landmark Opinion Means For Climate Change

Daisy Dunne, Josh Gabbatiss & Molly Lempiere

In a historic and sweeping advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the highest legal body of the United Nations, has declared that countries have binding legal obligations under international law to address climate change and can be held accountable for failing to act. The court unanimously ruled that fossil fuel production and emissions “may constitute an internationally wrongful act,” and that states causing climate-related harm could face legal consequences, including reparations.

Though not legally binding for individual governments, the opinion is binding on UN agencies and will carry considerable political and legal weight globally, especially in domestic courts and climate negotiations. It is the strongest international legal statement to date affirming the responsibility of states to protect the climate and opens a path for vulnerable nations and communities to pursue accountability and compensation.

## *A Youth-Led Legal Campaign Becomes a Global Movement*

The case began with 27 students at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji in 2019. Through a group called Pacific Island Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC), they lobbied Pacific leaders to bring the issue of climate

justice to the world's top court. Their campaign gained traction, and in 2021, the government of Vanuatu took the lead in a global diplomatic effort to seek an advisory opinion from the ICJ.

Vanuatu's initiative gained widespread support, starting with unanimous backing from the 18-member Pacific Islands Forum and eventually growing to include 105 nations from across continents. On 29 March 2023, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution formally requesting the ICJ's opinion. It asked the court to consider two pivotal questions: What are the legal obligations of states to protect the climate system under international law? What are the legal consequences if states, by their actions or inaction, cause significant harm to the climate? The court was also asked to pay particular attention to the rights of vulnerable states, communities, and future generations.

## *Unprecedented Legal and Scientific Engagement*

The ICJ process that followed was the most participatory in its 88-year history. The court received 91 written statements and 107 oral arguments from countries and international organizations, as well as 65 replies to follow-up questions from judges. Even countries that had never appeared

before the court, such as Barbados and Micronesia, participated.

In a rare move, ICJ judges also held a private consultation in late 2024 with leading scientists from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including its chair, Professor Jim Skea. This meeting provided the court with up-to-date scientific insights into the nature and urgency of the climate crisis. The court's 133-page opinion, delivered on 23 July 2025, marks only the fifth time in its history that the ICJ has reached a unanimous advisory opinion.

## *Scientific Consensus as Legal Context*

The ICJ heavily referenced IPCC assessments in defining the scientific context of its ruling. It confirmed that human activity—particularly fossil fuel use—is the main driver of greenhouse gas (GHG) accumulation in the atmosphere; climate change is already causing severe and escalating impacts, including sea-level rise, extreme weather, biodiversity loss, and irreversible ecosystem damage. A livable and sustainable future is only possible with rapid emissions cuts in this decade.

Quoting directly from IPCC reports, the court cited the “very high confidence” in findings that every fraction of a

degree of warming brings heightened risks. It warned that scientific uncertainty should not be a reason for inaction and reaffirmed the “precautionary principle”: where there is a threat of serious harm, states must act even without full certainty.

### ***Binding Climate Obligations under International Law***

The court concluded that states have binding legal obligations to act on climate change under both specialized treaties, like the Paris Agreement, and general international law. This directly contradicts arguments made by high-emitting states such as the US, China, and the UK, which claimed their climate duties should be interpreted only through the UN climate regime.

The ICJ rejected that narrow reading, asserting that broader customary international law, environmental principles, and human rights law also apply. Key obligations include: preventing significant transboundary environmental harm; acting with “due diligence” to reduce emissions and avoid worsening climate impacts; cooperating internationally in good faith to address climate threats; and respecting and protecting human rights by maintaining a healthy environment. The court stated that these obligations also apply to states not party to the Paris Agreement, such as the US, which has moved to exit the treaty again under the administration of President Donald Trump.

### ***Responsibility Extends Beyond Emissions***

A particularly groundbreaking element of the opinion is its recognition that countries’ legal obligations extend not only to GHG emissions but also to fossil fuel production, subsidies, and permitting. This means states can be held accountable not just for burning fossil fuels, but also for enabling their extraction and sale.

This expands legal scrutiny to economic activities that underwrite fossil-fuel dependence and suggests that governments approving new oil, gas, or coal projects may be violating international law. Joy Reyes of the Grantham Research Institute notes that



this language gives future litigants more ammunition to challenge fossil fuel infrastructure in court.

Professor Jorge Vicuales of the University of Cambridge, who acted as counsel for Vanuatu, said the court’s decision to include fossil fuel production—even though it was not directly asked to—demonstrates how seriously it takes the issue.

### ***Legal Consequences: Liability, Reparations, and Court Orders***

In response to the second question posed by the UN General Assembly, the court declared that states that breach their climate obligations can face legal consequences under international law.

This includes: liability for climate harm, paving the way for reparations, including compensation and formal apologies; court orders requiring states to revise or strengthen their national climate plans (NDCs) if they are found inadequate; and mandates to cease harmful activity, including revoking permits, halting subsidies, or strengthening environmental regulations.

The court emphasized that assigning legal responsibility is not impossible, even if the causal links between emissions and climate impacts are more diffuse than in cases like oil spills or industrial pollution. It cited IPCC research showing that human-caused climate change has already worsened disasters like floods, heatwaves, and droughts.

This significantly strengthens the legal basis for climate litigation worldwide. Courts in different jurisdictions can now refer to this opinion when ordering governments to act, enforce stronger climate targets, or address damages caused by climate-related events.

### ***A Path to Climate Reparations***

Perhaps the most politically significant implication of the ICJ opinion is its support for climate reparations. The court held that victims of climate harm—states or individuals—can seek compensation or restitution under international law.

While the Paris Agreement specifically states that its loss-and-damage provisions do not imply liability or compensation, the ICJ clarified that this language does not override the broader framework of international law. In other words, voluntary contributions to loss-and-damage funds do not shield countries from lawsuits or reparations claims.

Harj Narulla, legal counsel for the Solomon Islands, called it “a legal pathway for developing states to seek reparations from developed states.” Greenpeace’s Danilo Garrido Alves added that a country paying into a fund does not “get off the hook” for violating international law.

The court also made clear that historical responsibility matters. Countries’ contributions to climate change must be evaluated in terms of both past and current emissions. This directly



challenges the argument—often used by countries like China, India, or the US—that assigning blame is too complex.

Moreover, the ICJ rejected the idea that legal remedies depend on a state's vulnerability, affirming that all countries have equal entitlement to reparations if harmed by climate change.

### *The 1.5 C Temperature Goal is Now a Legal Obligation*

The ICJ went further than many expected in its interpretation of the Paris Agreement's temperature goal. It ruled that the 1.5°C limit is not just aspirational—it is the primary temperature goal to which states must legally align their policies.

This interpretation means countries must submit NDCs that represent their “highest possible ambition”, ensure their collective contributions are capable of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, and avoid backsliding or submitting weak NDCs that undermine the agreement's goals.

The court stated that discretion in setting national targets is limited by due diligence obligations and the duty to fulfill treaty commitments in good faith. This could have immediate implications for countries preparing new NDCs before the next global stocktake.

Veteran climate scientist Dr. Bill Hare said the ruling signals that submitting weak NDCs is legally unacceptable and could trigger international consequences.

The ICJ also noted that the principle of equity—“common but differentiated responsibilities”—remains central but must evolve. Countries' responsibilities should reflect their current capabilities, not static designations from decades ago.

### *What Happens Next?*

The ICJ's opinion does not compel any country to act immediately, but it sets a powerful precedent. It gives legal backing to calls for greater ambition, international cooperation, and accountability for climate damage.

Activists and legal scholars expect the ruling to strengthen ongoing and future climate lawsuits in national and regional courts; support climate-vulnerable states in demanding reparations or tougher action from high emitters; raise the bar for NDC submissions, particularly ahead of global climate summits; and pressure fossil-fuel producing nations to scale down production and revise subsidy policies.

It also adds new authority to human rights-based climate claims, echoing a 2024 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, which found Switzerland's climate inaction violated its citizens' rights.

As the climate crisis deepens, this opinion could mark a turning point, where climate accountability moves from the realm of diplomacy and pledges into that of law, rights, and enforceable responsibility.

*(This is an abridged version of the original article published in Carbon Brief)*

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# UN Report Details Record Global Temp, Surge In Climate Disaster Victims

EP Desk



**L**ast year marked the hottest in the past 175 years, with the global average temperature reaching 1.55°C above pre-industrial levels, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This was the tenth consecutive year of record heat, a trend that has coincided with a significant increase in the number of people affected by extreme weather events. These alarming statistics are detailed in the 2025 Sustainable Development Goals Report (SDG), released recently by the United Nations (UN).

According to the WMO, the average global temperature is currently estimated to be between 1.34 °C and 1.41 °C above pre-industrial levels. This is a long-term measure, and that's why, even though in 2024 the temperature will have reached what was predicted for 2030 in the Paris Agreement, the agreement is still valid and very relevant.

"The world cannot and must not give up on climate action. In order to keep the 1.5°C warming limit within reach, urgent investments in

adaptation, resilience, and emission reductions must be accelerated, especially in vulnerable regions. The cost of inaction far exceeds the cost of action – and time is running out to secure a livable and sustainable future," the report states.

## Impacts

The study reveals that extreme weather events, including heat waves, floods, storms, and droughts, triggered the highest level of climate-related displacement in 16 years. These events have also exacerbated food insecurity and contributed significantly to economic losses and instability. Direct economic losses averaged USD 202 billion per year, and when cascading effects and ecosystem damage are considered, the total surpasses USD 2.3 trillion.

An average of 124 million people were affected by disasters annually between 2014 and 2023, marking a 75% increase over the decade. The report highlights that Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) experience more than twice the global average of climate impacts. LDCs, for instance, account



for 26% of disaster-related deaths globally, despite representing only 12% of the world's population. Despite growing vulnerability, disaster-related mortality has decreased, currently standing at 0.79 per 100,000 people, down from 1.61 in the previous decade.

"We are facing a global development emergency – a severe one – with over 800 million people still living in extreme poverty. Intensifying climate impacts and relentless debt burdens are draining the resources countries need to invest in their people," stated UN Secretary-General Mr. Antynio Guterres during the report's launch.

#### Climate Finance

To address vulnerability to extreme events, robust climate finance is essential for supporting adaptation actions—measures aimed at minimizing the impacts of climate change on communities and cities. The report underscores the importance of disaster risk reduction strategies and early warning systems in mitigating losses. As of October 2024, 131 countries reported having national disaster risk strategies, a substantial increase from 57 in 2015, and 113 nations affirmed the presence of multi-hazard early warning systems.

Developing countries, in particular, need to expand this type of technology, and for that, funding is needed. "The upcoming global climate Leaders' Summit is a crucial opportunity to correct course by advancing the recently agreed climate finance targets, strengthening multilateral cooperation, and implementing ambitious national climate plans across all sectors to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050," says another excerpt from the report.

"The COP30 Presidency looks forward to working with the COP29 Presidency to lead the Baku to Belim 1.3T Roadmap, aimed at

## COP30: Amazonian Peoples Demand a Seat at Decision-Making Table in Belem

Indigenous peoples of the Amazon have demanded that they be represented at the United Nations climate summit in Brazil's Belem, itself in the Amazon, later this year.

Representatives of Indigenous peoples, traditional communities, and social movements from across the Amazon held a powerful demonstration on the morning of July 23 in front of the construction site of the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Belim.

The protestors sent a clear message to global leaders: the solutions to the climate crisis already exist and are practiced daily by Indigenous and traditional peoples in Brazil and around the world.


"There is no Amazon without its people. The territories protected by our communities are the last strongholds against destruction. Science confirms what our ancestors have always known: climate justice is only possible through territorial, social, and popular justice," the Declaration of the Amazon Peoples' Gathering for COP30: The Answer is Us, signed by 19 organizations, noted.

The document, which will be

delivered to the COP30 Presidency, stressed that hosting COP30 in the Amazon brings both a historic responsibility and a political opportunity to elevate social movements.


"The current global rise of fascism makes it all the more urgent for this COP to move beyond formalities and become a platform for true leadership by the peoples and movements of the Amazon," the document added.

The protest, according to a statement by non-profit Amazon Watch, comes at a critical moment in Brazil, as movements call on President Lula to veto Bill 2159/21 — known as the "Devastation Bill" — which would represent one of the most significant rollbacks to environmental protection in Brazil since the military dictatorship.

"A COP taking place in the Amazon must reflect the voices and faces of the Amazon. There are no real climate solutions without recognizing the peoples and their territories as key actors in this transformation," Dione Torquato, Secretary General of the National Council of Extractivist Populations (CNS), was quoted as saying in the statement. 

scaling up climate finance for developing countries. Together, we will produce a report summarizing our efforts ahead of COP30. The Baku to Belim 1.3T Roadmap should serve as a leverage point for financing low-carbon and climate-resilient development pathways in developing countries, keeping in mind that IPCC warnings about the urgency of climate action center on the fact that finance, technology,

and international cooperation are key enablers to accelerate climate action," states the first open letter to the international community, signed by COP30 President Andri Corrka do Lago.

Climate finance was also a key topic during negotiations in Bonn, Germany, last month, serving as the focus of two parallel sessions featuring contributions from dozens of countries and non-state actors. 



# Technology Gap Impedes Improving Energy Efficiency

Saleque Sufi

**T**here's no denying it: Bangladesh trails far behind in adopting and utilizing modern technologies across its power and energy sectors. Despite global advancements in energy planning, project execution, and supply chain operations, the country is at least a decade behind, whether compared to developed, developing, or even underdeveloped nations.

In the power sector, some modern fuel-efficient plants have enhanced electricity generation. Yet, major gaps remain in transmission grid upgrades and smart distribution networks, which are essential for efficient operation. The energy sector fares even worse. Although Bangladesh possesses high-quality discovered coal and vast unexplored gas basins, it continues to struggle due to indecision, a lack of strategy, and a failure to adopt advanced technology.

This write-up focuses on the energy

sector and the untapped potential of modern technology.

## *Coal Resource Exploitation*

While many countries are exploiting coal using clean and efficient technologies, Bangladesh remains indecisive about using its substantial reserves. Despite coal being labeled a major source of carbon emissions globally, Bangladesh—with a negligible carbon footprint—has no binding commitment to emission reductions. Ironically, it has already commissioned large-scale imported coal-based power plants that meet emission standards using advanced technologies.

Yet, the country's discovered coal deposits—located in a small region of Dinajpur and Rangpur—remain untouched. These deposits lie beneath fertile topsoil and water-bearing layers, and have been scientifically assessed by certified mining experts. Modern mining technologies can now extract

coal economically and safely. But successive governments have kept the matter in “suspended animation.”

If mining doesn't start soon, the global energy transition may leave this coal permanently buried. Even Barapukuria, the only active mine, is becoming economically unviable under the current underground methods. Imported coal is often cheaper than domestically produced coal. Bangladesh urgently needs a thorough techno-economic feasibility review and an audit of past studies. With the right technology, the country could use its coal reserves to bolster energy security through 2050 and beyond. The global coal phase-out isn't expected until at least 2070—so the window is still open, but shrinking.

## *Petroleum Resource Exploration*

Bangladesh began petroleum exploration in the 1950s and found promising gas fields in Sylhet, Cumilla, and other regions. But nearly 75 years later, it still lacks a comprehensive exploration strategy or depletion policy.

The country hasn't assessed the driving mechanisms of its producing fields, nor learned from the depletion of major fields like Bakhraabad and offshore

### Excerpts from Daily Gas Production and Utilization Report 21-22 July 2025

Companies	Gas fields	Wells	Capacity / Production MMCFD
BGFCL	5	44	851/468.60
SGFL	4	14	118/135.00
BAPEX	8	15	145/111.80
IOCs	3	43	1615/1093.70

Sangu. Reserve data isn't regularly updated. This negligence has fueled debate over whether gas reserves are nearing exhaustion, despite Bangladesh being part of one of the world's largest deltaic gas basins.

Why hasn't the country completed extensive 2D and 3D seismic surveys to identify petroleum prospects? Why do gas production reports fail to reflect real-time reserve status? Major producers like Bibiyana, Jalalabad, and Titas are unlikely to have the same capacity they did years ago. Yet no credible updates are available.

Chevron operates three gas fields that contribute about 45% of the national production. Bibiyana, the second-largest gas field, is depleting rapidly and could drop below 500 MMCFD in 3–5 years. Meanwhile, Titas—operated by a state company and reportedly larger—hasn't received the necessary technological upgrades to ramp up output. Bhola Island, where a large gas reserve was discovered in 1995, remains stranded. No detailed reservoir study has been conducted, and no transmission pipeline has been built. Why not apply modern technology to assess and evacuate Bhola's gas, especially during a national supply crisis?

It is possible to assess gas well capacity accurately using available technologies. That it hasn't been done raises serious questions about transparency and professionalism in public energy data.

### Gas Transmission

The Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL) was set up to manage transmission from source to delivery points via custody transfer metering. But in 31 years, it has failed to build a professional, technology-backed operation. Some pipelines are still managed by distribution companies. Custody transfer metering—crucial for accurate measurement, transparency, and safety—is absent or bypassed. Meanwhile, GTCL has been tasked with expanding the network despite no firm assurance of gas availability. As a result, costly infrastructure remains idle or underused.



A fully functional SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system could have prevented these issues. It would enable real-time monitoring, leak detection, and flow modeling. But SCADA is still not fully operational. Key compressor stations like Elenga and Ashuganj face frequent disruptions or were never commissioned. Major pipelines, such as AB-1 and AB-2, operate below capacity. The Ishwardi-Khulna pipeline remains dry. Had Bangladesh applied modern transmission design principles, it could have avoided these flawed investments.

### Gas Distribution System

Gas distribution—handled by TGTCL, BGDCL, and KGDCL—is in disarray. There's no digital mapping or verified "as-built" documentation of pipelines. As a result, many unregistered and aging pipelines leak gas underground, often 8 to 10 feet deep. In some places, unauthorized actors have laid unsafe pipelines using substandard materials, leading to theft and accidents. Distribution networks lack telemetry systems to enable central monitoring. Many gas users are unmetered, while authorized users often exceed their limits, especially during shortages. Although some prepaid meters were installed, maintenance challenges persist.

Old, leaky pipelines remain in service, and gas-related accidents are increasingly common. A modernization drive is urgently needed. Countries worldwide now use GIS-based mapping, MDPE and HDPE pipes, and smart metering systems to improve safety and efficiency. Bangladesh must stop supplying gas for cooking in congested cities. Smart prepaid meters should be mandatory. And no new connection should be granted without comprehensive GIS mapping and telemetry coverage.

### Conclusion

Bangladesh's energy supply is at a crossroads. Even if it shifts entirely to imported LNG, efficiency demands that the transmission and distribution networks be overhauled using state-of-the-art technologies. This will require skilled, tech-savvy professionals—and an enabling work environment that attracts and retains the next generation. Above all, the country must act fast to evacuate stranded gas from Bhola and remove bureaucratic barriers that prevent autonomous operation by capable companies.

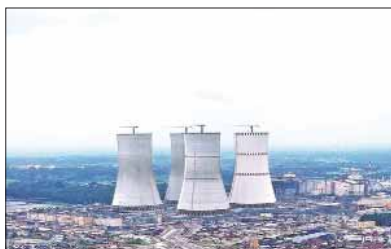
Modern technology enables monitoring, minimizes waste, and enhances economic operation. The country must embrace it now, before the opportunity passes.



**Saleque Sufi**  
Energy Expert



## RNPP Likely to Produce Power from October



**B**angladesh is expected to join over 50 countries using nuclear power peacefully as one of the two under-construction reactors of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in Ishwardi will go on production in October.

Officials of the Ministry of Science and Technology have said that around 52 days will take the reactor to deliver potential 1,200 megawatts of electricity to the national grid.

The nuclear power production will start in the power-starved country relying on power plants in neighboring India, including the controversial Adani

power company in Jharkhand, for meeting around 16 per cent its 14,000MW daily consumption in the current summer.

Besides, the power production from the country's single biggest project under the Russian credit worth around \$11.38 billion, almost two years later from the original deadline of 2024, is expected to check the growing imports of liquefied natural gas that began in 2019 for power production, said energy experts.

Conceived before the country's independence from Pakistan in 1971 Liberation War, the construction of the country's first nuclear power plant at Ishwardi, some 150 km west of Dhaka, was started during the Awami League regime that was ousted in the past year amid a mass uprising. **EP**

## LPG Turning Hazardous amid Widespread Cross-Filling



**T**he use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is steadily increasing across Bangladesh, both in households and commercial sectors, becoming a primary choice for daily energy needs.

However, this rapid adoption

is accompanied by a disturbing rise in cylinder-related explosions, raising serious safety concerns.

According to Fire Service data, 748 fire incidents caused by gas cylinders were reported in the past year alone, a sharp increase from 125 in 2023.

These accidents have resulted in numerous deaths and injuries, prompting urgent calls for stricter safety enforcement and regulation.

## BRICS Strengthen Cooperation for More Inclusive Governance

**T**he Rio de Janeiro Declaration takes note of the Pact of the Future, the Global Digital Compact, and the Declaration on Future Generations and points to the need to “adapt the current architecture of international relations to better reflect the contemporary realities”.

The Declaration reiterates the leaders' commitment to ensuring “greater and more meaningful participation and representation” of emerging markets and developing countries and LDCs, especially from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, in global decision-making processes and structures.

It also emphasizes the leaders' “strong call for reforms” of the principal organs of the UN and reiterates the urgent need to reform the Bretton Woods institutions to make them more effective, credible, inclusive, and accountable.

The leaders of the BRICS countries have issued a declaration, committing to strengthening cooperation in political and security, economic and financial, and cultural and people-to-



people matters.

The leaders commit to enhancing the bloc's strategic partnership through the promotion of peace, a more representative international order, a reinvigorated and reformed multilateral system, sustainable development, and inclusive growth.

Initially comprised of Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China, and South Africa, the recently expanded alliance now also includes Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan, and Viet Nam are BRICS partner countries.

The 17th BRICS Summit convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 6-7 July 2025 under the theme, ‘Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance.’ **EP**

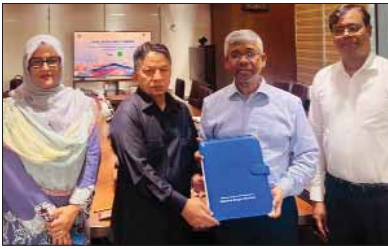
Experts have identified “cross-filling” as one of the major contributors to these deadly explosions. The illegal and unethical practice involves transferring gas from large cylinders into smaller ones—often using expired or damaged containers.

Traders involved in cross-

filling do so to maximize profits, but at the cost of public safety and government revenue.

“Cross-filling not only compromises safety but also bypasses proper regulatory checks,” experts noted, adding that the practice turns cylinders into ticking time bombs. **EP**

## NBR, BAERA Sign MoU to Boost Trade Thru Single Window System



**T**he National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA) on Sunday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate the use of the Bangladesh Single Window (BSW) system for import and export trade.

Implemented under an NBR-led project, the Bangladesh Single Window is an online platform that enables importers and exporters to electronically submit applications for Certificates, Licenses, and Permits (CLP) required for customs clearance.

Using the system, traders can obtain CLPs automatically after registering with their Business Identification Number (BIN) at the BSW portal ([www.bswnbr.gov.bd](http://www.bswnbr.gov.bd)), according to a press release from NBR.

The BSW platform streamlines the entire process of import-export documentation by allowing relevant government agencies to issue certifications simultaneously online.

It reduces time and cost, ensures transparency and accountability by minimizing human interaction, and helps promote trade and investment by building trust among domestic and international businesses.

As of July 20, 2025, the BSW system has already issued 431,169 CLPs. **EP**

## Govt to Cut Power Subsidies under 3Yr IMF-Backed Plan



**T**he government is drawing up a three-year roadmap to gradually cut subsidies in the power and gas sectors, aiming to ease the growing fiscal pressure.

The roadmap, covering FY26 to FY28, is being developed with assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and is expected to be finalized by September. An IMF technical mission visited Dhaka in May and has already drafted a plan.

According to the IMF, the strategy will be based on a realistic projection of electricity supply costs over the next three years. It will set out a clear timeline for tariff adjustments and specify protective measures for vulnerable groups.

Subsidies in the power and gas sectors in the last fiscal year soared by nearly 80 percent and around 41 percent, respectively, according to

finance ministry data.

If a tariff adjustment is necessary [for cutting subsidy], social safety measures will need to be integrated to shield the poor.

The subsidies could shoot up further without timely government measures, the draft roadmap warns. It explores two main approaches to easing the subsidy burden: introducing a dynamic tariff policy and reducing production costs.

According to the finance ministry, the revised subsidy allocation for the power sector in FY2024-25 was Tk 62,000 crore, of which Tk 59,600 crore was spent. The gas sector used Tk 8,500 crore out of a Tk 10,000 crore allocation. **EP**

## Trump Unveils \$70b AI and Energy Plan at Summit with Oil, Tech Bigwigs



**D**onald Trump joined big oil and technology bosses recently at a major artificial intelligence and energy summit in Pittsburgh, outraging environmentalists and community organizations.

The event came weeks after the passage of a mega-bill that experts say could stymie AI growth with its attacks on renewable energy.

"We're here today because we believe that America's destiny is to dominate every industry and be the first in every technology, and that includes being the world's number one superpower in artificial intelligence," said Trump.

The inaugural Pennsylvania energy and innovation summit, held at Carnegie Mellon University, is an attempt to position the state as an AI leader, showcasing the technological innovation being developed in the city and the widespread availability of fossil fuel reserves to power them.

At the gathering, Trump announced \$70bn in AI and energy investments for the state, Axios first reported, in a move the event's host, the Republican Pennsylvania

senator, Dave McCormick, says will be a boon to local economies.

It was evidence that Trump is making good on his promise to serve the people "of Pittsburgh, not Paris" as he planned withdrawal from the UN Paris climate accord, McCormick said.

At the summit, 20 leading technology and energy companies also announced more than \$92bn of investments for AI development in Pennsylvania. **EP**



## Global Gas Flaring Hits Highest Level Since 2007



**G**lobal gas flaring surged for a second year in a row, wasting about \$63 billion in lost energy and setting back efforts to manage emissions and boost energy security and access.

Flaring, the practice of burning natural gas during oil extraction, reached 151 billion cubic meters (bcm) in 2024, up 3 bcm from the previous year and the highest level in almost two decades.

An estimated 389 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent—46 million of that from unburnt methane, one of the most potent greenhouse gases—was needlessly emitted.

While some countries have reduced flaring, the top nine largest-flaring countries continue to account for three-quarters of all flaring, but less than half of global oil production.

Satellite data compiled and analyzed in the World Bank's annual Global Gas Flaring Tracker shows that flaring intensity—the amount of gas flared per barrel of oil produced—has

remained stubbornly high for the last 15 years.

"When more than a billion people still don't have access to reliable energy and numerous countries are seeking more sources of energy to meet higher demand, it's very frustrating to see this natural resource wasted," said Demetrios Papathanasiou, World Bank Global Director for Energy and Extractives.

The report highlights that countries committed to the Zero Routine Flaring by 2030 (ZRF) initiative have performed significantly better than countries that have not made the commitment. Since 2012, countries that endorsed ZRF achieved an average 12% reduction in flaring intensity, whereas those that did not saw a 25% increase. **EP**

## Govt to Fix Tariffs for 9 Power Plants

**T**he interim government has moved to set rates for nine large power plants that have been selling electricity to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) without official tariff approval. However, the power plants in question are owned by the state-run entities, fully or partially.

These power plants, with a combined capacity of 3,414 megawatts, were implemented during the previous Awami League government.

Despite supplying power to the national grid, their tariffs were never formally endorsed by the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase -- a mandatory

## Bangladesh Inks First Short-Term LNG Deal with Oman's OQ Trading

**T**he government has signed its first-ever short-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply deal with OQ Trading International of Oman, aiming to boost the country's gas supply and reduce dependence on the volatile spot market.

The new sales and purchase agreement (SPA), signed recently, will allow Bangladesh to import one LNG cargo per month from August 2025 through December 2026, totaling 17 cargoes. This marks the first time Bangladesh is entering a short-term LNG deal with any global supplier.

Petrobangla Secretary Md Amzad Hossain signed the agreement on behalf of the



state-run energy corporation. Officials of OQ Trading and its local partner, Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Ltd (RPGCL), were also present during the signing. Petrobangla Chairman Md Rezanur Rahman confirmed the details following the signing.

Under the deal, Bangladesh will import five LNG cargoes in 2025 and 12 in 2026. These imports will help ensure more stable gas supply across the country during periods of high demand. **EP**

requirement for such deals, according to official sources.

Instead, the state-run Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) has been buying electricity from these plants solely on the basis of power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed with the respective operators.

These deals were reportedly approved by senior government officials at the time, bypassing the necessary cabinet committee clearance, sources familiar with the matter told The Financial Express on Sunday.

The irregularities came to light during an internal audit conducted by the interim administration, which has now asked the Power Division and the BPDB to clarify how such contracts remained in effect



without proper authorization.

All nine plants began operations between 2012 and 2023. They include two major coal-fired joint ventures -- the 1,320MW Rampal plant under the Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company Ltd (BIFPCL) and the 1,320MW RPCL-Norinco plant in Patuakhali.

Other facilities include four plants under Rural Power Company Ltd (RPCL), two by BR PowerGen Ltd, and one solar power plant under North-West Power Generation Company Ltd (NWPGL). **EP**

## Rooppur NPP's Reference Plant in Russia Starts Trial of Digital Operator Assistant



An AI-based Operator Information Support System (OISS) has been brought into trial operation at Novovoronezh NPP Power Unit 6 in Russia, which serves as the reference plant for Rooppur NPP in Bangladesh.

OISS transmits information to operating personnel about parameter changes in the power unit control process, warning them of possible deviations and predicting the development of an event 30 minutes ahead. This helps make correct and timely decisions, significantly improving safety.

The Operator Information Support System covers 360 process systems of the modern power unit, approximately 200 interactive procedures, and 20 functions, ensuring a significant decrease in the information load on the operator.

The consequences of an error due to an incorrect operator's actions may be very large. Contingency shutdown of a power unit with a 1200 MW VVER reactor leads to multi-million-dollar losses.

Daily, a power unit with VVER-1200 on average generates 24.3 million kW h of energy. This energy is sufficient to supply power for one month to 100 thousand flats, each accommodating a family of four.

EP

## AI-Driven Predictive Maintenance Gaining Traction in Power Industry, Says GlobalData

Artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled predictive maintenance stands out as a key component in the pursuit of enhanced reliability and cost-effectiveness in the power industry.



This advanced approach is revolutionizing operations in power plants by improving the predictability of equipment upkeep, optimizing the allocation of resources, and enhancing overall plant efficiency.

It has the potential to decrease maintenance expenses by as much as 30% and boost equipment availability by 20%, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's latest report, "Predictive Maintenance in

Power: Strategic Intelligence," reveals that AI has become a crucial innovation in the predictive maintenance of electrical infrastructure.

By combining data analytics, machine learning, and real-time monitoring, utilities can now predict the future condition of their equipment more accurately. Companies such as GE Vernova, Siemens, and Schneider Electric are offering sophisticated predictive maintenance solutions to the power industry.

EP

## China Starts Construction on World's Largest Hydropower Dam in Tibet

China's Premier Li Qiang announced the start of construction on what will be the world's largest hydropower dam, located on the eastern rim of the Tibetan plateau and estimated to cost around \$170 billion.

The project is part of China's push to expand renewable energy and reduce carbon emissions.

Consisting of five cascade hydropower stations, the dam will be located in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo River and could affect millions downstream in India and Bangladesh.

Li described the hydropower

project as a "project of the century" and said special emphasis "must be placed on ecological conservation to prevent environmental damage".

Authorities have not indicated how many people the Tibet project would displace and how it would affect the local ecosystem, one of the richest and most diverse on the plateau.

But according to Chinese officials, hydropower projects in Tibet will not have a major impact on the environment or on downstream water supplies. India and Bangladesh have nevertheless raised concerns about the dam.

EP

## Norway Gas Output Down for Fourth Consecutive Month

Preliminary official data showed Norway produced 292.3 million standard cubic meters a day (MMscmd) of natural gas in June, down for the fourth month in a row.

The figure also marks the fourth consecutive month that Norway's gas output fell year-on-year, according to data from the Norwegian Offshore Directorate (NOD).

June 2025's gas production dropped 2.2 percent compared to May 2025 and 15.5 percent against June 2024. The June 2025 figure did beat the NOD's forecast by 3.1 percent.



The Nordic country sold 8.8 billion standard cubic meters (Bscm) of gas last month, down by 0.5 Bscm from May, according to the upstream regulator.

In the first quarter, Norwegian gas sales totaled 30.87 Bscm. That dropped to 28.2 Bscm in the second quarter.

EP



## Eight New Gas Wells to be Drilled



3,200 MMCFD in 2020-21, but rising demand has outpaced production.

In January 2025, demand was projected to be 3,800 MMCFD, while average production stood at just 1,927 MMCFD.

To bridge the gap, the country has been importing LNG since 2018.

Although the current LNG supply capacity is 1,100 MMCFD, about 841 MMCFD is being supplied, accounting for over 30 per cent of the total daily supply.

Two separate project evaluation committee (PEC) meetings, held at the Planning Commission recently to review proposals from the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD), recommended placing the gas well drilling projects before the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), subject to fulfilling certain conditions.

EP

The government is to drill eight new gas wells - five in Bhola and the rest in three other districts - in a bid to ramp up domestic gas production and reduce dependence on costly imports, officials said.

This will be done under two proposed projects with a combined estimated cost of Tk 28.28 billion.

The move is expected to add 170 million standard cubic feet per day (MMCFD) of natural gas by June 2028, accounting for over 7.78 per cent of the country's current gas supply from domestic sources, according to government estimates.

The project documents revealed that Bangladesh's gas supply rose from 699 MMCFD in 1995-96 to

## IAEA Mission Reviews China's Regulatory Framework for Nuclear Safety

An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team of experts today said China had made significant progress in further strengthening its regulation of nuclear safety, benefiting from the innovative use of digital tools and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as the country continues to rapidly expand its nuclear energy program.

Noting the importance of the regulatory body's staffing levels keeping up with China's fast-growing nuclear industry, the peer review team also encouraged additional improvements in regulations and guidelines in some areas, including nuclear safety inspections and emergency preparedness and response.

The Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) team concluded a 12-day mission to the People's Republic of China on 11 July, a full-scope review covering all facilities,



activities and exposure situations.

The 24-member expert mission was conducted at the request of the Government and hosted by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (the National Nuclear Safety Administration), which regulates nuclear safety in China.

With the world's second largest operating nuclear fleet after the United States, China is currently operating 59 units generating around 5% of its electricity. In addition, it is building 32 units and planning the construction of another 21 units.

The previous IRRS mission to China – a follow-up review – was carried out in 2016, when it had 32 units in operation.

EP

## 3rd ICMEAS 2025 Begins at MIST



ISPR press release.

This ICMEAS is a continuation of the previous endeavors dedicated to gather a significant number of diverse leading scholar, scientist, academicians, researchers, industrial experts together from different parts of the globe such as the US, the United Kingdom, Brunei, Egypt, Canada, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Australia, India, Singapore and China along with

The Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) launched the three-day 3rd International Conference on Mechanical Engineering and Applied Science (ICMEAS) recently.

The last ICMEAS was held at MIST in 2022, said an

Bangladesh and exchange their experiences and researches.

This year in the ICMEAS, an astounding number of 289 papers have been submitted from Bangladesh and eight from other countries, out of which 176 papers will be presented.

All papers accepted for oral presentation will be published in Scopus-Indexed Proceedings and Scopus-Indexed Journal, provided the papers fulfill

publishers' criteria.

Papers have been submitted by authors and presenters affiliated with 50 distinct universities worldwide.

This conference will provide a platform to young researchers and scientists to have an exposure to a wider intellectual community and have interaction with them. With its high quality, it will provide an exceptional value for students, academics and industry researchers.

EP

## Central European Petroleum Reports 'Largest-Ever' Discovery Offshore Poland



Polish arm of Canadian-founded Central European Petroleum.

In a recent statement, the company said that the Wolin East oil discovery is estimated to contain mean recoverable oil, sales gas and natural gas liquids totaling 200 million barrels of oil equivalent (mmbob). The Wolin license in total is estimated to contain more than 400 mmbob of recoverable hydrocarbon resources.

With these estimates, CEP Central European Petroleum said that the oil and gas resources in Wolin East "constitutes the largest conventional hydrocarbon field yet discovered in Poland, and one of the largest conventional oil discoveries in Europe in the past decade." **EP**

The Noble Resolve departs the Esbjerg shipyard, Denmark, on its way to the Wolin concession offshore Poland.

CEP Central European Petroleum has announced what it describes as "Poland's largest-ever oil and gas discovery" off the Baltic Coast.

The discovery was made at the Wolin East 1 (WE1) well in the Baltic Sea, approximately six kilometers offshore from the city of Świnoujście. CEP Central European Petroleum is the

## GlobalData Outlines ESG Discussion Agendas by Companies in Filing Documents

As environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations gain momentum across industries, companies are intensifying their focus on environmental commitments in regulatory filings. With mounting pressure from stakeholders, firms are outlining strategic investments in renewable energy, emissions reduction, and green innovation.

These disclosures signal a shift toward long-term sustainability, emphasizing climate resilience and accountability as integral to future-ready corporate operations and investment strategies, reveals the Company Filings Analytics Database of GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Misa Singh, Business Fundamentals Analyst at GlobalData, comments: "Companies are facing intense scrutiny from stakeholders, who are increasingly focused on ESG practices and disclosures."



Alongside corporate governance, this scrutiny is particularly acute regarding environmental issues like climate risk.

The pressure to comply with ESG expectations is also leading to substantial investments in ESG."

Vistra Corp in its earning call transcripts revealed its plans to invest over \$700 million on solar and energy storage projects in 2025 while DTE Energy Co intends to invest \$24 billion over the next five years to improve customer reliability and transition to cleaner energy generation.

Misa adds: "Some companies were seen discussing their plan of action revolving around renewables, sustainability, green innovation and low-carbon operations." **EP**

## Energy Sector Drives CCUS Growth, Accounting for 70% of Projects by End-2024: GlobalData



Oil and gas companies are playing a leading role in the development and deployment of CCUS. As of 2024, more than 70% of the operational and planned CCUS

facilities are associated with energy assets. This indicates a growing commitment by the energy sector to reduce its emissions intensity through innovation in carbon capture and storage technologies, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) is rapidly emerging as a key solution in the global energy transition, offering a realistic path to decarbonize hard-to-abate sectors such as cement, steel, refining, and thermal power generation.

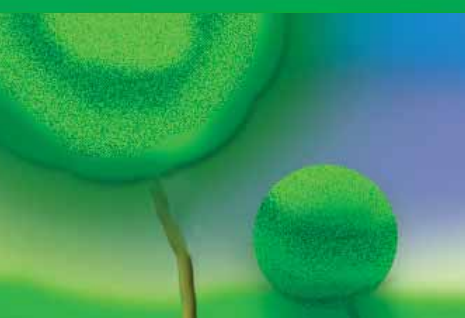
GlobalData's Strategic Intelligence report, "Carbon Capture and Storage," reveals that over 50 commercial-scale carbon capture projects were active within the global energy sector alone as of 2024, representing a cumulative carbon capture capacity of approximately 45 million tonnes per annum (mtpa).

Assuming that all the proposed projects come

online, the global carbon capture capacity in the energy sector could rise to nearly 316 mtpa by 2030.

Leading oil and gas players such as ExxonMobil, Occidental Petroleum, and Equinor have taken early initiatives in CCUS, supported by engineering and service companies like Technip Energies, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI), and SLB. **EP**





# Greenpage

## Powering Textile Efficiency: High-Level Dialogue on GCF & IDCOL's \$133m Loan



goal: to mainstream energy efficiency in the textile sector.

He emphasized that this event compliments with IDCOL's larger vision-scaling EE investments and unlocking new project pipelines. Mr. Morshed concluded by thanking EY

Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), with funding support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) hosted a high-level roundtable on accelerating Energy Efficiency (EE) in Bangladesh's textile sector.

Held in Dhaka, the event brought together senior government officials, global brand representatives, IDCOL leadership, and C-suite executives from over 15 leading textile units.

The roundtable opened with an address by IDCOL's Executive Director and CEO Mr. Alamgir Morshed, who shared personal reflections on the energy landscape and outlined the session's

and GCF for their technical and financial partnership. This was followed by technical presentations.

The Chief Guest, Ms Farzana Momtaz, Secretary, Power Division, stressed that EE is no longer an environmental luxury-it is an economic necessity. She acknowledged the need for a system-wide shift and recognized the roles of IDCOL and SREDA in driving this change.

IDCOL has reiterated its dedication to promoting energy efficiency through robust partnerships, efficient financing mechanisms, and advocacy for supportive policies.

EP

## Japan Sees Bright Future for Ultra-Thin, Flexible Solar Panels

Japan is heavily investing in a new kind of ultra-thin, flexible solar panel that it hopes will help it meet renewable energy goals while challenging China's dominance of the sector.

Pliable perovskite panels are perfect for mountainous Japan, with its shortage of flat plots for traditional solar farms. And a key component of the panels is iodine, something Japan produces more of than any country but Chile.

The push faces some obstacles: perovskite panels contain toxic lead, and, for now, produce less power



and have shorter lifespans than their silicon counterparts.

Still, with a goal of net-zero by 2050 and a desire to break China's solar supremacy, perovskite cells are "our best card to achieve both decarbonization and industrial competitiveness," minister of industry Yoji Muto said in November.

"We need to succeed in their implementation in society at all costs," he said.

EP

## Australia Advances 53 GW of Renewables through Grid Process

Australia's energy transition is gaining "real measurable momentum" with the market operator reporting a record wave of new solar, wind, and energy storage projects are progressing through the grid connection process, at a larger scale than ever before.

The Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) latest Connections Scorecard shows a surge in new generation and storage capacity with

260 projects totaling 53 GW going through the connection process in the National Electricity Market (NEM), up nearly 40% from the same time last year.

AEMO said the pipeline is expanding across every stage of the process and project sizes are also increasing significantly, driven by a surge in standalone batteries and hybrid solar-plus-battery projects.

EP

### 3 New RMG Factories Get LEED Certification



environmental sustainability in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector, according to the leaders of RMG sector.

This brings the total number of LEED Certified RMG factories to 253, with 105 Platinum, 132 Gold and 12 Silver.

Bangladesh now boasts 9 out of 10 and 68 out of 100

Highest Rated LEED factories in the world.

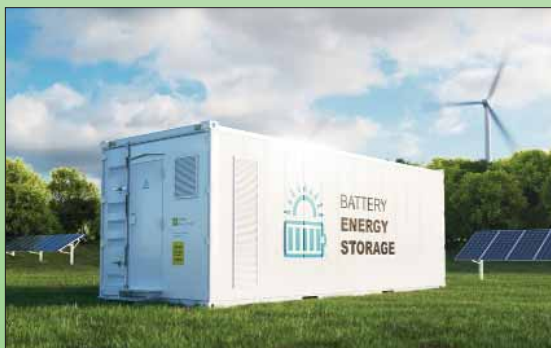
The three new factories that received LEED certification are: Comfit Rainbow Dyeing and Finishing, Saiham Cotton Mills Ltd., and Saiham Cotton Mills Ltd Unit 1.

EP

Three more RMG factories of Bangladesh have got the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certificates from the US Green Building Council (USGBC).

It's a testament to the country's unwavering commitment to

### Clean Energy Key to Addressing India's Power Demand Peaks



contribute to electricity demand. Electricity consumption by EVs has grown nearly tenfold – from 59 million units (MUs) in FY2021 to 569MUs in FY2024,” says Charith Konda, contributing author and Energy Specialist at IEEFA, South Asia.

Despite the rapid growth of solar, India continues to rely heavily on coal to meet evening peak demand, a new briefing note by the Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) finds. Coal remains the backbone of supply, accounting for nearly 73% (157.6GW) of the total daily generation, the report states.

As of FY2024, the industrial, commercial, residential, and agricultural sectors accounted for approximately 32%, 10%, 31%, and 22% of India's total electricity sales, respectively.

“While still modest in scale, electric vehicles (EVs) are beginning to

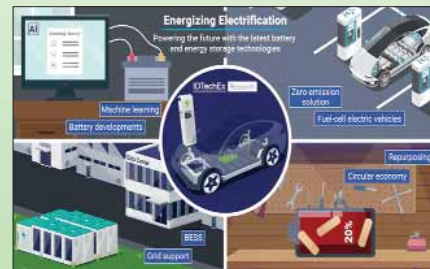
IEEFA's analysis shows that the alignment of peak demand with solar availability presents an opportunity to maximize solar utilization, making it possible to tap into the cheapest available renewable energy source, reduce daytime reliance on coal, and cut emissions.

“The persistent evening peaks, which now nearly match daytime highs, reinforce the urgency of deploying storage solutions, demand measures and hybrid renewable projects to meet post-sunset demand,” says Saloni Sachdeva Michael, co-author and Energy Specialist at IEEFA, South Asia. The sharp rise in demand after sunset strains the grid and drives up market prices.

EP

Greenpage

### Energizing Electrification – A Future of Batteries, AI, and Hydrogen



The future of energy could be increasingly streamlined, sustainable, and efficient, with battery developments and the integration of machine learning. Li-ion batteries and hydrogen fuel cells are some of the most promising up-and-coming technologies responsible for allowing innovations within main industries, including automotives and energy storage.

IDTechEx's portfolios of Batteries & Energy Storage and Electric Vehicles research reports cover the latest developments.

Sustainability is one of the most renowned key words of the future, with one of its main accompaniments being the electrification of transport.

In 2023, IDTechEx reported an 800GWh battery demand across different types of electric vehicles, showcasing the scope for battery technologies to have a future of success. IDTechEx's report, "Electric Vehicles: Land, Sea, and Air 2025-2045" conveys that electric cars are the largest proportion driving this demand, having been responsible for 86% as of 2023.

Subsidies and restrictions are two governmental inputs that are likely to shape the electrification landscape going forward, as companies are pushing to meet net-zero targets and avoid potential charges on unnecessary emissions.

EP



## IDCOL Wins Four Prestigious Awards



ceremony in July in Singapore, recognize IDCOL's leadership in the industry.

The Asian Banking & Finance Awards are renowned for honoring outstanding performance, innovation, and impact in project finance and fund management in Asia. IDCOL's achievements

at the ceremony solidify its position as a key player in shaping climate-smart, socially inclusive, and commercially viable infrastructure and energy solutions.

IDCOL's recognition are: Green Deal of the Year, Project Infrastructure Finance Deal of the Year in Bangladesh, Domestic Project Finance Bank of the Year, and Green Financing Bank of the Year in Bangladesh.

EP

**I**nrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) has received four esteemed awards at the Asian Banking & Finance (ABF) Awards 2025, highlighting its excellence in sustainable infrastructure financing, green energy investments, and innovative project finance in South Asia and Africa.

The awards, presented during the Corporate & Investment Banking Awards and Wholesale Banking Awards

## Pakistan's Quiet Solar Rush Puts Pressure on National Grid



**P**akistanis are increasingly ditching the national grid in favor of solar power, prompting a boom in rooftop panels and spooking a government weighed down by billions of dollars of power sector debt.

The quiet energy revolution has spread from wealthy neighborhoods to middle- and lower-income households as customers look to escape soaring electricity bills and prolonged power cuts.

Mounted on poles above homes, solar panels have become a common sight

across the country of 240 million people, with the installation cost typically recovered within two to five years.

Making up less than two per cent of the energy mix in 2020, solar power reached 10.3 per cent in 2024, according to the global energy think tank Ember.

But in a remarkable acceleration, it more than doubled to 24 per cent in the first five months of 2025, becoming the largest source of energy production for the first time.

It has edged past gas, coal and nuclear electricity sources, as well as hydropower which has seen hundreds of millions of dollars of investment over the past decades.

As a result, Pakistan has unexpectedly surged towards its target of renewable energy, making up 60 per cent of its energy mix by 2030.

EP



## Vena Energy Signs 100 MW Load-Following Solar, Wind Deal with SECI

**V**ena Energy, a green energy provider operating across the Asia-Pacific region, has signed a 100 MW load-following renewable PPA with SECI. It will develop renewable energy projects paired with energy storage to deliver firm and dispatchable renewable energy (FDRE) that matches demand.

The FDRE scheme, launched in June 2023, includes configurations such as



assured peak power, round-the-clock (RTC) supply, and load-following delivery based on requirements from distribution companies.

While multiple PPAs have been signed under the RTC and peak power categories, this marks India's first load-following renewable PPA. The agreement aims to ensure reliable renewable power by aligning supply with the hourly demand profile of distribution companies. Projects must integrate wind, solar and storage systems to deliver consistent hourly output over a 25-year period.

Monika Rathi, Head of India at Vena Energy, said the milestone demonstrates the company's technical expertise and marks its first integrated wind, solar and energy storage project in India.

EP

## Redesign Investment Systems to Ease Pressure on Resources: Rizwana



**E**nvironment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan has underscored the need for redesigning investment frameworks to ease pressure on natural resources, alerting that the growing demand for clothing could aggravate resource strain.

Speaking at a recent dialogue, Rizwana highlighted progress in three key areas, noting that the textile industry is shifting towards more sustainable production.

She said an Industrial Water Use Policy is in the works to help conserve groundwater by introducing usage-based costs, while a binding chemical regulation is also pending to curb the use of harmful substances in locally

manufactured products.

In energy, the Adviser said, the government aims to achieve 30% renewable energy use by 2030, with plans to transition government offices as well.

For the tobacco sector, she noted that future regulations will be shaped through consultations with stakeholders and businesses.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) hosted the dialogue on 'Fostering Sustainable Investment' supported by RecoverTM, Phillip Morris Bangladesh Ltd, and Chevron Bangladesh.

AmCham Bangladesh President Syed Ershad Ahmed mentioned Bangladesh stands at a pivotal moment balancing LDC graduation and climate commitments with the urgent need for sustainable development. **EP**

## Climate Groups in Asia Push for Energy Sovereignty

**3**50.org Asia recently launched REImagine Asia, a campaign for community-led renewable energy emphasizing the need for rich countries and polluters to pay their climate debt so that developing countries in Asia can achieve energy sovereignty.

Amid US tariff negotiations, the climate group warned against trade deals that would make Asian countries more dependent on US oil and gas imports. Reports say that Indonesia has agreed to import \$15 billion worth of US oil and gas to reduce tariffs. Reports also indicate that India is planning to increase imports of Liquefied Natural Gas and crude oil from the US as part of a trade deal.

"Our future is not for sale. Asian governments should not be arm-twisted into guzzling more US oil and gas when they have committed to phasing-out fossil fuels and



tripling renewable energy by 2030. The complete disregard of climate commitments puts billions of Asians at greater risk of climate impacts as the planet approaches the dangerous 1.5°C limit. It also stunts the region's vast renewable energy potential and undermines long-term energy sovereignty and security," says Chuck Baclagon, 350.org Asia Regional Finance Campaigner.

In a webinar, 350.org Asia launched its REImagine Asia campaign which highlights successful stories of how community-led renewable energy initiatives across the region have led to access to clean and affordable energy, climate resilience, and better livelihoods. **EP**

## Global Movements Call for Action This September

**A** powerful wave of global actions are set to take place this September as movements across the world unite in historic global days of action. Under the banner Draw the Line, communities will mobilize in towns and cities to draw the line against injustice, pollution, and violence, and for a just transition and a future built on renewable energy, fairness, and peace.

The call has become a global rallying cry supported by workers, youth, indigenous groups, and social movements. In a world marked by escalating climate disasters, rising authoritarianism, and deepening inequality, the message is clear: we must draw the line for people and the planet.

Draw the Line is a global action (15-28 September) with widespread

mobilizations large and small peaking over the weekend of September 19-21, 2025. The call to action to Draw the Line: Rights, Jobs and Justice, is being co-convened by a network of global climate organizations 350.org, CAN-International, APMDD and War on Want, together with other local, regional and global movements across the world.

This announcement comes at the same time as a major



climate address by the UN Secretary-General Antynio Guterres in New York, where he declared the shift to renewable energy is already happening and emphasized the economic, social, and security benefits of a just transition away from fossil fuels. **EP**



## Environment-Friendly Tannery, Combined Efforts to Play Key Role in Leather Industry Development: Adilur



Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan has said that an environment-friendly tannery system, use of modern machinery and technology, skilled human resources, and coordination between the public and private sectors would play a vital role in leather industry development.

Adilur noted that the leather industry is Bangladesh's second-largest export-oriented sector while this industry is also generating employment opportunities for more than hundreds of thousands of people alongside its significant contribution to the national economy.

The Industries Adviser made these remarks while inaugurating the 9th Bangladesh Leather & Footwear Expo (BLF) – 2025 at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB) in the capital recently, said an Industries Ministry press release.

He said there is substantial potential for value addition in the leather, footwear, and leather goods while the sector also holds vast potentials for both backward and forward linkage development.

By 2030, Adilur predicted that the leather industry could generate employments for some 3.5 million to four million people and can attain production and export targets worth \$12.50 billion in the leather, leather goods, and footwear sectors. **EP**

## BRAC Bank Discloses 100% of Its Carbon Emissions Across All Scopes

**B**RAC Bank has emerged as one of the first institutions in Bangladesh to publicly disclose 100% of its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, covering the full spectrum from internal operations to emissions generated through its financing activities.



With the release of its Sustainability and Impact Report 2024, BRAC Bank completed a full-scale carbon accounting exercise, reporting a total of 1,477,468 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) across direct (Scope 1), energy-related (Scope 2), and value chain (Scope 3) emissions, marking a significant step toward environmental transparency in the financial sector.

Under Scope 1, which includes direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by the bank such as diesel generators, refrigerants, and fleet fuel, the bank reported 1,630 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. For Scope 2, covering indirect emissions from purchased electricity, the figure stood at 16,671 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

Scope 3 emissions, which encompass indirect impacts across the value chain, amounted to 1,459,167 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. Of this, 1,423,479 tCO<sub>2</sub>e came from Category 15

financed activities—emissions generated by the businesses and sectors the bank supports. These alone represent over 96% of BRAC Bank's total reported carbon footprint. The remaining Scope 3 emissions, totaling 35,687 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, were linked to business travel, waste, procurement, and employee commuting.

This positions BRAC Bank as a national frontrunner in South Asia among financial institutions voluntarily reporting Category 15 emissions under Scope 3 as defined by the GHG Protocol—considered the most complex and material aspect of a bank's climate impact, with quantification based on the globally recognized Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) standard.

Additionally, 18,112 tonnes of emissions were avoided through the bank's clean energy investments and solar infrastructure, leading to a net climate impact of 1,459,356 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for 2024. **EP**

Ambrym, said.

"We have been waiting for this decision for a long time because we have been victims of this climate change for the past two decades," he said.

The chief recalled that his island was battered by three tropical cyclones in 2023, with

twin cyclones Judy and Kevin striking in March of that year, followed by Lola in October.

"Some of the traditional crops are no longer growing like before," he added.

"We're very happy that this International Court of Justice has ruled in favor on this issue." **EP**

## Vanuatu Island Chief 'Very Impressed' by Global Climate Decision



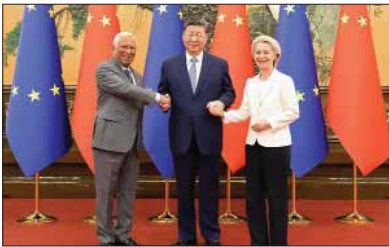
**T**he paramount chief of a volcanic island in Vanuatu said recently he was "very impressed" by a global court's declaration that countries must tackle

climate change.

Vanuatu spearheaded the legal case at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, which found countries have a duty to protect against the "urgent and existential" threat of a warming planet.

"I'm very impressed," George Bumseng, the highest chief of the Pacific archipelago's cyclone-prone island of

## EU, China Reaffirm Climate Cooperation amid Global Tensions and US Absence



In a rare demonstration of global alignment, the European Union and China have issued a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to climate cooperation, green trade, and the Paris Agreement.

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, the statement positions climate action as a crucial area of continued collaboration between two of the world's largest economies.

The announcement followed a high-level visit

to Beijing by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antynio Costa, who met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other senior officials recently.

As the United States steps back from international climate diplomacy, the EU-China statement signals a clear intent to reinforce global ambition and multilateral cooperation.

Notably, the statement comes just one day after the International Court of Justice handed down a landmark ruling reinforcing states' legal obligations to protect people from the impacts of climate change. **EP**

## Buriganga River Poses Ecological and Public Health Risk Due to Heavy Metal Pollution: Study



A recent study has revealed alarming levels of heavy metal contamination in the Buriganga River, posing significant threats to both the environment and public health in and around Dhaka city.

The study, titled 'Heavy

Metal Contamination in the Buriganga River, Bangladesh: A Review of Ecological Risk and Pollution,' was conducted by Beauty Akter and Professor Dr Syed Hafizur Rahman from the Environmental Sciences Department at Jahangirnagar University (JU).

The study was published in the June 2025 edition of the Jahangirnagar University Environmental Bulletin.

Drawing on a wide range of peer-reviewed research, the

## Everllence Cuts Emissions from Own Production by 63%

Everllence has made its corporate responsibility transparent with the publication of its sustainability report for financial year 2024. The report shows concrete progress, including a 63 percent reduction in CO2 emissions from its own global production, compared to 2018.

At the heart of the report is Everllence's revised sustainability strategy, built on three core pillars: "Decarbonization is our business" encompasses the company's solutions that help customers reduce emissions in energy-intensive sectors such as shipping, energy, and industry.

"Nature" stands for responsible resource use, emission reductions at production sites, and the protection of biodiversity. The third pillar, "People and Society", brings together initiatives for good working conditions,



diversity, and social responsibility.

This strategic realignment is based on a double materiality analysis, incorporating external perspectives and additional topics and data to enhance transparency in reporting.

Dr. Uwe Lauber, CEO of Everllence, said: "With our sustainability strategy, we are explicitly taking responsibility for the environment and society, embedding this commitment into our corporate strategy, 'Moving big things to zero.' Decarbonizing the global economy is our business. We firmly believe that sustainability and climate protection are key drivers of transformation for German mechanical engineering and the German economy." **EP**

study presents a comprehensive analysis of the concentrations of heavy metals in the river's water and sediment and assesses the associated ecological risks.

According to the findings, dangerously high levels of toxic metals including lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd), chromium (Cr), mercury (Hg), arsenic (As), zinc (Zn), nickel (Ni), copper (Cu), and iron (Fe) have been detected, particularly in areas near unregulated industrial

discharge points. Many of these concentrations exceed both national and international safety thresholds.

The study identifies tannery waste, textile and dyeing factories and chemical industries as the primary contributors to this pollution, particularly in the Hazaribagh and Kamrangirchar areas. Additional sources include untreated domestic sewage, roadside runoff, agricultural discharge, and open solid waste dumping. **EP**



# Not Just Public Funds, Climate Finance Must Evolve

**C**limate finance is declining globally just as climate impacts are intensifying. That's why Bangladesh must enhance its capacity and strengthen institutional preparedness to make the most of available climate funds. Developed countries are no longer expected to fund climate action solely from their public sectors. Under the "Baku to Belém Roadmap for USD 1.3 Trillion," COP30 is expected to kick off a process to develop innovative financing mechanisms—currently the only viable path to accessing larger climate resources.

These views were shared by Advocate Hafijul Islam Khan (Hafij Khan), founder and director of the Center for Climate Justice Bangladesh, in an interview with **Mollah Amzad Hossain**, editor of Energy & Power.

***Under the "Baku to Belém Roadmap for USD 1.3 Trillion," what kind of discussions might take place at COP30? Financing wasn't discussed in Bonn. So, how are preparations moving forward?***

At Baku, countries agreed under the NCQG (New Collective Quantified Goal) to mobilize USD 300 billion annually. They also agreed to continue discussions on scaling this up to USD 1.3 trillion by 2035. This ongoing process is known as the "Baku to Belém Roadmap for USD 1.3 Trillion."

But this money is not expected to come solely from the public sector—it must be mobilized across all sectors. Therefore, discussions in Belém will be critical for developing a clear strategy on how this financing will be raised, who will contribute, and under what conditions.

While SB62 in Bonn didn't include climate finance formally on the agenda, there were some side discussions. However, growing geopolitical and geoeconomic tensions could significantly hinder finance mobilization.

We all know the USD 100 billion per year promised by developed countries for 2020–2024 was never fully delivered. A new pledge of USD 300 billion per year was made in Baku, but again, there are no guarantees. Still, we hope this roadmap will lead to a formal institutional structure that allows negotiations to move forward more efficiently.

***Negotiators from developing countries still hope that most climate finance will come from public sources. But developed nations are now shifting focus to innovative finance and the private sector. How do you interpret this?***

The basic principle of the finance discussion is that polluters must pay. Countries like the US, which have historically polluted the most, must pay now. Countries like China, which are among today's top emitters, also need to step up. This is fundamentally about compensating for pollution.

We've insisted that, in the interest of climate justice, the majority of climate finance must come from public sources. But now developed nations argue that their public sectors can't shoulder the full burden—the private sector must be engaged as well.

This raises a critical question: How do we compel corporations, banks, and other private entities—many of which are major emitters—to contribute to climate efforts? There must be pressure and accountability mechanisms to ensure they pay their share.

There's also increasing discussion about innovative financing tools like carbon taxes and levies. For instance, there are proposals to levy taxes on the maritime and aviation sectors. These are promising, but implementation will be difficult.

***There was once a proposal to tax the wealth of the ultra-rich to fund climate action. What's the current status of that idea?***

That idea hasn't gained much traction.



Hafij Khan

***We can no longer depend solely on public finance for climate action. The polluters, whether governments or corporations, must pay their fair share. That means creating pressure and accountability mechanisms for private actors. If we want to mobilize USD 1.3 trillion by 2035, innovative financing involving all sectors is not just ideal, it's the only viable path forward.***

The reality is that the ultra-rich often own or control the industries most responsible for emissions. These individuals and their corporations—especially in developed countries—bear historical responsibility for climate damage.

Ideally, fossil fuel-producing countries should be paying compensation. But now governments are trying to shift that responsibility onto corporations instead.

***Private capital is profit-driven. It may invest in mitigation, where returns are possible. But how can we attract private financing for adaptation and loss & damage, which don't generate profits?***

Despite its limitations, the private sector has become a key player in today's global climate framework. Under

Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, a carbon market mechanism is being developed, and many private actors are eager to participate.

Funds generated through these markets could potentially be directed toward adaptation and loss & damage.

Another idea is to legally require polluting companies to fund climate resilience. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is expected to release an advisory opinion on this, and I believe it will carry weight. It could lead to real pressure on fossil fuel companies.

We need to move beyond viewing climate finance as a public-sector-only issue. The private sector must be involved, and this requires active engagement from civil society, academia, NGOs, youth, and women's groups.

***You mentioned the need to institutionalize the Baku and Belém roadmaps. What exactly do you mean by that?***

Our goal is to mobilize USD 1.3 trillion by 2035. But where will this money come from? It must come from the public, private, and all other actors. The Paris Agreement already outlines various mechanisms for accessing climate finance.

What's missing is a structured system to pull together those funds. By institutionalization, I don't mean creating a new fund—I mean setting up a financing mechanism that can tap into these existing sources more effectively.

***Over the years, the UNFCCC has developed several strategies, mechanisms, and funding tools. What kind of preparation do developing countries need to access these funds fairly?***

It starts at the national level. Each country—through its government, civil society, NGOs, and media—must first define its priorities for the COP. Once this national process is complete, the 148 developing countries must come together with a unified negotiating agenda. Together, we must push for public finance and fair access.

***Given the changing global landscape, it's clear that climate***

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***finance will shrink. Countries must submit strong project proposals to secure their share. How prepared is Bangladesh?***

You're absolutely right—global climate finance is shrinking. So, we must be prepared to capture what's still available.

First, we must build local capacity. Unfortunately, we still lack the technical expertise to develop high-quality projects. This means we may have to rely on foreign experts.

Second, institutional integration is key. Though we have designated national entities (DNEs) for different funds, we now need to identify a central body—or a few key institutions—that can coordinate access to all climate funds. This central body should receive funds and allocate them to pre-selected eligible projects. Strong coordination is crucial.

Bangladesh has begun this process, but we must accelerate it. We should also prepare to receive not just financial assistance but also technical support.

***The 6th Board Meeting of the Loss and Damage Fund was recently held in Manila. A decision was made to initially disburse USD 250 million. Have distribution guidelines been finalized? What about mobilizing new or pledged funds?***

The main goal of the 6th Board Meeting was to finalize disbursement modalities. A decision was made to provide USD 5-20 million per country as an initial allocation.

The question now is how that money will be disbursed. Unlike other funds—where you submit a project, get

approval, and then implement—this fund is different.

The Board agreed that it must be capable of rapid disbursement for natural disasters like floods or cyclones. At the same time, it will also allow for project-based disbursements.

So far, there is no agreed-upon access strategy. Discussions are ongoing about innovative access options, including direct budget support.

The World Bank, which is acting as an interim host, wants disbursements to meet its high standards. But many developing countries struggle to meet those requirements. Therefore, the Board decided to conduct more research and finalize the access modalities—possibly at its next meeting in October.

In the meantime, the Fund Secretariat is working on mobilizing pledged funds, while the Board explores how to bring in private sector contributions.

***Corporations worldwide are spending heavily through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. Could any of that money be channeled into the Loss and Damage Fund?***

Yes, there's potential for that. But both the political leadership at the COP and the Fund's board need to take action. We need public campaigns and political pressure to ensure that polluters pay financial compensation to those suffering the consequences.

***The United States is increasingly impacted by natural disasters. Could this push its federal government to recommit to climate finance?***

There's no clear answer. Even when the federal government withdrew from the Paris Agreement, US states and corporations continued their climate efforts. It's hard to say whether public pressure alone will be enough to push the federal government back into a leadership role in climate finance.

***Is there potential to mobilize climate finance from Bangladesh's domestic private sector?***

Absolutely—and we must take it seriously. The government should create a legal framework that compels polluting industries to finance mitigation efforts. **EP**



# QUESTIONS ARE MANY; ANSWERS A FEW

Reverse Swing



Farid Hossain

**W**ith the first anniversary of the July uprising knocking on the door the questions are: what has been achieved, where have been the failures and why. The mass upheaval's biggest glory has been the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who ruled the country for over years with an iron hand before her Awami League government collapsed on August 5 last year. Since then she has been living in India amid calls for her trial on charges of crimes against humanity. She stands accused at the revamped International Crimes Tribunal for her role in ordering the use of lethal weapons against the protesters – many of them women and children – whose campaign peaked in mid-July. What had started as a protest against discriminatory quotas in government jobs transformed into the one-point demand – “Hasina must step down” – largely thanks to the indiscriminate use of lethal weapons by the security forces. Attacks on government buildings and infrastructure such as Metro Rail and Dhaka Elevated Expressway forced Hasina to impose curfew and call the military to enforce it. The military,

however, had the patience and wisdom not to use force against the masses as the protests escalated to a point of no return. That had contributed largely to seal the fate of Sheikh Hasina who had no other way but to flee.

The void left by Hasina's departure was quickly filled by Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus, a long-time critic of the former prime minister. Yunus wasted no time in assembling an interim administration with the help of the military and the anti-Hasina political parties and groups. He received huge international support for his interim administration even though its composition raised eyebrows domestically. Criticisms that picked up advisers mainly from the pro-Western NGOs and individuals who worked with him at his Grameen Bank and other enterprises founded by him still continue to haunt his government. Brushing aside the critics, Yunus is going ahead as the chief adviser of the interim government.

Since taking over as the head of the interim government Prof Yunus has been working on reaching three goals

he has set for it: Reforms, Trial and Election. He has formed six key commissions with regard to reforming the country's Constitution, judiciary, police administration, the Election Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission and labor laws. Several other commissions, including one on women, have also been formed and all of them submitted their reports. However, the main focus has remained on the efforts to reform the Constitution, the changes suggested in the Election Commission and the holding of the next general election. Yunus also formed a consensus commission keeping him in the chair to deal with the issues in which all the stakeholders agree and go forward. The heads of the six key commissions are members of the consensus commission. The declaration of July Charter as demanded by the student leaders of the uprising remains another area of concern for the interim government. According to latest reports the major political parties such as BNP, Jamaat and National Citizen Party have differences to thrash out in regard to the July Charter.

Prof Yunus, meanwhile, has announced plans to hold the national election by February next year. He also has ordered the security forces, including police and Rab, to make preparations for holding the country's “freest” elections his administration wants to conduct. Bangladeshis, especially the newly enlisted voters, are too eager to go to the polling booths and cast ballots to choose their own representatives. When will be that election? What will be the composition of the parliament? Will it be a single-chamber House or of two chambers? If there is an Upper House how will it be elected? Will there be direct vote or the system professional representation? Many of these questions still remain unanswered. **EP**



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