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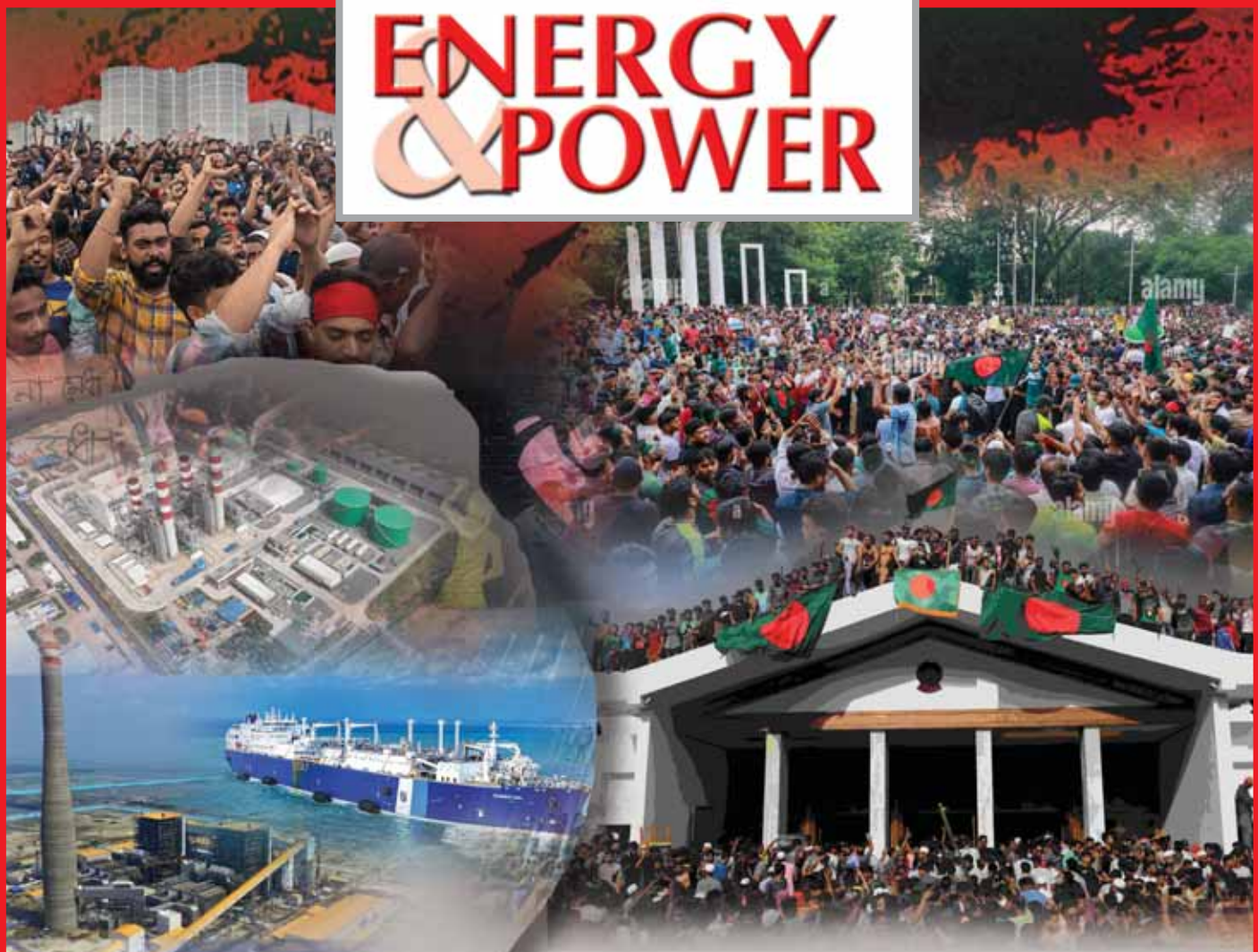
August 16, 2025

ENERGY & POWER



A Year In Power

- No Major Change In Power, Energy Sector In A Year
- Alternatives To Addressing Bangladesh's Energy Crisis
- From "Don't Look Up" To COP29: A Real-Life Satire On Climate Inaction

JERA MEGHNAGHAT POWER LIMITED

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

About JERA

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

Energy for a New Era

Upstream Development Fuel Procurement

- Upstream Investment **6 Projects**
- LNG Procurement from **15 Countries**
- LNG Fleet Carriers **22 carriers**

LNG Receiving & Storage Terminals

- LNG Tank Capacity in Japan **6.65 million kL**
- Equivalent to **Approx. 30%** of LNG tank capacity in Japan
- LNG Receiving Terminals in Japan **11 terminals**

Domestic Power Generation

- Thermal Power Station **26 stations**
- Power Generation Capacity **Approx. 61GW** Largest in Japan
- Power Generation Output **Approx. 235 TWh**
  Equivalent to approx. 33% of power generation in Japan

Overseas Power Generation

- Number of projects **In more than 10 Countries**
  Approx. 30 Projects
- Power Generation Capacity **Approx. 13.7GW**
  (Output Corresponding to Equity)
- Renewables Development Capacity **Approx. 3.5 GW**
  (Included in the Power Generation Capacity)

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

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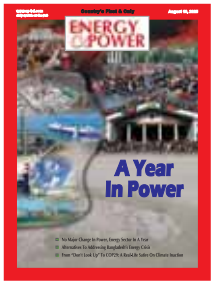
Over the past year, there has been no major change in the power and energy sector. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant has not yet been commissioned, while the government has not initiated any new major projects. Some opportunities existed to act, but they were not taken. The authorities have failed to take effective action. ...Professor A. K. Enamul Haque tells EP



ENERGY & POWER

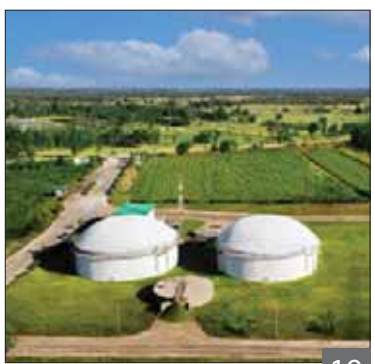
EDITORIAL

The interim government's first year offers a mixed verdict on the power and energy sectors. On one hand, an uninterrupted electricity through summer, no small feat in recent years, helped restore public confidence in basic service delivery. Payment of long-overdue arrears to suppliers averted fuel shortages, and reforms such as repealing the Quick Enhancement Act signaled a commitment to transparency. Cost-saving initiatives, aided by softer global prices, shaved billions off procurement bills. Yet these achievements mask deeper structural weaknesses. The gas crisis has intensified, with industrial production disrupted and domestic reserves declining. Import dependency now stands at 55%, exposing the economy to volatile global markets. The promised shift toward renewable energy is mired in delays and policy uncertainty, while stalled offshore exploration means Bangladesh remains years away from reducing its reliance on imported fuel. Meanwhile, allegations of massive corruption under the previous government remain unresolved, despite a white paper estimating USD 6.0 billion lost in the power generation sector alone. The decision to bring in foreign consultants is welcome, but late. Governance reforms, such as appointing sector outsiders to key boards, have been criticized as cosmetic.

This government was never expected to solve the energy crisis in a year, but it had the mandate to lay the groundwork for a secure, diversified energy future. That opportunity has been only partially seized. Whoever takes office after February's elections will inherit an energy sector still dependent on imports, still vulnerable to shocks, and still in urgent need of bold, long-term solutions.

highlights

COVER



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Pilot projects could be launched within existing gas franchise areas, and if successful, expanded nationwide. Joint feasibility studies by Petrobangla, gas distribution companies, and agricultural and livestock departments could ensure effective integration with existing infrastructure and environmental safeguards. Similar projects are already underway in India. Mumbai-based Mahanagar Gas Limited, part of the state-owned GAIL. ... More in Special Article

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Over the past one year, the government managed to keep the lights on without major interruptions, a notable achievement in a country where power cuts have often been a daily frustration. But the energy crisis has only deepened, with the gas shortage becoming more acute. No decisive action was taken during the one-year period to secure the long-term energy future.

Published by the Editor from 187 Elephant Road (Raj Complex), Dhaka 1205
& Printed at Ananda Printers, 166 Arambagh, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh

Green page

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.


Green page

Experts Call for Realistic Plan, Soft Loans to Achieve Bangladesh's Rooftop Solar Targets

Malaysia Renewable Power Capacity to Reach 30GW by 2035: GlobalData

Contents

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Rosatom Presents 4th Generation Nuclear Technologies in China

Rosatom took part in the World Nuclear University's (WNU) Summer Institute, held in China recently. It is an international educational program aimed at developing the professional skills of nuclear workers from different countries.

The program took place in China. Six companies from the Russian nuclear industry participated in the Summer Institute (SI) 2025.

Rosatom presented generation IV innovative reactor technologies supporting the concept of a closed nuclear fuel cycle (NFC). A technological sequence covering all stages of nuclear fuel transformation was elaborated.

According to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) classification, the generation IV nuclear power systems involve the use of various technologies that are united by a common result – higher fuel efficiency, increased safety, energy efficiency, reduction of spent nuclear fuel, etc.

The World Nuclear University's Summer Institute is an immersive 270-hour international educational program aimed at developing leadership and communication skills. The program is held annually in different countries on a regional rotation principle.

LNG Canada Begins Phase 2 FEED Update

LNG Canada awarded Flour Corp.'s joint venture with JGC Corp. the contract to update the front-end engineering and design (FEED) for a proposed Phase 2 expansion of the 14-million tonne/year LNG Canada liquefaction plant on the traditional territory of Haisla Nation in Kitimat, BC. Phase 2 would double the plant's capacity.

The award follows the commissioning of Phase 1 with the recent shipment of the plant's first LNG cargo (OGJ Online, July 1, 2025). The JGC Fluor JV provided Phase 1 engineering, procurement, fabrication management, construction, and commissioning.

LNG Canada—comprised of Shell PLC, Mitsubishi Corp., Korea Gas Corp., Petroliam Nasional Berhad (Petronas) and PetroChina Co. Ltd.—has not yet reached a final investment decision on Phase 2.

bp Announces Hydrocarbon Discovery at Bumerangue Exploration Well, Offshore Brazil

bp recently announced an oil and gas discovery at the Bumerangue prospect in the deepwater offshore Brazil.

bp drilled exploration well 1-BP-13-SPS at the Bumerangue block, located in the Santos Basin, 404 kilometers (218 nautical miles) from Rio de Janeiro, in a water depth of 2,372 meters. The well was drilled to a total depth of 5,855 meters.

The well intersected the reservoir about 500 meters below the crest of the structure and penetrated an estimated 500 meter gross hydrocarbon column in high-quality pre-salt carbonate reservoir with an areal extent of greater than 300 square kilometers.

Sempra, JERA Sign Long-Term LNG Supply Deal for Pre-FID Port Arthur Phase 2

Sempra Infrastructure and JERA Co. Inc. have signed a long-term supply agreement for LNG offtake from the proposed Port Arthur LNG Phase 2 development project in Jefferson County, Tex.

Under the 20-year sale and purchase agreement, Sempra will supply 1.5 million tonnes/year (tpy) of LNG to JERA on a free-on-board basis. This agreement, which builds on JERA's plan to secure LNG supply for Japan and the greater Asian market, builds upon a non-binding heads of agreement signed between the companies in June 2025.

Last month, Japan's largest power company noted a number of agreements signed with operators including Sempra, Cheniere, Commonwealth, and NextDecade, that aimed to secure up to 5.5 million tpy of LNG from US suppliers.

In its release July 31, Sempra said the proposed Port Arthur LNG Phase 2 project is under active marketing. Development of Phase 2 remains subject to certain conditions, including completing commercial agreements, securing and/or maintaining necessary permits, obtaining financing, and reaching a final investment decision, among other factors.

BGFCL Signs Deal with Chinese Firm to Drill Gas Wells at Titas and Bakhrabad

Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFCL) signed an agreement on 7 August with China's Chuanqing Drilling Engineering Company Ltd (CDECL) to drill two deep gas wells at the Titas and Bakhrabad fields, aiming to ease the country's ongoing energy shortage.

Under the project, Titas-31 (5,600 meters) and Bakhrabad-11 (4,300 meters) will be drilled to explore deep gas reserves. This marks Bangladesh's first venture into High-Pressure High-Temperature (HPHT) drilling, with expected pressures reaching 15,000 PSI and temperatures of around 390°F.

The initiative follows 3D seismic surveys by BAPEX in 2011–12 and further evaluation by China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) in 2019–20.

Drilling will target four potential gas-bearing layers in Titas and two in Bakhrabad, all within the Bhuban and Borail formations beneath unexplored overpressure zones.

The Tk798 crore project will be funded through a Tk558.60 crore government loan and Tk239.40 crore from BGFCL's own equity. Implementation is scheduled from July 2025 to December 2027.

12kg LPG Cylinder Price Falls by Tk 91

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has reduced the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) of 12 kg cylinder at retailer level by Tk. 91, lowering the price at Taka 1,273 from Tk. 1,364 with effect from 6 PM this evening.

The chairman of the commission Jalal Ahmed announced the new price at a press conference recently.

"LPG producing companies will sell a 12-kg LPG cylinder at Tk. 1,178, while the wholesale price will be Tk. 1,228. At the retail market, the 12-kg LPG price will be at Tk. 1,273," he said.

Ahmed said the BERC also fixed the prices of auto gas at Tk. 58.28 per liter, reducing the amount by Tk. 4.18 against a liter.

He said that price of government owned 12.50 kg LPG at dealer/retailer point is Tk. 825, which will remain unchanged.

The BERC chairman said that the price adjustment for private LPG has been made in line with the Saudi CP (Contract Price).

According to the new price of LPG, price at retailer level owned by private sector, LPG cylinders of 5.5 kg has been fixed at Tk. 584, 12.5 kg LPG at Tk. 1,326, 15 kg at Tk. 1,592, 16 kg at Tk. 1,698, 18 kg at Tk. 1,910, 20 kg at Tk. 2,122, 22 kg at Tk. 2,334, 25 kg at Tk. 2,653, 30 kg at Tk. 3,183, 33 kg at Tk. 3,502, 35 kg at Tk. 3,714 and 45 kg at Tk. 4,775.

Fuel Prices to Remain Unchanged in August

The government has kept unchanged the prices of diesel, kerosene, petrol and octane at Tk 102 per liter, Tk 114 per liter, Tk 118 per liter and Tk 122 per liter respectively for the month of August under the automatic fuel pricing formula.

Petroleum prices have been kept at the same levels as in July to ensure supply of such items at reasonable prices, an order of the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) under the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources (MPEMR) stated recently.

The EMRD also published a gazette over the petroleum prices for August.

The government first introduced the automatic fuel pricing formula on March 07, 2024.

Petrobangla Employees Union Gets New Office Bearers

The election of Petrobangla Employees Union was held on July 31, 2025. Md. Rafiqul Islam has been elected as President while Sheikh Nur Alam elected as General Secretary.

The other elected office bearers are Md. Ariful Haque (Senior vice-president), Md. Amirul Islam and Md. Abul Hossain (Vice-president), Ruhul Amin (Asstt. general secretary), Md. Abul Bashar (Organizing secretary), Abdullah Al Firoj (Asstt. Organizing secretary), Md. Didarul Islam (Finance secretary), Md. Nazrul Islam (Office secretary), Md. Nur Alam Siddique (Publicity secretary), Md. Masum Mollah (Sports & cultural secretary) and Md. Shiraj-ud-doula (Executive Member). Md. Julian conducted the election as Chief election commissioner.

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Unit-3 at Barapukuria Power Plant Resumes Operation

The 275 MW unit-3 of Barapukuria Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant resumed operations recently, supplying 175 MW of electricity to the national grid.

Chief Engineer of the plant, Abu Bakkar Siddiqui, confirmed it, saying, "The unit began generating power after necessary repairs and maintenance work on some equipment. It has now resumed its power supply to the national grid".

Unit-3 is currently producing between 170 MW to 175 MW of electricity, slightly below its full capacity of 275 MW, following a 10-day shutdown due to technical issues.

According to plant sources, the resumption of Unit-3's operations followed repairs to a steam pipe. The plant uses approximately 5,500 metric tonnes of coal daily to generate power across all three units, with Unit-3 consuming 2,600 metric tonnes per day.

Child Dies in Gas Cylinder Blast in Gazipur

A 4-month-old child Raihan died in a gas cylinder explosion in the Mirerbazar area Gazipur recently.

The child's father, Ripon Mia, 25, and mother Hafiza Khatun, 20, also suffered burns in the incident and are undergoing treatment at the hospital in critical condition.

Pubail Police Station Officer-in-Charge Amirul Islam said it was primarily suspected that the gas cylinder used for cooking was leaking.

The cylinder exploded the moment it was lit in the morning. Child Raihan died on the spot.

Raihan's parents were rescued and sent to the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka.

Couple Sustained Burn Injuries in Gas Cylinder Blast in Savar

A couple sustained burn injuries in a gas cylinder blast at Gohail Bari in Ashulia of Savar, on the outskirts of the capital recently.

The victims were identified as Mintu, 35 and his wife Babita, 30 of the area. Both of them are garment workers.

Quoting local people, Abdul Hannan, officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station, said the gas cylinder went off with a big bang while Babita was cooking at her home, leaving both Babita and her husband injured.

Later, they were taken to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Two Electrocuted, Eight Injured during Shop Inauguration in Rangpur

Two people were electrocuted and eight others injured while attempting to reconnect electricity during the inauguration of a shop in Rangpur's Kaunia upazila recently.

The deceased were identified as Shahabuddin Ahmed, 45, of Pirgachha upazila, and Shariful Islam, 38, from Baluya area in Mithapukur upazila, said Abdul Latif Shah, officer-in-charge of Kaunia Police Station.

The incident took place in Sahabaz Amtola area of Balapara union when Nazar Ali, a local businessman, had organized a gathering to mark the opening of his new fertilizer shop. During the event, the electricity supply to the shop was abruptly cut off. While trying to restore the power connection, multiple individuals received electric shocks.

Locals rushed the injured to Kaunia Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared Shahabuddin and Shariful dead upon arrival.

Bangladesh to Buy 2 LNG Cargoes for Tk 989cr from Singapore, South Korea

The government has approved the purchase of two cargoes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the spot market at a total cost of Tk 989 crore, with the average unit price standing at around $12 per million British thermal unit (MMbtu)

The approvals came at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase held at the Secretariat in Dhaka recently.

The proposals were placed by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division.

One cargo will be imported from Gunvor Singapore Pte Ltd at a unit price of $11.97 per MMbtu, with the total cost amounting to Tk 503 crore.

The second cargo will be procured from Posco International Corporation, South Korea, at a unit price of $11.95 per MMbtu, costing Tk 486 crore.

A Year In Power

Mollah Amzad Hossain
Afroza Akther Pervin

A year into Bangladesh's interim government, the power sector has avoided major blackouts, but the gas crisis has worsened. Allegations of large-scale corruption under the Awami League remain unproven, though foreign consultants will be hired to investigate. Reforms like repealing the quick enhancement law and adjusting pricing powers were introduced, yet renewable expansion stalled and import dependency deepened. While cost-cutting measures saved billions, long-term energy security remains unaddressed, leaving the next elected government to tackle mounting supply, pricing, and infrastructure challenges.

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After the Awami League government fell in the wake of the 2024 uprising, an interim administration took charge in a dramatically different political climate. On 7 August 2025, it marked its first year in office — a milestone that has sparked fresh public debate over what it has achieved, and where it has fallen short. Looking back at the past year in one of the most critical areas for Bangladesh's economy: the power and energy sectors. Over the year, the government managed to keep the lights on without major interruptions — a notable achievement in a country where power cuts have often been a daily frustration. But beneath the steady electricity supply, the energy crisis has only deepened, with the gas shortage becoming more acute.

From the outset, the interim government pledged to bring transparency, root out corruption, and expose the misdeeds of the previous administration. Yet, a year on, the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources has not released any conclusive findings to the public. Allegations remain that the Awami League siphoned off billions of taka from the sector over its 15 years in power.

A recent white paper claimed that at least 10% of all spending in the power and energy sectors during that time was lost to corruption and irregularities. It is estimated that the power generation sector alone saw around USD 6.0 billion misappropriated. The committee behind the report urged the government to back up these allegations with hard evidence and to bring in foreign consultants to investigate questionable power plant contracts. That recommendation has now moved a step closer to reality. After a recent Cabinet Committee meeting, Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed announced that a policy decision had been made to hire such consultants — potentially opening the door to the first independent scrutiny of the sector in years.

Reforms

After taking office, the interim government fulfilled a long-standing demand by repealing the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010.

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One Year of the Interim Government & the Power and Energy Sector

In addition, the authority to set fuel oil prices was kept with the ministry, while the power to set other energy prices was returned to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC). BERC has also taken over the setting of jet fuel prices from the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

Previously, the positions of chairmen in public-sector power and energy companies were filled mainly from among the secretaries and senior officials of the ministry's two divisions, raising concerns about conflicts of interest and the lack of transparency and accountability. During the interim government's tenure, with one exception, former or current secretaries have been appointed as chairmen to all company boards.

Asked for his view on this change, Professor A.K. Enamul Haque, Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said that unless the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of board chairs and members are clearly defined, this reform will not help reduce irregularities and corruption. Former BERC member Engineer Mizanur Rahman argued that appointing people with no sectoral experience as board chairs has not improved accountability and has disrupted normal operations. CAB Energy Adviser Dr. Shamsul Alam dismissed the move outright, calling it "nothing but old wine in a new bottle."

Clearing Outstanding Dues

Due to financial constraints and a shortage of foreign currency, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and Petrobangla had accumulated massive arrears in the power and energy sectors. This created serious challenges in securing gas from international oil companies (IOCs), LNG and coal from foreign suppliers, and electricity from independent power producers (IPPs).

Over the past six months, the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources has gradually cleared outstanding payments, restoring normalcy to the sector. However, payment flows are once again being disrupted, and arrears are starting to build up. The Bangladesh-China Power Company, which operates the 1,320 MW Payra coal-fired power plant, is reportedly owed around Tk 8,000 crore. The company has warned that without immediate payment, it will be unable to import coal, forcing a shutdown. BPDB Chairman Engineer Rezaual Karim said the board is trying to make payments but cannot settle the entire amount at once.

Engineer Mizanur Rahman views the clearing of dues as one of the interim government's achievements. However, IUB Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. M. Tamim noted that while reducing arrears has brought relief to the sector, the credit goes to the Ministry of Finance, not the Power and Energy Ministry.

Power Sector

Since 2022, electricity supply has been disrupted due to difficulties in importing fuel, especially from a shortage of US dollars. This led to load-shedding in 2022, 2023, and 2024, even though generation capacity exceeded demand by 40%. The shortages were most severe during the summer.

Many feared a similar crisis in the summer of 2025, but the interim government reduced arrears and managed to maintain a normal electricity supply from February onwards. If they can meet the extra demand in September's hot season, no further shortages are expected this year.

Speaking to Energy & Power, Engineer Mizanur Rahman said the Power Division deserves praise for avoiding a major supply crisis, although favorable weather also played a role—this

summer's temperatures were tolerable, with periodic rains cooling conditions. Dr. M. Tamim, however, argued that with generation capacity far exceeding demand, meeting electricity needs was not a major challenge, and paying off arrears meant the government faced little pressure.

Still, Humayun Rashid, President of the Philippines–Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry and CEO of Energypac, said that while there was no load-shedding in residential and commercial areas, industrial customers—particularly those served by REB's PBS network—experienced regular outages, disrupting production in grid-dependent factories.

Currently, Bangladesh's maximum electricity generation remains below 18,000 MW, despite an installed capacity of 27,000 MW. About 2,000 MW is always offline for maintenance, and another 2,000 MW is unavailable due to fuel shortages. Prof. Tamim estimates that at best 20,000 MW can be produced from the remaining 23,000 MW of available capacity.

No new power generation projects were finalized in the past year. By 2029, peak demand is expected to reach 25,000 MW, and by 2030, 26,000 MW. Even with the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant coming online, shortages may occur. Developing a new power project in Bangladesh typically takes three to four years.

Rooppur Nuclear Power Project Delays Since 2022, political changes and Western sanctions on Russia have created challenges for the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant. After August last year, new complications emerged, delaying project completion by two years, although costs will reportedly remain unchanged. The first 1,200 MW unit is now expected to begin trial production in December this year. PGCB has already prepared the transmission line for the plant.

Renewable Energy Expansion

For Bangladesh, there is no alternative to expanding renewable power capacity to achieve an energy transition and reduce import dependency. According to the Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP) 2023, the goal has been set to

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One Year of Power Sector Under the Interim Government: A Reality Check

generate 40% of total power capacity from clean energy by 2041. However, critics have called this plan unrealistic, prompting the interim government to initiate a review of the IEPMP.

On June 16, the Power Division announced the Renewable Energy Policy 2025. Under the new policy, the target is to meet 20% of total electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030, and 30% by 2040. However, sector stakeholders have pointed out ambiguities in these targets. Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury, Director of the Centre for Energy Research at United International University (UIU), said it is important to clarify whether the 20% and 30% targets refer to installed capacity (MW) or actual energy generation (produced units).

Following the announcement of the Renewable Energy Policy 2025, the government began taking steps to expand solar power. At a meeting chaired by Interim Government Chief Adviser Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the National Rooftop Solar Program was announced. This includes instructions to install solar plants on the rooftops of all government buildings, as well as on hospitals, schools, colleges, and all other educational institutions.

However, it has not yet been decided whether the government will invest directly or declare solar "clusters" and lease rooftops with pre-set tariffs for private sector investment. The Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) is preparing to launch a rooftop solar program with a capacity of 3–5 kW. The Power Division has also announced a program to install 3,000 MW of rooftop solar by December this year. Still, sector experts believe that this target is unrealistic within such a short period under the current net-metering framework.

In 1996, Bangladesh's installed power generation capacity was 3,301 MW, rising to 27,424 MW by June 2025. However, due to a lack of focus on renewable energy development, the share of renewables in installed capacity has fallen—from 230 MW in 1996 (entirely from the country's only hydropower plant), about 7% of total capacity at the time, to just 5.6% today. In terms of actual generation, fossil fuels accounted for 98% of all electricity generated last year, with renewables contributing only 2%.

During the previous government, 37 renewable energy projects were approved under special laws, and Letters of Intent (LOIs) were issued. But after assuming office, the interim government canceled these LOIs, amended the policy, and launched a four-phase open tender process to develop 5,238 MW of solar power at 55 sites. Sources indicate that the tenders received limited responses, with no major domestic or international companies participating. Although not officially disclosed, the tariff rates proposed in the bids reportedly range from 14–15 cents per kWh, whereas previous projects had achieved rates below 11 cents.

Asked whether Bangladesh is on the right track with renewable power expansion, Mostafa Al Mahmud, President of the Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association, said that canceling the LOIs has undermined investor and lender confidence. The changes in implementation agreements and bidding processes have created uncertainty in the sector. Prof. Tamim said that without guaranteed returns, investment in this sector will not materialize. However, Engineer Mizanur Rahman argued that if the Power Division were to identify suitable land, develop it, install transmission lines, and then hold auctions, very competitive tariffs could be achieved. He added that if this approach had been

adopted over the past year, success could have been achieved much more quickly.

Energy Sector

While the government has shown some success in managing the power sector, the supply of primary energy—especially natural gas—has become even more fragile compared to last year. Domestic production capacity is declining due to delays in new drilling, and the supply of domestic gas continues to fall. Last year, LNG imports covered 60% of the country's 1,100 MMCFD LNG handling capacity. This year, despite increasing LNG imports to 70% of capacity, Petrobangla is still struggling to meet demand.

Currently, drilling is underway for 150 wells, including new exploration and the refurbishment of existing ones. So far, 19 wells have been completed, adding 80 million cubic feet of gas to the grid. Under the previous Awami League government, 16 of 50 planned wells were awarded to three companies under special laws. The current government has continued with two of those projects but canceled 14, delaying drilling by about eight months. New tenders and contract signings are now in progress.

The previous government had signed a contract with Summit for a third Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) to expand LNG import capacity, but the interim government canceled it. A term sheet with US company Excelerate Energy for a fourth FSRU was also canceled, as were ongoing talks with two companies for RLNG imports from India. Over the past year, no progress has been made on issuing new tenders for FSRU development. However, the government has decided to implement the Matarbari onshore LNG terminal project under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.

Prof. M. Tamim said the gas supply situation has worsened and that even with available funds, Bangladesh lacks the infrastructure to import enough LNG to solve the problem, meaning the crisis will deepen in the coming years. Former BUET Dean Prof. Dr. Ijaz Hossain noted that Petrobangla has effectively informed industries and entrepreneurs that gas supply cannot be guaranteed, and the shortage will continue to grow.

Under the previous government, Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for offshore bidding had been finalized, with December last year set as the submission deadline. No companies submitted bids. Indian company ONGC is also leaving two offshore blocks it had been working on. Petrobangla has updated the offshore PSC and drafted the onshore PSC, which is now awaiting approval from the Energy Division. However, it is unlikely that bidding for oil and gas exploration will take place before the upcoming February elections.

The interim government also organized a special meeting on the prospects and challenges of coal resource development. Most experts at the meeting recommended domestic coal extraction and utilization. However, the Energy Adviser stated that the interim government would not make any decisions on domestic coal mining, though they plan to leave a set of recommendations for the next government.

Cost Savings as a Priority

The interim government has continued to emphasize cost savings as a way to reduce expenses in the energy sector. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been pressing for a reduction in subsidies in the power sector. The previous government responded by repeatedly raising prices. The interim government, on the other hand, has focused on cost-cutting measures. On the occasion of its one-year tenure, the Power Division and the Energy Division each prepared separate reports highlighting their achievements. These reports showcase savings made by reducing expenses. According to the ministry, changes in the import and procurement process have increased competition, leading to reduced costs in various areas.

The Energy Division claims that abolishing special provisions and increasing competition in LNG procurement saved Tk 302 crore. They expect even greater savings in the current fiscal year. In fuel oil imports, Tk 7,000 crore was saved in FY 2024–25 compared to the previous year. By signing new gas sales agreements with KAFCO, a Fertilizer Factory, and Lafarge Cement, the government will earn an additional Tk 1,000 crore annually in revenue. Reducing system losses generated Tk 218 crore more in revenue, while increasing industrial gas prices will add Tk 98 crore.

Experts note that while government initiatives to increase competition have indeed lowered costs in many cases, global factors have also played a role. Over the past year, international prices for fuel oil and LNG were lower than the previous year. Global shipping costs for energy transport also declined. Engineer Mizanur Rahman pointed out that although the government's initiatives were positive, the fall in international prices of oil, LNG, and coal significantly contributed to cost reductions.

The Energy Division also stated that to increase domestic gas production, it has

begun implementing a plan to drill and refurbish 150 wells, boosting BAPEX's capacity by purchasing three new rigs. Work on 19 wells has been completed so far, and cost reductions in 10 gas sector projects have saved Tk 328 crore.

The Power Division's report highlights that reducing the service charge for private power plants' fuel oil imports by 4.0% will save Tk 470 crore. Increasing the oil import volume per ship from 15,000 to 20,000 tonnes will save Tk 354 crore. Setting the price for electricity from the Matarbari power plant at Tk 8.45 per unit will save Tk 2,500 crore annually. The division has also initiated tariff reductions for other power plants, aiming to save Tk 2,630 crore by lowering tariffs in government-owned plants. Additionally, measures such as reducing facility rents, collecting overdue charges (fines), and other activities aim to generate Tk 9,210 crore in revenue.

Savings amid Rising Subsidies

Petrobangla reports that it has incurred losses since LNG imports began and has required annual government subsidies. In FY 2018–19, when LNG imports started, the subsidy stood at Tk 2,500 crore. As imports increased, so did subsidies, reaching Tk 8,900 crore in the last fiscal year, compared to Tk 6,000 crore the year before.

In the power sector, the subsidy allocation for the last fiscal year was Tk 47,000 crore. Considering the deficit, the revised budget increased it to Tk 62,000 crore. However, the Power Division says the figure will decline in the current fiscal year (2025–26), with Tk 37,000 crore allocated. Last year, the target was to save Tk 11,444 crore by cutting costs by 10%. From August to May, Tk 1,500 crore in savings was achieved. Shutting down 10 private power plants after their contracts expired saved Tk 525 crore.

The Power Division claims that summer load-shedding was avoided through advance planning. Domestic arrears of Tk 1,728 crore have been cleared, and $152.6 million in foreign dues have been paid. Adani's outstanding payment has been reduced from Tk 7,934 crore to Tk 2,363 crore.

Remarks from the Power and Energy Adviser

Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan, Adviser on Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources, told journalists that the problems in the power and energy sector cannot be solved in one year. While an uninterrupted power supply was ensured during the summer, the gas crisis cannot be solved overnight. Building the necessary infrastructure would take at least three years. However, the government has maximized LNG imports to meet industrial gas demand and emphasized gas exploration and production.

Regarding rental power plants, anti-corruption measures, canceling or amending controversial power plant contracts, and disputes with Adani, Khan said there has been progress. Committees are working on these issues, and discussions to lower electricity prices through contract amendments are ongoing. Talks with Adani have also progressed, though final results are not yet visible to the public. "A lot is happening behind the scenes," he said, "but it will take time."

Conclusion

Bangladesh now relies on imports for 55% of its total energy and electricity needs — and that reliance is growing. Over the past six years, the taka has lost 40% of its value against the US dollar, making imports even more expensive. For now, global prices for gas, oil, LPG, LNG, and coal are relatively low, but the calm could be short-lived. Any flare-up in Middle East tensions or a prolonged Russia–Ukraine war could send energy markets into fresh turmoil.

For more than 15 years, experts have warned about the dangers of building a power and energy sector heavily dependent on imports. Successive Awami League governments failed to act on those warnings. The result: even after pouring Tk 70,000 crore in subsidies into the power and energy sector in FY 2024–25, the country is still struggling with losses and rising prices. The recent gas price hike has hit industries hard, particularly the export-oriented garment sector, where production is suffering due to inadequate supply.

When the reform-minded interim government came to power, many expected bold moves to explore domestic gas and coal reserves and to accelerate renewable energy development. These steps could have eased import dependence and strengthened energy security. While some initiatives have been launched, quick results are unlikely. If they had been started in earnest, the next elected government would have had a stronger base to build on.

For now, the Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources has focused on day-to-day measures: improving management, investigating corruption, and cutting costs. But it has yet to take decisive action to secure the country's long-term energy future — a fact the energy adviser himself has admitted. This means that whoever forms the government after the February elections will inherit an energy sector facing some of its toughest challenges yet. EP

Securing Bangladesh's Energy Future From Gas Shortages To Strategic Reforms

Saleque Sufi

Bangladesh's crisis-prone energy sector is now critically ill and in desperate need of lifesaving intervention. Energy security has become increasingly uncertain, sounding alarm bells for the country's fragile industrial growth and economic development. Severe shortages in gas and electricity have led to the shutdown of many small and medium-sized industries in recent years. In contrast, large industries continue to grapple with a chronic energy crunch. Foreign direct investment (FDI) and domestic industrial investment have nearly ground to a halt. Not a single large-scale industry has been established in several years.

Since the country's liberation, successive governments have come and gone, yet none have addressed the energy crisis with the urgency it demands. Natural gas use began in the world's largest riverine delta during the 1960s, but as of July 2025, Bangladesh remains one of the least explored gas-rich deltas in the world. Significant coal deposits—often referred to as "black gold"—still lie buried underground. Offshore petroleum potential remains virtually untapped, and only about one-third of the onshore areas have been explored. The country's gas-based economy is in steep decline.

Petrobangla's recently published annual report offers a sobering account of the current situation and its short-term plans for gas exploration and extraction. At an information-sharing event organized by Petrobangla for energy journalists, former BUET dean and prominent energy researcher Dr. Ijaz Hossain delivered a highly informative keynote presentation on the nation's critical energy security challenges.

Petrobangla's presentations highlighted alarming system losses in the gas supply chain, largely due to leakage, theft, and pilferage. They also revealed substantial outstanding receivables owed to gas distribution companies. While the agency outlined its current projects and future programs, it also issued a stark warning: at the current rate of consumption, the nation's remaining 8 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of proven gas reserves could be exhausted soon. The current exploration program is unlikely to sustain existing supply levels.

Bangladesh is ill-equipped to rely solely on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG), given the financial burden and infrastructure constraints. For over two decades—since at least 2000—experts have been urging the government to undertake well-planned exploration initiatives and adopt smarter gas utilization strategies. Dr. Ijaz, in his presentation, proposed a set of short, medium-, and long-term measures to confront and mitigate the crisis.

The energy sector is a strategic pillar of national security, requiring a unified approach among major stakeholders, a comprehensive master plan, transparent implementation, and consistent policy direction. Yet even the current interim government has not prioritized essential reforms. Without decisive action, Bangladesh will continue to leave its coal resources untapped and will still face gas shortages well beyond 2030, stalling both FDI inflows and domestic industrial investment.

Sector-Wise Gas Utilization (FY 2023-24)

Sector	% of Total Gas Used
Power	40.00%
Captive Power	19.00%
Industry	18.00%
Domestic	11.00%
Fertilizer	06.00%
CNG	05.00%
Commercial	01.00%
Tea	00.10%

Gas Utilization Scenario

In his recent presentation on "Energy Security: Challenges and the Way Forward," Dr. Ijaz outlined the roots of Bangladesh's chronic gas crisis. Gas production rose from roughly 1,800 million cubic feet per day (MMCFD) in 2008–09 to 2,660 MMCFD in 2016–17, with a peak of 2,786 MMCFD on May 6, 2015. This increase came primarily from pushing existing fields—such as Bibiyana, Jalalabad, and Titas—to maximum output.

Between 2000 and 2024, Bangladesh consumed about 15 TCF of gas, mostly from proven recoverable reserves. During that time, minimal exploration efforts yielded only 2 TCF of additional resources (excluding the North Bhola find). As fields depleted, daily production fell from the 2015 peak to around 1,800 MMCFD. Dr. Ijaz warned that, at the current pace, the remaining 8 TCF of recoverable reserves will be exhausted by 2030 unless major new discoveries are made.

Historically, gas utilization between the 1960s and 1980s was concentrated in fertilizer plants, industries, and domestic and commercial sectors. Expansion of the gas grid in the 1980s and 1990s extended service to southeastern and northern Bangladesh. In the 1990s, compressed

natural gas (CNG) was introduced for vehicles to reduce air pollution. However, Petrobangla and the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) failed to anticipate surging national demand or conduct the necessary exploration to meet it.

By the early 2000s, supply deficits had emerged. The gas grid was later extended across the Jamuna River to western Bangladesh, and industries were permitted to install captive gas-fired power plants to address growing electricity shortages. As the crisis deepened, new gas connections were suspended in 2015.

According to Petrobangla's latest data, daily gas supply now stands at 2,841 MMCFD—comprising 1,019 MMCFD of regasified LNG (RLNG) and 1,822 MMCFD from domestic fields. Even under conservative estimates, national demand is about 4,200 MMCFD, leaving a shortfall of roughly 1,400 MMCFD.

This persistent shortage has forced most fertilizer plants to remain idle for much of the year, left about 40% of gas-based power generation capacity unused, and caused widespread disruption to industrial operations. Without urgent, large-scale exploration and resource development, Bangladesh's energy crisis will only deepen, dragging the economy down with it.

Quoting the Petrobangla source, Dr. Ijaz, in his presentation, highlighted the sector-wise gas utilization in FY 2023-24.

The table shows that gas-to-power still requires as high as 59% of the gas supplied. For domestic cooking, 11% of gas is burnt, and 5% goes to CNG. Fertilizer production requires 6%. Given the present chronic crisis of gas supply and the very challenging situation for improving the situation in the foreseeable future through expediting exploration and implementing LNG import infrastructure projects, gas utilization options must be reviewed. Use of gas for cooking and CNG, having alternative and feasible options, may be phased out. Gas must be supplied on a priority basis to fuel-efficient power plants. Major Industries should consider using LPG and SNG wherever possible.

System Loss

System loss across the gas supply chain remains a huge concern. The following table triggers major concern. In a crisis-prone gas supply scenario, high system loss, where the majority of it is from theft, pilferage, and

Operational System Loss Scenario in Gas Supply Chain (July 2024 to May 2025)

Month Name	Supplied Gas Volume (MMCM)	Sales Gas Volume (MMCM)	Difference	% Difference
July 2024	2233.21	2070.27	162.94	7.30
August 2024	2263.99	2083.11	180.88	7.99
September 2024	2166.94	2059.48	107.45	4.96
October 2024	2408.91	2173.34	235.56	9.78
November 2024	2386.48	2179.51	206.97	8.67
December 2024	2405.01	2185.26	219.75	9.14
January 2025	2372.03	2148.90	223.13	9.41
February 2025	2114.33	1955.24	159.09	7.52
March 2025	2437.72	2270.03	167.69	6.88
April 2025	2203.54	2052.41	151.12	6.86
May 2025	2329.11	2176.27	152.84	6.56
Total	25321.25	23353.83	1967.42	7.77

unauthorized use, is completely unacceptable. Distribution companies have issues like age-old, dilapidated pipelines, hundreds and thousands of illegal connections, meter tampering, and meter bypassing. But how can a gas transmission company be attributed 2-3% system loss? Gas is evacuated into the gas transmission grid through modern, accurate Custody Transfer Meters and delivered to Distribution Companies again through Custody Transfer Meters at designated stations – CGS, TBS, and DRSs. GTCL does not directly supply gas to any end users. We understand Gas Transmission lines have been hot tapped at several places for supplying gas directly to bulk users, and their meters are being used as custody transfer meters by some distribution companies. Moreover, gas supplied to a large number of domestic consumers without meters has no control over gas usage. Add to that, gas pilferage through illegal and unauthorized connections is rampant.

The possibility of leakage from the Gas Transmission system is bare minimum. Hence, other than minor metering inaccuracies, say more or less 0.5% there must not be any transmission loss.

The table of gas use from July 2024 -May 2025 states monthly system loss hovering between 6.56% and 9.41%. In a country where we have been in the gas business since 1960, such a scenario is completely unacceptable. In many gas-using countries, technical losses are even less than 2%. Petrobangla and Distribution companies have been carrying out coordinated drives against unauthorized gas use, but to little avail. Projects have been planned for abandoning old pipelines, introducing digital mapping, GIS, and SCADA. But all this needs time and a huge investment. Petrobangla companies have cash constraints.

Dilapidated distribution networks have also become unsafe. Major gas accidents have happened, causing loss of lives and property. But a lack of care keeps the operation of the gas system vulnerable.

Accounts Receivable

Petrobangla companies also suffer greatly from huge outstanding gas bills by all categories of consumers – Power, Fertilizer, and others. These handicaps Petrobangla companies in not meeting only the operational expenses but also taking up new projects. Petrobangla requires using a major portion of the subsidy it receives in making payments for gas bills to IOCs and the purchase of LNG.

For a commercial organization, it is extremely challenging to function efficiently with over 65% outstanding bills of major gas users. In addition to the above, the other 8 categories of consumers also owe huge outstanding bills to gas companies. Something must be done as soon as possible so that the outstanding bills do not exceed a certain agreed limit.

Managing Demand-Supply Challenges

System losses and outstanding receivables can be brought down to acceptable levels through smart system management and

efficient operations. However, Petrobangla and the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) must immediately refocus on strategic system planning and effective implementation for exploration and resource exploitation, while setting clear priorities for gas supply. Regardless of Bangladesh's progress in energy transition, the economy will remain gas-dependent at least until 2030.

In his presentation, Dr. Ijaz projected that by 2030, gas demand will rise to 4,600 million cubic feet per day (MMCFD). How can this be met? The Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP) estimates that 2,000 MMCFD could come from domestic gas fields. Achieving this will require, in addition to Petrobangla's ongoing activities, large-scale exploration in both onshore frontier areas and offshore territories. Existing floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs) with expanded capacity could supply 1,200 MMCFD. The IEPMP also recommends building two additional FSRUs by 2030, which could increase supply by another 1,130–1,750 MMCFD.

If all these measures are implemented, total supply could reach 4,330–4,950 MMCFD. But for that to happen, Petrobangla must maintain domestic production above 2,000 MMCFD through aggressive exploration. Both existing FSRUs must be kept operational through proper maintenance, and the two new units must be ready on schedule. Critically, Petrobangla must secure sufficient foreign currency to purchase LNG equivalent to 2,600 MMCFD. Without the financial capacity to procure LNG, even fully functional FSRUs or land-based terminals would be meaningless.

Petrobangla's Plans

Emerging from years of inertia, Petrobangla has launched two major drilling projects—one targeting 50 wells and the other 100 wells—to complete all 150 wells by 2028. Given past performance, this is an ambitious undertaking. Bangladesh's drilling history is marked by delays, technical hurdles, and financial constraints. Nevertheless, if these projects are rigorously monitored and supported, they could add enough new gas by 2030 to keep domestic production above 2,000 MMCFD.

In the meantime, gas from Bhola must be evacuated to the national grid, with drilling and development at priority prospects in the Greater Chittagong Hill Tracts and Chattak. Notably, BGFCL has engaged a Chinese contractor to explore deeper, high-pressure zones in the Titas and Bakhrabad gas fields. Petrobangla also plans to issue fresh tenders for FSRUs and offshore exploration. The government is seeking public-private partnership (PPP) partners for a land-based LNG terminal at Matarbari and must also plan for additional long-term LNG purchase contracts. It remains unclear what arrangements, if any, have been finalized with the United States for LNG procurement.

Percentage of Total Outstanding Gas Bills of Power and Fertilizer (December 2024 - May 2025) Taka in Crores

Company	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25
TGTDCL	7130.79	7227.33	6850.14	7000.79	6226.34	6368.39
JGTDSL	4204.41	4060.44	3485.64	3322.16	3035.86	2967.51
KGDCL	1192.73	1122.66	1015.52	986.00	1050.65	927.67
PGCL	1652.87	1601.79	1677.43	1636.96	1703.18	1824.26
BGDCL	4541.38	4529.23	4605.45	4310.91	4219.29	3811.07
SGDCL	1640.31	1675.78	1701.56	1633.93	1523.15	1543.70
Total	20362.49	20,217.23	19,337.74	18,890.75	17,758.47	17,487.60
% of Gas Bill	69.53%	68.95%	67.67%	67.27%	65.45%	64.30%

Bangladesh must explore every possible avenue to boost gas supply—whether from domestic production or imports—to sustain industrial growth. The country is unlikely to phase out natural gas use even by 2050 and beyond.

Recommendations

To address the current crisis, Petrobangla must reassess its priorities. International oil companies (IOCs) and foreign drilling contractors should be engaged for both offshore and onshore exploration, working alongside BAPEX to develop domestic petroleum resources. Immediate steps must be taken to conduct authentic reservoir studies to determine the actual size of proven recoverable reserves, particularly at the Bhola gas fields.

A gas transmission pipeline linking Bhola to the national grid must be constructed on a priority basis. The presence of such infrastructure would encourage IOCs to invest in nearby prospects. Delays in resolving the Chattak drilling issues must end, and strategic partners should be selected for BAPEX to explore the Chittagong Hill Tracts. If 10 drilling rigs can be mobilized by 2027, Bangladesh could potentially add 3–5 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of new gas to the national grid by 2030.

Beyond the Gas Development Fund (GDF) proceeds, BAPEX should receive special budget allocations to sustain exploration activities. Comprehensive seismic surveys should be conducted nationwide. In addition to foreign firms, capable local companies should be encouraged to partner with BAPEX in exploration projects.

Midstream and downstream challenges must be addressed in parallel. It is unacceptable that Bangladesh's gas system continues to suffer from excessive system losses and high receivables. Every effort must be made to eliminate such losses. Health, safety, and environmental (HSE) standards must be prioritized. Managing the gas supply chain is a highly technical undertaking, and Petrobangla companies must invest in enhancing the skills of their technical personnel. Bangladesh cannot afford to waste its limited gas resources through inefficiency and waste.

Decisions should be made to phase out gas use in low-value-added applications, such as cooking and transportation. Priority should be given to efficient industrial users. The government must also help Petrobangla keep receivables below the equivalent of three months' gas bills. Without this, cash constraints will continue to hamper development and operational activities. Additionally, the composition of Petrobangla's board and subsidiary company boards should be reviewed to include seasoned professionals with proven track records. The current government must do its homework thoroughly. Natural gas—and energy security as a whole—is the lifeblood of Bangladesh's economic development. EP

Saleque Sufi
Energy Expert

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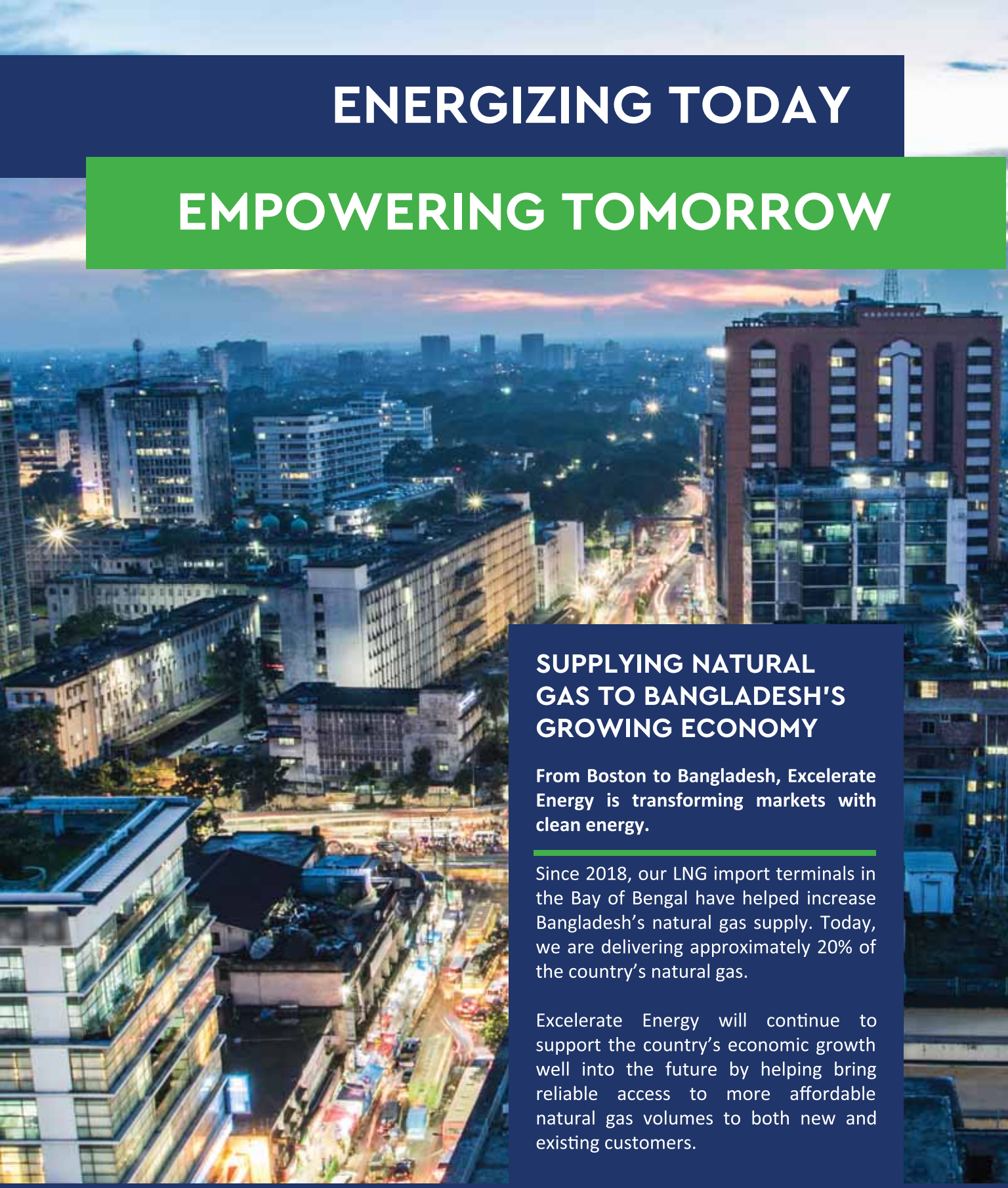

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Alternatives To Addressing Bangladesh's Energy Crisis

Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain

Bangladesh is facing an escalating energy crisis. Widespread power shortages are disrupting households and businesses alike, while domestic gas reserves are depleting rapidly. This decline has forced many power plants to switch to imported liquefied natural gas (LNG), despite the sharp rise in spot market prices. Although the current situation is less severe than before, the sector remains highly vulnerable due to its heavy dependence on volatile and costly imported LNG, coal, and oil.

This growing reliance on imported fossil fuels is not only heightening the volatility of the energy sector but also straining public finances, depleting foreign currency reserves, and inflating subsidy burdens. The trend towards greater LNG use is particularly worrying and needs urgent reversal.

Since 2019, Bangladesh's LNG import prices have fluctuated, with a sharp spike in 2022 due to global market conditions. Initially, some LNG deals—tied to a percentage of Brent crude prices—were comparatively cheaper. For instance, one long-term contract with OQ Trading was set at 11.90% of the three-month average Brent crude price, plus US$0.50 per MMBtu. However, the global energy shock in 2022 sent spot prices soaring, with some cargoes costing $35.89/MMBtu and $36.95/MMBtu. These high import costs persisted, even under long-term contracts with Qatar and Oman.

The severe gas shortage is hitting industries and fertilizer plants hardest, highlighting the need for a thorough reassessment of gas allocation. Identifying sectors where gas can be replaced by alternative fuels could free up supply for more productive and high-value uses.

CNG stations and piped gas to kitchens—still available in select areas—should be reviewed critically. While CNG offers environmental benefits and lower transport costs, and piped gas to households saves on cooking fuel imports, the current crisis requires prioritizing industrial and agricultural production over comfort and convenience.

In the early 2000s, Bangladesh was often described as "floating on gas"—at least according to some experts and oil companies. This optimism followed Unocal's discovery of the Bibiyana gas field, which the company claimed was too large for local demand and proposed exporting to India. Around the same time, the Asian Development Bank funded the "Clean Fuel Project" to introduce CNG in the transport sector.

Launched in 2002–03, CNG was an immediate success. It was cheaper than petroleum fuels and spurred a boom in CNG conversion workshops and filling stations. By the end of the decade, hundreds of stations were operating, with hundreds of thousands of vehicles converted to run on CNG. This switch saved an estimated US$800 million annually in petroleum imports.

However, the rapid expansion of CNG infrastructure also destabilized gas supply pressure. By 2010, CNG alone consumed about one-tenth of the daily 2,000 mmcfd supply. The domestic sector used another 12.1%, yet the system already faced a shortfall of 400–600 mmcfd. The government eventually froze new gas connections, approving only a few industrial projects under special consideration.

As demand kept growing—driven by rapid economic development—the shortage worsened, leading to costly LNG imports from 2018–19. LNG is blended with domestic gas for supply

through the national grid, ensuring that gas-dependent industries continue to operate. But with no major discoveries in the past decade, domestic gas production has steadily fallen, and 600–800 mmcfd now comes from imported LNG. Current supply is about 3,000 mmcfd, far short of the estimated demand of over 5,000 mmcfd.

Despite shortages, CNG usage continues to rise, even though it is no longer as cost-effective and is plagued by long queues. Industries that generate export earnings and employment are competing for dwindling gas supplies against non-essential uses.

In the early years of gas distribution, domestic kitchens were the main customers. Gas companies promoted household adoption through attractive schemes, but rising fuel prices and changing consumer behavior drove demand so high that supply could not keep pace. Over time, illegal connections became widespread.

Titas Gas has recently intensified its crackdown on unauthorized usage, disconnecting 29,617 illegal connections, 6,712 burners, and removing 144 km of pipeline between September 2024 and April 2025. The drives have targeted industrial, commercial, and residential offenders. In Savar alone, 400 illegal connections—including one commercial establishment—were severed, along with 1.5 km of illicit pipeline.

Public awareness campaigns are being conducted in conjunction with enforcement, and offenders may face fines and even imprisonment. The disconnections are saving millions of cubic feet of gas daily.

Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan has suggested that all domestic gas connections in Dhaka be shut off to curb wastage, noting: "Providing gas to households is a waste, especially when industries are struggling." He advocates permanently ending new residential connections and phasing out CNG vehicles. Without such measures, he warns, "the folly with CNG and the merry burning of blue flames in kitchens" will continue to hurt high-value sectors.

Given the rapid depletion of natural gas reserves and the lack of new discoveries, innovative solutions are urgently needed to preserve remaining supplies for critical sectors. One promising alternative is replacing piped natural gas in households with biogas produced locally.

Power Generation Statistics

Fuel-wise power generation for FY-2021-22		
Fuel Type		Quantity (MkWh)
% of Total power generation		
Hydro	744	0.87
Gas	47136	55.06
Furnace Oil	22867	26.71
Diesel	1483	1.73
Coal	5342	6.24
Renewable Energy	323	0.38
Power Import	7712	9.01

Source: BPDB

Per unit cost of power generation (Tk/kWh) FY 2021-22	
Fuel types in generation	Unit cost (Tk/kWh)
Furnace Oil	17
HSD	26
LNG	13
Imported Coal	8.1
Domestic Coal	6
Domestic Gas	2.57
Hydro	1
Solar Power Plant	12
Nuclear8	14
Imported Power	6.48

Source: Power Division

A large-scale, commercially viable biogas project could be developed near city gate stations, using cow dung from nearby suburbs. Residents could be incentivized to keep small herds—4–6 cows per household—providing milk for sale and dung for energy production. Special agents, appointed by gas companies, would collect dung on a fixed schedule using mechanized vehicles, issuing receipts for quantities delivered. Payments to both agents and households would be made digitally.

Collected dung would be processed in biogas plants, with the gas compressed and fed into the city's existing distribution network. This would free up natural gas for industrial and commercial use while creating new jobs, boosting dairy and livestock farming, and generating income for rural households.

Pilot projects could be launched within existing gas franchise areas, and if successful, expanded nationwide. Joint feasibility studies by Petrobangla, gas distribution companies, and agricultural and livestock departments could ensure effective integration with existing infrastructure and environmental safeguards.

Similar projects are already underway in India. Mumbai-based Mahanagar Gas Limited, part of the state-owned GAIL group, is investing Rs 1,323 crore over the next two years to set up both a compressed biogas facility and a battery manufacturing plant. Currently, 70% of its revenue comes from CNG sales, but the company is diversifying into non-fossil fuel

ventures to secure future growth.

In another example, Uttar Pradesh has launched the Gram-Urja model to boost rural energy self-sufficiency and employment. The program, linked to the MGNREGA scheme, promotes household and farm-based biogas units to cut domestic LPG use by 70%. Farmers benefit from reduced input costs, organic fertilizer production, and new income streams.

These models show that Bangladesh could replicate and adapt such initiatives, reducing reliance on costly fuel imports while supporting rural economies and promoting renewable energy.

It must be recognized that electricity is the backbone of all economic activities in a country. On scrutiny, it will be revealed that the progress made in Bangladesh from the late nineties to the early twenties owed much to the more or less continuous availability of electricity to the economic sectors, which in turn was made possible only through the seamless, uninterrupted supply of gas to the power sector.

If the gas supply is stopped, the future will be bleak. If no gas can be ensured at an economical price for power generation, the country will be at stake. Next to gas, coal is the alternative for power generation. As reasonable coal deposits are available in Bangladesh—so far left unattended due to various pressures against their utilization—it may be a prudent decision to revert to coal mining to run power stations. Coal may continue to be the major prime mover for electrical generators during the transition period until acceptable renewable energy sources, possibly kinetic energy from river water flow, can be made available to meet all the country's electricity needs.

While more serious financial and physical programs for oil and gas exploration must be continued by the government, an overall Energy System Master Plan, covering all relevant issues in addition to specific biogas and coal mining, needs to be initiated immediately. EP

GAS CONSUMPTION IN KITCHENS

Year	Volume (MMCM)	Value (million Taka)
2019-2020	3757,790	46415.66
2020-2021	3799,824	46469.51
2021-2022	3620,208	45593.92
2022-2023	2848,559	49805.75
2023-2024	2837,428	49015.61
2024-2025(March 25)	2085,429	35789.95

Source: Petrobangla

Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain,
former Chairman of Petrobangla and BERC

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Natural Gas, LNG Fuel Asia's Energy Transition Journey - PETRONAS Executive VP

As the world continues its journey towards net zero, the energy mix has come to the forefront of the conversation. While it is widely accepted that renewable energy will play a key role in decarbonization, there is a growing consensus that natural gas will remain essential in this transition. Increasingly, the industry recognizes that gas is not just a bridge to a lower-carbon future, but a destination fuel that provides a stable foundation for energy systems, particularly in regions striving to balance economic growth with climate goals.

By 2035, PETRONAS is reimagining gas as the destination fuel, backed by market-leading production capacity and an unmatched 40-year track record: over 16,000 LNG cargoes delivered always on-time to 25+ countries globally. The company's transformation into a progressive lower-carbon solutions provider means every business decision serves one vision: delivering reliable, competitive energy that bridges today's needs with tomorrow's possibilities, ensuring PETRONAS remains essential in the global energy transition.

PETRONAS Executive Vice-President and CEO, Gas and Maritime Business, Datuk Adif Zulkifli emphasized the critical role of natural gas in the energy transition during a recent panel session at Energy Asia 2025.

"In Asia-Pacific, the population is expected to reach 5.2 billion by 2050. As the region continues to develop, it is projected to account for half of the world's energy demand through 2050, driven by economic growth and greater industrialization, including the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, and the need to meet the everyday energy needs of its people. In this landscape, natural gas provides a pragmatic solution. It provides energy security while supporting a practical and achievable transition to a more sustainable energy across the region."

Adif noted that while investments in renewables will continue to grow, the challenge of intermittency must be addressed, something gas can counteract by providing a stable and secure baseload. Furthermore, as coal still contributes about 60% to Asia's electricity generation, natural gas is often seen as a low-hanging fruit when it comes to replacing coal-powered generation.

Asia, the largest growth region for LNG

Asia, home to a rapidly growing population and the world's fastest-growing economies, is envisioned to be the biggest growth region when it comes to gas imports.

Adif highlighted two types of liquefied natural gas (LNG) markets in Asia: the traditional markets, comprising long-time LNG importers such as Japan, China and South Korea, and emerging markets such as Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, which have started importing LNG in recent years.

"For over four decades, PETRONAS has had the privilege of supporting the traditional markets while steadily expanding our presence in emerging markets to support the region's growing energy needs. This is due to the geographical advantage of our LNG Complex in Bintulu, allowing us to serve both markets with shorter shipping distances, faster delivery and enhanced supply responsiveness. In addition, Malaysia is located along stable, conflict-free maritime routes, which provide an additional advantage in ensuring secure and uninterrupted LNG delivery," he said.

He added that these advantages are particularly important to emerging markets, which tend to be more price-sensitive.

While gas may not compete with coal on price alone, it remains a competitive option when factoring in its lower emissions profile and the growing need for lower-carbon energy sources.

"We can never compete with coal on price, but coal brings its own set of environmental challenges. That is why methane reduction in the natural gas value chain is critical. If we address that effectively, gas becomes an even more compelling proposition. It is cost-effective, abundant and increasingly accessible, thanks to ongoing infrastructure development," said Adif.

Decarbonizing the gas value chain for a net zero future

At PETRONAS, the group has set a target to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, said Adif, further detailing the journey towards that aspiration with a 50% methane emissions reduction in the natural gas value chain by 2025 and 70% by 2030.

He noted that PETRONAS has been quite active in pursuing zero venting and flaring, achieving the former last year and making progress in achieving the latter by 2030.

"We have made significant progress. In fact, we have already surpassed our 2025 target, reducing methane emissions by 66% through flaring and venting reduction projects across our upstream and gas operations," said Adif.

Beyond methane reduction, PETRONAS is advancing energy efficiency across its operations. The group has employed the use of advanced software to optimize fuel gas utilization and leverage digital simulation to minimize energy consumption.

"As at end-2024, we were able to reduce as much as two million tonnes of CO2 equivalent through our energy-efficient projects," he noted.

Additionally, Adif said the group is pursuing electrification, noting that PETRONAS' Bintulu LNG plant will be gradually powered by hydroelectric power beginning in the middle of next year.

"Beyond operational improvements, we are also investing in long-term low-carbon technologies and infrastructure. We are undertaking a study to potentially capture about 1.7 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) of CO2 from the plants in Bintulu and store it at an offshore site. With the CO2 captured, we can further reduce emissions across our value chain and offer lower-carbon LNG for customers looking to meet their sustainability goals," he said, adding that PETRONAS is also pursuing carbon capture and storage with various industry partners.

Market mechanisms still needed to achieve net zero operations

While PETRONAS is making meaningful progress in reducing emissions across its operations, Adif acknowledged that achieving net zero emissions across the natural gas value chain remains a significant challenge.

Reaching net zero requires more than operational improvements. It demands deeper investments in advanced technologies, cleaner power sources and infrastructure upgrades. These come with higher costs, which in turn highlight the need for market mechanisms that recognize the value of lower-carbon LNG.

"For example, our LNG facility in Canada is one of the lowest-emitting energy plants in the world — it only has 0.15% CO2 equivalent per tonne. We will see more plants like these that continue to lower emissions, but achieving net zero across the entire value chain will also require broader shifts in the energy ecosystem," said Adif.

He emphasized that this journey cannot be undertaken by producers alone. Collaboration across governments, markets and value chains is essential to enable faster and deeper decarbonization. Supportive policies, clear incentives and the willingness of markets to recognize and reward lower-carbon LNG will be critical to sustaining momentum.

"For PETRONAS, we will continue to push emissions down at every part of the value chain. As long as we stay committed to reducing emissions both pre-combustion and post-combustion, and delivering LNG with the lowest possible carbon footprint, we are creating a product that is not just competitive but necessary for the energy transition," he said.

Reprint from The Edge Malaysia EP

From "Don't Look Up" to COP29
A Real-Life Satire on Climate Inaction

GSM Shamsuzzoha (Nasim)

The outcome of COP29 bears an unsettling resemblance to the 2021 satirical science fiction film "Don't Look Up," starring Leonardo DiCaprio. The film satirizes government inaction in the face of an existential threat, much like the current global response to climate change. It also critiques the corrosive role of media, social media, and corporate interests in distorting public perception of critical issues.

In the movie, two astronomers, Dr. Randall Mindy and Kate Dibiasky, discover a planet-killing comet on a collision course with Earth. When they alert the U.S. government and the public, their warnings are dismissed, mocked, and politicized. The administration, motivated by short-term political gain and corporate agendas, downplays the crisis. A social media-driven disinformation campaign ensues, where citizens are urged to "Don't Look Up," even as the comet becomes visible in the sky. Meanwhile, the scientists urge people to "Just Look Up" and take action, but their calls are drowned in a sea of memes, apathy, and partisan noise. In the end, the comet strikes Earth—with a severe catastrophic consequences.

This fictional story uncomfortably mirrors the current global approach to climate change. Despite clear scientific consensus and visible signs of planetary distress, political inertia and media trivialization continue to stall meaningful action. COP29, instead of being a breakthrough moment, largely echoed this same paralysis—rhetoric over responsibility, optics over outcomes.

The outcome of COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, resonates with chilling familiarity against the backdrop of Adam McKay's 2021 satirical masterpiece, "Don't Look Up". The film's central narrative – scientists discovering an existential threat (a planet-killing comet), only to be met with political indifference, media trivialization, corporate co-option, and public apathy – serves not merely as allegory but as a near-documentary reflection of the global response to the climate crisis, crystallized in the failures of the "Finance COP."

COP29: A "Don't Look Up" Scenario Played Out in Real Time

The Unheeded Scientists, the Ignored IPCC: Dr. Mindy and Dr. Dibiasky's frantic warnings mirror the increasingly dire, unequivocal alarms sounded by the IPCC. AR6 was the clearest 'comet sighting' yet, stating the rapidly closing window for 1.5°C and the astronomical costs of inaction. COP29's procedural achievement of setting a trillion-dollar 'floor' for the NCQG, while acknowledging scale, lacked the binding commitments, quality guarantees (grants over debt-inducing loans), and concrete pathways that the scientific 'need' demands. Like President Orlean initially dismissing the astronomers, the NCQG outcome treated the scientific imperative as a negotiating chip rather than an existential mandate.

Political Downplaying and Diversion: The film's President Orlean and her Chief of Staff (Jason Orlean) delay action due to midterm polls, ultimately crafting a flawed, profit-driven "BASH" mission. COP29 saw developed nations successfully downplay their historical responsibility ("Don't look back at emissions!") and divert focus towards an "expanded donor base" and the nebulous mobilization of private finance. The hard-fought but inadequate NCQG text, allowing loans and mobilized private capital to dominate, became the real-world equivalent of the compromised BASH plan – technically a "response," but structurally flawed and unlikely to avert catastrophe, designed more to appease domestic constituencies and protect economic interests than to solve the problem. Azerbaijan's fossil fuel backdrop added a layer of dissonance akin to the film's tech billionaire exploiting the comet for mineral extraction.

The Battle of Narratives: "Just Look Up" vs. "Don't Look Up": The astronomers' "Just Look Up" campaign versus the government and corporate media's "Don't Look Up" distraction perfectly mirrors the climate communication battlefield. At COP29, the stark reality of climate-vulnerable nations demanding trillions in grant-based, accessible finance for survival ("Just Look Up at the Need!") was drowned out by technical jargon, disputes over definitions, geopolitical grandstanding related to other conflicts, and narratives emphasizing economic constraints or the potential

of future, unproven technological fixes ("Don't Look Up at the Scale or the Injustice!"). The focus shifted from the planetary emergency to the minutiae of negotiation, much like the comet became a viral meme.

The Inevitable Impact Looms: While Earth hasn't yet suffered the comet's direct hit, the failure of COP29 to deliver adequate, just finance is an impact. It directly undermines the Global South's ability to adapt, transition, and recover from losses and damages. It makes the 1.5°C target virtually unreachable. The "impact" is not a single event but the ongoing escalation of suffering, displacement, and ecological collapse that the NCQG's shortcomings guarantee. COP29's outcome ensures the climate crisis's impact will be harder and hit the most vulnerable first and hardest.

However, hope still flickers on the horizon. Against the political failure satirized years in advance by Hollywood, President Luiz Inбcio Lula da Silva of Brazil, the incoming COP30 President, emerged at the G20 Summit on November 19, 2024, with a clarion call that cut through the noise: "COP30 will be our last chance to avoid an irreversible rupture in the climate system." His speech was a direct rebuttal to the "Don't Look Up" dynamics that crippled COP29, outlining a path grounded in justice, urgency, and leadership:

Confronting the "Last Chance" Reality: Unlike leaders who downplay timelines, Lula explicitly framed COP30 as the final off-ramp before systemic collapse. This echoes the astronomers' desperate pleas, refusing to sugarcoat the stakes. It's a direct challenge to the complacency and incrementalism witnessed at COP29.

Demanding Accountability from the Polluters: Lula forcefully reiterated the bedrock principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), calling out developed nations for their historical emissions. His demand for "larger accountability" directly addresses the core equity failure of COP29, where developed nations evaded binding public finance commitments. He didn't just ask them to pay; he demanded they lead by example.

The Bold 2040/2045 Challenge: Lula's most concrete and radical proposal was calling on developed G20 nations to bring forward their climate neutrality targets from 2050 to 2040 or 2045. This is transformative:

- Science-Based: Aligns better with the rapid emission reductions needed for 1.5°C.
- Restores Credibility: Addresses the trust deficit by demanding developed nations "assume their historical responsibilities" first, before asking more of others. This undermines the "expanded donor base" deflection used at COP29.
- Creates Space for Equity: Recognizes developing nations "can all take steps forward" but "at different paces," conditioned on the promised finance and technology transfer finally materializing. It links ambition to support.

Centering Indigenous Knowledge and Ecological Stewardship: Lula highlighted the "essential role of indigenous and traditional communities," grounding climate action in the knowledge systems of those who have sustainably managed vital ecosystems for millennia. This counters the top-down, technocratic approaches often prioritized in finance discussions and offers a model for resilience.

Proposing a UN Climate Change Council: Recognizing the fragmentation plaguing global climate governance (evident in the weak links between COP29's NCQG, L&D, and the NDC process), Lula proposed a dedicated Climate Change Council at the UN. This aims to:

- Integrate disparate efforts across mitigation, adaptation, finance, loss & damage, and just transition.
- Enhance coordination and accountability.
- Potentially elevate climate action within the UN system, giving it sustained high-level political attention beyond the annual COP frenzy.

COP30: Can "Just Look Up" Overcome the Inertia?

President Lula's intervention provides a desperately needed narrative and political counterweight to the "Don't Look Up" paralysis exemplified by COP29. He has framed COP30 in Belem – located at the heart of the imperiled Amazon – as the ultimate test of global solidarity and political will. However, formidable obstacles remain:

- Overcoming COP29's Legacy: The weak NCQG and depleted trust cast a long shadow. Can Lula rebuild the coalition needed for a genuine breakthrough, especially when developed nations resisted binding commitments just months prior?
- Translating Vision into Binding Agreements: Bold speeches must become concrete decisions. Can the 2040/45 target push gain traction? Can the Climate Council proposal overcome bureaucratic inertia and gain buy-in?
- Geopolitics and Domestic Pressures: Ongoing conflicts, economic instability, and the rise of climate-skeptic factions in key countries will continue to strain cooperation.
- Corporate Capture: The forces satirized in "Don't Look Up" – corporate interests seeking to profit from or delay the transition – remain potent and will lobby against the radical shifts Lula proposes.

COP29 proved that "Don't Look Up" was less satire and more prophecy. The world witnessed the triumph of political expediency, obfuscation, and inadequate compromise over the clear-eyed action demanded by science and justice. The climate comet's trajectory grows ever steeper.

President Lula da Silva, in invoking the "last chance" and laying down a gauntlet with the 2040/45 demand and structural reforms, has issued the definitive "Just Look Up" call for the COP process. He has positioned COP30 not just as another meeting, but as the final diplomatic off-ramp before irreversible climate breakdown. His leadership offers a path grounded in equity, historical responsibility, and the urgent integration of efforts.

The world cannot afford another round of empty promises. COP30 must not be another scene from Don't Look Up. It must be the turning point where humanity finally looks up and acts.

The question for COP30 in Belem is crystal clear: Will the world finally heed the scientists, embrace President Lula's challenge, and deliver the transformative action required? Or will it remain trapped in the self-destructive farce of "Don't Look Up", ensuring the comet – in the form of runaway climate change – hits with full, devastating force? The success or failure of COP30 will determine whether humanity finally chooses to look up, act, and survive, or remains wilfully blind on its path to destruction. EP

Efforts Underway to Keep Smooth Power Supply at Affordable Price: Adviser

Energy affairs adviser Dr. Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan has said that the interim government is continuing its efforts to ensure a smooth power supply at an affordable cost, taking a number of new measures and revising some existing systems.

"The government has been trying to keep power supply smooth across the country and keep it at an affordable rate," he said recently, marking the occasion of the first anniversary of the interim government.

Since assuming office, the incumbent administration has been taking various initiatives to make power and energy production and supply systems cost-effective. Under one such step, his ministry reviewed contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to eliminate capacity payment clauses.

The provision previously obligated the government to pay for power generation by private producers for their plant capacity, even when no electricity is supplied to the national grid. EP

Govt to Buy 2 More LNG Cargoes for September

The government will buy two more liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes for September deliveries to meet the country's mounting natural gas demand.

State-run Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Ltd (RPGCL) sought to buy these LNG cargoes from the spot market for September 10-11 and 22-23 delivery windows, a senior RPGCL official said.

The evaluation committee is currently evaluating bids from the interested suppliers who submitted offers at the close of the August 3 deadline.

The volume of the spot LNG cargoes is around 3.36 million British thermal units (MMBTU) each.

The cargoes are to be delivered to the Moheshkhali Island, with an option to discharge them at either of the country's two floating storage re-gasification units (FSRUs) located on the island.

Bangladesh has so far bought only one spot LNG cargo for September delivery. EP

NESCO to Reduce Power Outage Frequency in Rajshahi

The Northern Electricity Supply Company (NESCO) Limited has undertaken an ambitious project to modernize and expand its electricity distribution network to reduce the frequency and duration of power outages across all 16 districts under Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions.

The initiative aims to enhance the overall reliability, efficiency, and capacity of the power distribution system while minimizing electricity losses during transmission and distribution.

"We have already adopted modern technologies and best practices in network management and operation to modernize the overall distribution system," said Engineer Hamidur Rahman, Project Director and a senior official at NESCO.

Under the project titled "Network Infrastructure Development and Modernization of Distribution System in the NESCO Area," NESCO seeks to upgrade existing infrastructure, expand network capacity, and introduce advanced technologies for improved electricity service delivery.

With an estimated cost of around Taka12.71 billion (1,271.52 crore), the project will be implemented by June 2029 across 39 upazila towns in the two divisions. EP

Siemens Energy India Profit Up 80% YoY

Siemens Energy India Ltd (SEIL) has reported a robust financial performance for the quarter ended June 30, 2025, with net profit soaring 80% year-on-year (YoY) to INR 263 crore. Revenue from operations rose 20% YoY to INR 1,785 crore. New orders for the quarter surged 94% to INR 3,290 crore.

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The company maintained a solid EBITDA margin of 17.6%, highlighting improved operational efficiency and cost discipline. EP

Fresh Fuel Loading at RNPP Unit-1 Likely on Nov 6

Fresh fuel loading at unit-1 of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is expected to begin in early November, marking the final countdown to the commissioning of Bangladesh's first nuclear power facility by year-end, according to senior officials.

"We are working to complete all the necessary tests, aiming to load fresh fuel into unit-1 by November 6," said an RNPP official.

Once fuel is loaded, it will take another 45 to 50 days to bring the 2,400-megawatt power plant operational, he said.

"We've already completed most machinery tests for unit 1. Now, safety tests are underway," he added.

However, the launch of the 1,200MW Unit 1 will depend on the final report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

According to Dr Kabir Hossain, project director of RNPP, a 14-member pre-OSART team from the IAEA is scheduled to arrive on August 10 for inspection.

"They will assess all preparations and safety protocols following international standards. We'll proceed to the next stage once the report is received," he said, noting that the plant's commissioning hinges on the IAEA's final findings. EP

Govt Clears Tk18,631cr in Foreign Power Dues in One Year

The interim government has repaid an amount of Tk18,631 crore as outstanding foreign power bill against electricity imports, power division officials said on 6 August.

"The government has been actively working to settle outstanding bills, including those owed to (India's) Adani Power and others," Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan said.

He said of the amount the power division has paid Tk5,000 crore to Adani Power Limited against its dues of Tk7,934.89 crore as electricity bill, and "now the Adani will get Tk2,363.50 crore."

Khan said that the government took various steps to minimize avoidable expenditures related to different power projects, and so far, Tk6,479 crore was saved.

Power Division officials said that under an extensive effort in the past one year they reduced the import service charge by 4%, worth Tk470 crore, from 9%, from energy import for private power plants.

Apart from this, the quantity of shipment was increased to 20,000 tonnes from 15,000 tonnes, which will also save Tk354 crore. Tariff renegotiation was done, which is lower than the average selling price of Tk8.95 per unit to save Tk2,500 crore annually.

Meanwhile, the government shut down 10 inefficient and outdated old plants by

Independent Power Producers (IPPs) or rental power plants having a generation capacity of 1010MW, which saved Tk525 crore. EP

Two More Wells to be Drilled in Jamalpur for Gas Exploration

The government has decided to drill two more gas wells in Jamalpur as part of the ongoing exploration work.

"We hope that digging work for two more wells in Jamalpur will be started in January next year for searching gas, after completion of documentary work by December this year," Petrobangla chairman Md Rezanur Rahman said while presiding over a seminar in the city recently.

The government has undertaken various initiatives to dig more wells to increase gas production from domestic sources, he added.

The seminar titled 'Energy Security of the Country: Challenges and Way Forward - the Role of Media' was held at the Petrobangla auditorium.

Energy expert Professor Dr Ijaz Hossain presented a keynote paper in the seminar, while Petrobangla directors AKM Mizanur Rahman and Engineer Md Rafiqul Islam described activities and initiatives of its subordinate companies.

Chairman of Forum for Energy Reporters Bangladesh (FERB) Shamim Jahangir also delivered a speech and highlighted the media role for energy security in the country.

Professor Ijaz predicted that the country would need 4,600 mmcfd gas in 2030 to meet the ongoing and future demand.

He said domestic gas production will have to be kept at least 2000 mmcfd through vigorous exploration activities by the government, while the existing Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) will have to be fully operational, adding more than 100 mmcfd gas.

Ijaz also suggested the government install two new FSRUs with having supply capacity of at least 1400 mmcfd. EP

JERA's 745MW Meghnaghat Plant Goes Live

JERA Meghnaghat Power Limited (JMPL) has begun commercial operation of one of the largest and most efficient gas-fired power plants in Bangladesh.

The company announced the development in a statement issued recently, marking a major milestone in its commitment to bolstering Bangladesh's energy security and driving economic growth.

This combined-cycle gas-turbine (CCGT) power plant at Meghnaghat in Narayanganj has a gross generation capacity of 745 megawatts (MW) and a net output of 718 MW.

The state-of-the-art power station is set to supply up to 5 percent of Bangladesh's peak electricity demand.

Electricity generated from the plant will be sold to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) under a long-term power purchase agreement spanning 22 years from the date of commercial operation.

As Bangladesh works to modernize its energy infrastructure and ensure affordable, reliable access to electricity, large-scale projects like JMPL's plant are viewed as vital long-term investments.

The country's electricity demand is projected to reach 51,000 MW by 2041, in line with its goal of achieving developed nation status. EP

Private Sector Losing Edge for Lack of Uninterrupted Energy Supply: DCCI

Bangladesh's private sector is lagging behind in production due to the lack of uninterrupted quality energy and power supply, which is hampering the country's competitiveness in the international export market, Dhaka Chamber President Taskeen Ahmed said recently.

Regular implementation of energy audits in industrial units is now a must, and academia should be involved in sector-wise industry research and necessary 'industry mapping', he added.

Considering the current geopolitical situation, Bangladesh's private sector is under considerable pressure, he said.

Ahmed made the remarks at a discussion jointly organized by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) and the South Asia Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem) on "Energy efficiency in the industrial sector of Bangladesh," held at the Dhaka Chamber auditorium in the capital.

There is still no specific government action plan focused on energy efficiency, even though an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Master Plan was formulated in 2016 and an Integrated Energy and Power Sector Master Plan was developed in 2023, said Selim Raihan, executive director of Sanem.

Therefore, the issue needs to be considered with due diligence, he added.

He noted that definitional and conceptual differences regarding energy efficiency exist across various sectors of the country. Moreover, Raihan pointed out significant barriers in the extraction and supply of the country's energy resources. EP

Int'l Court Asks BAPEX to Pay $42m to Foreign Oil Company

Bangladesh stands to lose around US$42 million to a breakaway foreign oil-and-gas company following an international-court verdict on a dispute over payment for gas-well drilling.

The Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC), in its 'partial final verdict', has asked state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd (BAPEX) to make the payment in favor of the Azerbaijan-based firm, Socar AQS LLC, BAPEX officials said recently.

"BAPEX will file an appeal against the SIAC verdict soon," said one of them about their plan for overturning the order passed following hearings from both BAPEX and Socar.

If the SIAC keeps its verdict unchanged in its final verdict, BAPEX might have to pay an additional US$3.16 million to the company, which is deemed a cost for arbitration, said sources.

The Azerbaijan firm was paid around US$11.8 million against its drilling of Semutang South-1 gas well in Khagrachhari under the Chattogram division.

Semutang is the lone well that Socar AQS drilled among the three BAPEX-owned gas wells. The well was found dry after the drilling. Losing in the final verdict means BAPEX's payment to the Azeri company will be around US$57 million against an unsuccessful gas drilling.

This will be the first-ever incident in the country's history that Bangladesh lost to an international oil company (IOC) in an international court following a dispute over well drilling. EP

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC

(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

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মানসম্পন্ন বিদ্যুৎ নিরবচ্ছিন্নভাবে দেশের সকল মানুষের নিকট পৌঁছে দেয়াই আমাদের অঙ্গীকার

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

Green page

Experts Call for Realistic Plan, Soft Loans to Achieve Bangladesh's Rooftop Solar Targets

Experts at a recent dialogue stressed the urgent need for a pragmatic roadmap and accessible soft loans to effectively implement the government's ambitious rooftop solar energy goals.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) organized the crucial dialogue, titled 'Rooftop Solar', concerning the government's recently launched 'National Rooftop Solar Program'.

Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem, Research Director at CPD, Helen Mashiat Prioty, Senior Research Associate at CPD, and Md Nasir Uddin, General Member of the Bangladesh Solar & Renewable Energy Association, presented the keynote papers on the topic.

Announced on July 3, 2025, the solar energy goals aim to meet 20 percent of the total electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030 and 30 percent by 2040.

While the government has already launched initial steps for the program's implementation, the CPD stressed the vital importance of robust prior planning and the development of effective implementation guidelines, the experts said.

Without these, there is a significant concern that this new endeavor could falter, much like previous initiatives such as the 'Net Metering Rooftop Solar Program', which did not fully achieve its objectives, they said.

During the dialogue, a proposed design for the 'National Rooftop Solar Program' was presented, alongside an outline for a potential monitoring and evaluation framework aimed at ensuring its successful execution. EP

Malaysia Renewable Power Capacity to Reach 30GW by 2035: GlobalData

Renewable energy sources have become increasingly pivotal in driving the transformation of Malaysia's power sector. The nation is striving to diminish its reliance on fossil fuels and transition to a more sustainable energy mix.

The Malaysian government has established ambitious objectives, aiming to augment the proportion of renewable energy to 40% of the total installed capacity by 2035 and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Against this backdrop, the country's cumulative renewable capacity is forecast to reach 30GW in 2035, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.8% during

2024-30, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's latest report, "Malaysia Power Market Outlook to 2035, Update 2025 – Market Trends, Regulations, and Competitive Landscape," reveals that during 2020–2024, Malaysia's renewable power generation increased from 5TWh in 2020 to 9.8TWh in 2024, registering a CAGR of 18.5%. EP

Memo Signed to Build 600MW Solar Plant in Khulna

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Sundarban Delta Growth Initiative and the Arab contractor consortium Orascom Peninsula at the Khulna Club auditorium recently, aiming to build a 600-megawatt solar power plant in Khulna, with an estimated cost of Tk 8,000 crore.

Before the signing ceremony, SDGI chairman Mohammad Ali Asgor Lobby briefed journalists about the project.

He said that this was the first phase of a larger initiative to generate 2,000 megawatts of renewable energy. 'The project aligns with Bangladesh's national target of sourcing 25 per cent of its total energy from green sources by 2030.'

'We are working to expand green energy not only in the Sundarbans but across the country, in line with the SDG-based strategic development plan of Bangladesh,' he added.

The 600MW solar project represents a foundational step toward this goal. The project is expected to ensure energy security, reduce carbon emissions, uphold environmental justice and generate employment opportunities for the local population through industrial relocation.

In response to a question, officials revealed that over 1,500 acres of land will be needed for the project. Land in the Shiromoni and Bil Dakatia areas of Khulna city is currently being surveyed. If suitable land is not found there, alternatives in Mongla will be explored. EP

JERA, bp Seal Offshore Wind Development Venture

JERA and bp have established their new 50:50 offshore wind joint venture JERA Nex bp.

This is a global offshore wind developer, owner and operator, with operating assets and development projects providing a potential net generating total of 13 GW. That includes about 1 GW of installed net generating capacity, planned developments totaling 7.5 GW and a further 4.5 GW of secured offshore wind leases.

Going forward, the JV's initial focus will be on development and optimization of existing projects through gaining access to external capital and competitive financing.

Also newly established is JERA Nex bp Japan, which is dedicated to the Japanese offshore wind development sector, led by former Jera managing executive officer Masato Yamada.

Late last year, JERA, Green Power Investment and Tohoku Electric Power applied to operate an offshore wind power project in the Sea of Japan offshore the southern side of Aomori Prefecture.

This is said to be one of Japan's largest offshore wind projects to date, with a planned power generation capacity of 615 MW. It should start operations in June 2030. EP

Green page

Italy Poised to Increase Renewables' Share in Power Generation Mix: GlobalData

Italy has been promoting the development of renewable energy through its principal energy strategies and policies, including the National Energy Strategy and the Integrated National Plan for Energy and Climate, while also emphasizing energy security.

As a result, renewables are projected

to overtake thermal power as the primary source of Italy's electricity generation in 2030 and will continue to increase their share to 55.9% in 2035, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's latest report, "Italy Power Market Outlook to 2035, Update 2025 – Market Trends, Regulations, and Competitive Landscape," reveals that renewable power dominated Italy's capacity mix in 2024 with 43.4% share.

It is expected to be the leading technology in 2035, accounting for 70.6% share. This was closely followed by thermal power, which accounted for 42.3% capacity share in 2024 and is expected to see a decline to 21.4% in 2035.

In 2024, thermal power dominated generation mix with 51.3%, while renewables accounted for 34.9%. Large hydropower accounted for the remaining 13.8% share. EP

Vietnam Renewable Power Capacity to Surpass 112GW by 2035: GlobalData

Vietnam generates a significant part of its electricity from coal- and gas-based thermal power plants, as well as a vast number of hydropower plants. To alleviate the climate change effects of thermal power generation, the government is turning towards renewable power generation sources.

The Vietnamese power sector presents significant opportunities for renewable energy, with wind, solar power, and biopower holding large potential for development. Against this backdrop, the country's cumulative renewable capacity is forecast to reach 112.1GW in 2035, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.3% during 2024-35, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's latest report, "Vietnam Power Market Outlook to 2035, Update 2025 – Market Trends, Regulations, and Competitive Landscape," reveals that during 2020-24, Vietnam's renewable power generation increased from 21.1TWh in 2020 to 38.5TWh in 2024, registering a CAGR of 16%.

During 2024-35, it is expected to further increase to 179.6TWh in 2035, growing at a CAGR of 15%. EP

Renewables will be World's Top Power Source by 2026: IEA

Renewable energy will overtake coal to become the world's top source of electricity "by 2026 at the latest", according to new forecasts from the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The rise of renewables is being driven by extremely rapid growth in wind and solar output, which topped 4,000 terawatt hours (TWh) in 2024 and will pass 6,000TWh by 2026.

Wind and solar are increasingly under attack from populist politicians on the right, such as US president Donald Trump and Reform in the UK.

Nevertheless, they will together meet more than 90 per cent of the increase in global electricity demand out to 2026, the IEA says, while modest growth for hydro power will add to renewables' rise.

With nuclear and gas also reaching record highs by 2026, coal-fired generation is set to decline – driven by falls in China and the EU – meaning that power-sector emissions will decline, too.

The IEA says that renewables could overtake coal as early as this year, depending on weather-related impacts on the output of wind and hydro capacity. It adds that the switch will happen by 2026 "at the latest", when renewables are expected to make up 36 per cent of global power supplies, against just 32 per cent from coal – the fuel's lowest share in a century.

The share of global electricity generation coming from wind and solar combined will rise from 1 per cent in 2005 and 4 per cent in 2015 to 15 per cent in 2024, 17 per cent in 2025 and nearly 20 per cent in 2026. EP

Bhutan Commissions First Utility-Scale Solar Plant

The Sephu solar project currently has a capacity of 17.38 MW following completion of phase one of project works. Another 5 MW is expected to come online later this year.

Bhutan's Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources has inaugurated the country's first utility-scale solar power plant.

The Sephu solar project, located in the

town of Wangdue Phodrang towards the centre of the country, occupies around 44 acres (17 hectares) of state-owned land.

It currently has a capacity of 17.38 MW following completion of the first phase of the project. An additional 5 MW will be added as part of a second phase, scheduled for completion later this year.

The engineering, procurement and construction of the project has been carried out by a joint venture company between Bhutanese construction firm M/S Rigsar and Indian engineering company PES via a contract awarded in 2023. The tender for the project ran in 2022.

The project has been funded by loans and grants from the Asian Development Bank alongside contributions from the Royal Government of Bhutan. EP

ICJ's Advisory Opinion to Strengthen Moral Grounds for Global Climate Policy Reform: Rizwana

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan recently said that while the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the obligations of states in respect of climate change may not be legally binding, it will significantly bolster moral courage in pushing for changes to global climate policies amid today's adverse geopolitical reality.

"This opinion will create pressure in international policy-making spaces, ultimately compelling states to revise their approaches," she said.

The environment adviser made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at a discussion at the Department of Environment on the ICJ's Advisory Opinion concerning states' responsibilities in addressing climate change.

She further stated, "Climate change is not just an issue for civil society-it must engage the youth. Our generation may survive, but future generations could suffer severe consequences. If we don't act now, we will be held accountable by those who come after us."

In her remarks, she also highlighted key issues such as riverbank erosion, infrastructural vulnerabilities, the urgency of climate adaptation planning, and the need to strengthen local government capacity.

"There can be no sustainable solution without rehabilitation in river erosion-prone areas," she said.

The keynote paper was presented by Advocate Hafij Khan, environmental lawyer and climate change negotiator. Professors Payam Akhavan, Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger, and Nicole Ann addressed the event virtually. EP

Fridays For Future Calls for a Global Climate Strike During COP30 in Belém

The global youth-led climate movement Fridays For Future (FFF) has announced a Global Climate Strike to take place on November 14, 2025, during the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belйm, Brazil.

Under the banner #JustTransitionNow, young people around the world will mobilize to demand urgent, justice-centered action to phase out fossil fuels and build a sustainable future for all.

The timing is intentional. COP30 marks a decisive moment for global climate negotiations, and FFF is calling on world leaders to move from promises to concrete action that delivers a truly just transition, one that centers science, human rights, and communities most impacted by the crisis.

"Global leaders must stop listening to fossil fuel lobbyists or seeking alliances with groups like OPEC+. It's time they start listening to science, to young people, and to traditional communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis. A just transition is not a luxury or a campaign to be used for greenwashing; it's a matter of survival and securing our future," says Daniel Holanda from Fridays for Future Brazil.

"This summit in Belйm must elevate the knowledge of Indigenous peoples, who have long protected the planet. We cannot allow fossil fuel expansion in the Amazon while the world watches. This region is being drilled by the oil industry while the conference is taking place. As Fridays for Future, we must denounce it," declares another activist. EP

Australia Expands 2030 Renewable Target by 18 GW after COP28 Pledge

Australia is one of only seven countries outside the European Union that has updated its 2030 national renewable target with an 18 GW boost, since the 2023 COP28 global tripling pledge.

Australia is one of only seven countries outside the European Union that have updated their 2030 national renewable energy targets, adding 18 GW since the 2023 COP28 global tripling pledge.

A new report by UK energy retailer Ember Energy, titled "What's new with national renewable targets? Not Much!," finds that most countries that committed to tripling renewable capacity have not taken adequate steps to meet that goal.

The report covers 96 countries and the European Union as a bloc. Together, they account for 97% of global renewable capacity, 96% of electricity sector demand, and 96% of power sector emissions as of 2024.

Australia's target of 82% renewable electricity by 2030 is above the 60% global share set out in the International Energy Agency (IEA) Net Zero Emissions scenario, the report finds, but highlights that Australia's fossil fuel reliance was still high in 2024 (65% of electricity, with 46% from coal).

Consequently, emissions per capita were three times the global average, the report finds, and the second highest in the Group of 20 (G20). EP

Govt Urged to Take Immediate Steps to Restore City's Ecology

Dhaka is hurtling toward environmental catastrophe unless immediate steps are taken to restore the city's ecological balance — warns a new study by the research and advocacy organization Change Initiative.

Presented at a press conference at Dhaka hotel recently, the report titled 'Dhaka without nature? Rethinking Natural Rights Led Urban Sustainability' paints a dire portrait of the capital's urban and environmental future.

Based on 44 years of satellite imagery and data analysis, the research reveals a staggering sevenfold increase in densely populated areas, a 60% loss of wetlands, and a 3–5°C rise in land surface temperatures (LST) since 1980.

These dramatic changes, driven by mismanagement and unregulated urban sprawl, have turned Dhaka into one of the most ecologically vulnerable megacities in the world. EP

Plastic Pollution 'Grave and Growing' Health Threat: Lancet

Plastic pollution is a "grave, growing and under-recognized danger" to health that is costing the world at least $1.5 trillion a year, experts warned in a report recently.

The new review of the existing evidence, which was carried out by leading health researchers and doctors, was published one day ahead of fresh talks opening in Geneva aiming to seal the world's first treaty on plastic pollution.

"Plastics cause disease and death from infancy to old age and are responsible for health-related economic losses exceeding US$1.5 trillion annually," said the review in The Lancet medical journal.

Comparing plastic to air pollution and lead, the report said its impact on health could be mitigated by laws and policies.

The experts called for the delegates from nearly 180 nations gathering in Geneva to finally agree to a treaty after previous failed attempts.

Philip Landrigan, a doctor and researcher at Boston College in the United States, warned that vulnerable people, particularly children, are most affected by plastic pollution.

IDCOL Supports Icddr,b for Climate & Health Research

IDCOL, the Infrastructure Development Company Limited, has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the health risks associated with climate change in Bangladesh by extending support to icddr,b, a globally recognized health research institute.

This contribution comes from IDCOL's Climate Resilience Fund (CRF) as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

The impacts of climate change, particularly gradual effects like rising temperatures, saline intrusion, and unpredictable weather patterns, are increasingly affecting public health. Vulnerable groups, including women, children, and individuals in low-income or coastal regions, bear a disproportionate burden of these consequences.

icddr,b, through its Health and Demographic Surveillance Sites spread across Bangladesh, has been actively researching the health implications of climate change.

This partnership signifies a significant stride in aligning financial development with public health research and resilience-building efforts, further strengthening Bangladesh's response to the enduring challenges posed by climate change. EP

EU Denies Boosting US Fossil Fuel Imports Harms Climate Fight

The European Commission denied recently that its trade deal pledge to massively ramp up US fossil fuel imports over three years would undermine the bloc's goal to become carbon neutral by 2050.

"This agreement does not contradict our medium- to long-term decarbonization objectives or targets at all," EU spokesperson Anna-Kaisa Itkonen told reporters of the pledge to buy $750 billion of US liquefied natural gas, oil and nuclear fuels to replace Russian energy sources. EP

"It is incumbent on us to act in response," he said in a statement. EP

Urgent Steps Needed to Protect Dhaka's Children from Toxic Lead Sites: ICDDR,B Study

Immediate action is urgently needed to shut down or control industrial sites in Dhaka that are leaking toxic lead, as they are putting thousands of children at serious health risk.

A new study led by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (Icddr,b) has revealed alarmingly high levels of lead in children's blood, raising fresh concerns about industrial pollution in the capital's densely populated neighborhoods.

Icddr,b organized a discussion titled 'Fighting Lead Poisoning in Bangladesh - Progress Made, Challenges Ahead' to highlight the widespread and preventable burden of lead exposure in Bangladesh and explore opportunities for urgent intervention.

Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, Executive Director of icddr,b said, "Lead poisoning silently steals our children's potential, damaging their brain development and nutritional status, with consequences that will hold back Bangladesh's future. We must act decisively to eliminate these sources of exposure so that every child can grow up healthy, smart, and ready to contribute to our nation." The event began with an overview of Icddr,b's lead prevention efforts by Dr Sarah Salway, Senior Director, Health Systems and Population Studies Division (HSPSD).

She underscored how lead exposure remains a major but overlooked public health threat in Bangladesh, particularly for children living near polluting industries.

According to Unicef, Bangladesh is now the 4th most lead-impacted country globally, with 36 million children suffering from elevated blood lead levels [1] Research presented at the event revealed that in Dhaka slums from 2009-2012, 87% of children under 2 had blood lead levels >50 µg/L, strongly associated with stunting [2]. EP

Third-Hottest July on Record Wreaks Climate Havoc

The third-hottest July worldwide ended a string of record-breaking temperatures last month, but many regions were still devastated by extreme weather amplified by global warming, the European climate monitoring service said recently.

Heavy rains flooded Pakistan and northern China; Canada, Scotland and Greece struggled to tame wildfires intensified by persistent drought; and many nations in Asia and Scandinavia recorded new average highs for the month.

"Two years after the hottest July on record, the recent streak of global temperature records is over," Carlo Buontempo, director of the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service, said in a statement.

"But that does not mean climate change has stopped," he said. "We continue to witness the effects of a warming world."

As in June, July showed a slight dip compared to the preceding two years, averaging 1.25 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) era.

2023 and 2024 warmed above that benchmark by more than 1.5C, which is the Paris Agreement target set in 2015 for capping the rise in global temperatures at relatively safe levels. EP

SEforALL 2024 Results: $2.48b Mobilized as Global South Leads Clean Energy Push

Despite persistent global challenges, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) delivered major results in 2024, mobilizing USD 2.48 billion in financing commitments for clean energy access and transition efforts led in collaboration with partners.

The results reflect the growing leadership of countries in the Global South in shaping a just and equitable energy future.

Over the past year, SEforALL helped secure 93 high-level commitments through Energy Compacts, while delivering integrated support in planning, policy, finance mobilization, and capacity-building across 24 countries, including 77 projects and initiatives.

A notable achievement in 2024 was SEforALL's engagement in the Mission 300 initiative, led by the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank, which aims to halve the number of people without electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The initiative is designed to unlock financing, catalyze clean energy markets and scale solutions that could benefit far beyond the 300 million people directly targeted. EP

No Major Change In Power, Energy Sector In A Year

If the current approach to running public sector power and energy companies continues, it will only exacerbate the sector's losses. Like the private sector, directors of public sector companies must also be made responsible for their decisions, with clearly defined duties and accountability. On the other hand, to reduce dependence on energy imports, equal importance must be given to demand-side management as well as supply. And to resolve discontent in rural electricity supply, there is no alternative to reorganizing PBS units into regional companies.

Professor A. K. Enamul Haque, Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), made these remarks in a conversation with Energy & Power Editor ***Mollah Amzad Hossain.***

How would you evaluate the one year of the interim government in advancing the power and energy sector?

Over the past year, there has been no major change. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant has not yet been commissioned—had it been, that would have been a big achievement. On the other hand, the government has not initiated any new major projects. Some opportunities existed to act, but they were not taken. The special law for power and energy projects has been repealed, and the authority to set electricity and energy prices has been returned to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC). However, the energy ministry has failed to take effective action to resolve the discontent within the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB).

You were a member of the White Paper Committee formed to assess the economic situation left by the ousted Awami League government. In that report, you stated that at least 10% corruption and irregularities occurred in power and energy projects. You also recommended addressing this. Has the current government started acting on the suggestions?

The biggest driver of corruption was the special law. It allowed excessive demand projections and back-to-back investments. The current government has not signed any new contracts, but reviewing and amending old ones is far easier said than done. Corruption largely stemmed from over-investment. It should be the Anti-Corruption Commission's job to investigate and expose irregularities in past contracts, but we haven't seen that yet. I believe it will happen. We must remember the White Paper was not an investigation report—it showed how corruption occurred, based on analysis of projects and contracts. The government has tried to close loopholes to prevent similar irregularities in the future.

I believe that if not this government, some future government will certainly investigate these high-profile corruption cases and determine accountability.

Under the IPP policy, capacity charges are a global practice and are applied worldwide. Why then is there so much criticism in Bangladesh? And without an IPP policy, is there any alternative to private investment in power generation?

Because of weak foreign currency reserves, private investors in Bangladesh always demanded sovereign guarantees through implementation agreements. But many investors misused this to siphon money abroad. Guarantees must be provided carefully and after proper scrutiny. That said, domestic investment capacity has grown much stronger in recent years, and we should take advantage of that.

We must also remember that Bangladesh's generation capacity already exceeds demand. Therefore, the government was not under pressure to attract new investment. However, if economic growth accelerates, new investment will again be required. Recently, growth has slowed, and power demand has also declined, so demand has not increased.

What is needed is a transparent investment environment. Even in the preparation of the Power and Energy Master Plan, corruption took place because vested groups tried to influence the plan to create new investment opportunities. Investment should not focus only on generation; transmission and distribution must also be strengthened in an integrated manner. Energy supply must be ensured so that power plants do not remain idle due to fuel shortages or transmission constraints, as has happened in the past. That is why experts outside the power and energy

Professor A. K. Enamul Haque

Honestly, I am not very optimistic about promises. Political parties will always promise more than each other. I don't expect much in terms of realistic commitments. But what we can expect is that whatever they do in the power and energy sector, they should do it with transparency and with the people and the country's priorities in mind.

sector should be involved in planning.

One group is pushing for non-fossil fuel power, meaning renewable energy. But we must carefully evaluate the financial viability of wind and solar projects in specific locations. In my view, the wind power project in Cox's Bazar is not economically viable.

The White Paper report recommended preparing plans to ensure transparency in the power and energy sector and assigning their implementation to different authorities. Couldn't the interim government have at least started this structural reform?

In my view, the reason this reform has not begun is not a lack of government will, but bureaucratic barriers. For example, in the name of decentralization, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) was split into generation, transmission, and distribution. To ensure investment in power generation, the private sector was given opportunities under the IPP policy. On top of that, generation companies were also created in the public sector, and bureaucrats were again placed in charge of their boards. I do not agree with the process of turning power and energy into public limited companies. If it is done, the objectives must be clear and specific. The World Bank recommended it, but I do not agree with the approach of running them like private companies driven by profit. Instead, they should operate on a "no-profit, no-loss" basis. But because these companies lack accountability, they are in fact increasing losses in the power and energy sector.

To restore transparency, the boards of public sector companies were restructured. But appointing former and current secretaries again as chairmen has only created more complications. What is your take?

Look, merely changing people will not bring success. The method of governance must change. The required skills and knowledge of those joining the boards must be clearly defined. Instead, what is happening is the creation of vested interest groups around these companies. If a private limited company makes a loss, its

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directors bear the responsibility from their own pockets. But directors in public limited companies bear no such liability. So there must be a clear policy defining what the board can and cannot do, and directors must be held accountable. Otherwise, due to a lack of transparency and over-investment, losses in the power and energy sector will only continue to grow.

In the past 15 years, the cost of power generation has nearly tripled. What strategies should be adopted to reduce it? Many say the rising fuel cost and the depreciation of the taka against the dollar over the last six years are the main drivers.

Our domestic gas is being purchased at international prices. Not all power and energy costs are being passed on to consumers. At the same time, currency depreciation has also contributed. Therefore, the areas where costs are rising must be analyzed carefully before taking future decisions. There is no alternative to reducing generation costs.

Bangladesh's import dependence on power and energy is currently around 55%. Many argue that there is no alternative to exploring and using domestic gas and coal to curb this. What do you suggest?

I want to look at this in two ways. Our supply is low, so we have to import to meet the deficit. Not only is Bangladesh, South Asia as a whole is import-dependent. We had our gas resources, but wasted them. You say 55%, but I say it is closer to 70%. Because of wrong policies, we are buying domestic gas at import-equivalent prices from IOC`s. The other issue is on the demand side. We must consider demand-side management as well, because supply-side measures alone cannot meet the country's energy needs. Also, when energy is supplied at below-market prices, it inevitably gets misused. So, by ensuring efficient technology use, we must gradually reduce demand. Otherwise, subsidies will keep increasing. I believe the way forward is to streamline the processes of the energy and power sector. That will practically provide the direction needed to resolve future crises.

Rural electricity is provided by REB-PBS. But the conflict between REB and PBS is still ongoing. What is the way out?

We worked on this issue and made recommendations to the government. Indeed, this is not fully corporatization, but it is not possible to run such a large rural power supply infrastructure centrally from Dhaka. That is why we suggested creating four regional companies. But the operating policy must be finalized, because these companies must operate on a break-even basis. Profit is not realistic. To ensure rural power supply, mismanagement must stop, and efficiency must increase. Rural consumers cannot bear the full cost burden, so not all PBS units will ever be profitable. Therefore, profitable PBSs must cross-subsidize the others.

We must remember that managing 80 PBSs from Dhaka is not a sustainable strategy. They should be divided into four zones, with each company given decision-making independence. However, REB operations should continue, as they will provide technical support to the PBSs.

For the next government that comes to power, what will be the biggest challenge? What kind of power and energy development plan should be included in their election manifesto?

Honestly, I am not very optimistic about promises. Political parties will always promise more than each other. I don't expect much in terms of realistic commitments. But what we can expect is that whatever they do in the power and energy sector, they should do it with transparency and with the people and the country's priorities in mind. EP

Reverse Swing

Farid Hossain

YUNUS SETS THE ELECTION ROADMAP GOING

In a televised address to the nation on August 5, the first anniversary of the historic student-led mass upsurge that ended Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus declared that Bangladesh will go to the polls in the first half of February next year.

His announcement has been welcomed by the political parties that currently matter. Bangladeshis, who have long been deprived of a truly free and fair vote, have also greeted Yunus's announcement with high hopes for democracy and their rights. "I've been eagerly waiting to hear such an announcement from the chief adviser," said Shahnaz Akther, a university graduate who has been enrolled as a first-time voter. "I'm already feeling excited." In presenting the election roadmap, Prof. Yunus, the Nobel laureate who took over as the head of the interim administration on August 8, three days after the mass upsurge, reiterated his promise to hold the freest, fairest, and transparent election that Bangladesh has ever seen in its history. "We will step into the final and most important phase after delivering this speech to you, and that is the transfer of power to an elected government," he said. "On behalf of the government, we will extend all necessary support to ensure that the election is free, peaceful, and celebratory in spirit," the interim leader added.

When he took over the responsibility of running the country after Hasina's fall, Prof. Yunus unveiled three key tasks for his interim government: reforms, trials in the July massacre, and then an election. In his speech to the nation, he once again, correctly thought, underlined the importance of reforms for the election to be free, fair, and peaceful, allowing the voters to gather at the polling stations to choose their representatives freely and in an atmosphere of festivities. He has rightly called for people to seize the "opportunity" for reform. He also warned about people whom he said sought to undermine the nation's gains, saying, "The fallen autocrats and their self-serving allies remain active, conspiring to derail our progress."

A day after presenting the roadmap for the vote and transfer of power to the people's elected representatives, the chief adviser's office wrote to the Election Commission asking it to start the poll preparation. The ball is now within the EC's court. It has announced that the election schedule will be published in December, three months before the vote. A new voter list has also been published. Election Commission (EC) Senior Secretary Akhter Ahmed has said that as of June 30, 2025, the total number of the country's voters stood at 12,61,70,900. Out of those, 6,40,06,916 are male voters and 6,21,62,760 are female voters, he said, adding that the rate of voter inclusion in 2025 is 3.69 percent and the rate of increase of voters is 1.97 percent.

Political parties are also making their preparation. The election campaign is already in the air. The parties already registered with the EC are joining the fray. BNP, the party expected to win the upcoming election, has reiterated its promise to take the smaller partners along, though it is still unclear how it will sail through the troubled waters in sharing seats, even if the number is small. How the BNP's aspirants will behave under the changed political situation in the absence of the Awami League is anybody's guess. Will they loyally accept the high command's decision? The party may likely see rebels to deal with. Will Jamaat, now the second largest party, join the polls without raising any new issue? It has already been pressing for proportional representation, especially in the proposed upper house of the parliament. The student-led National Citizen Party is yet to formally get the EC registration, but surely will get it.

For the voters, it's now time to wait and see how the political parties come to woo them. EP

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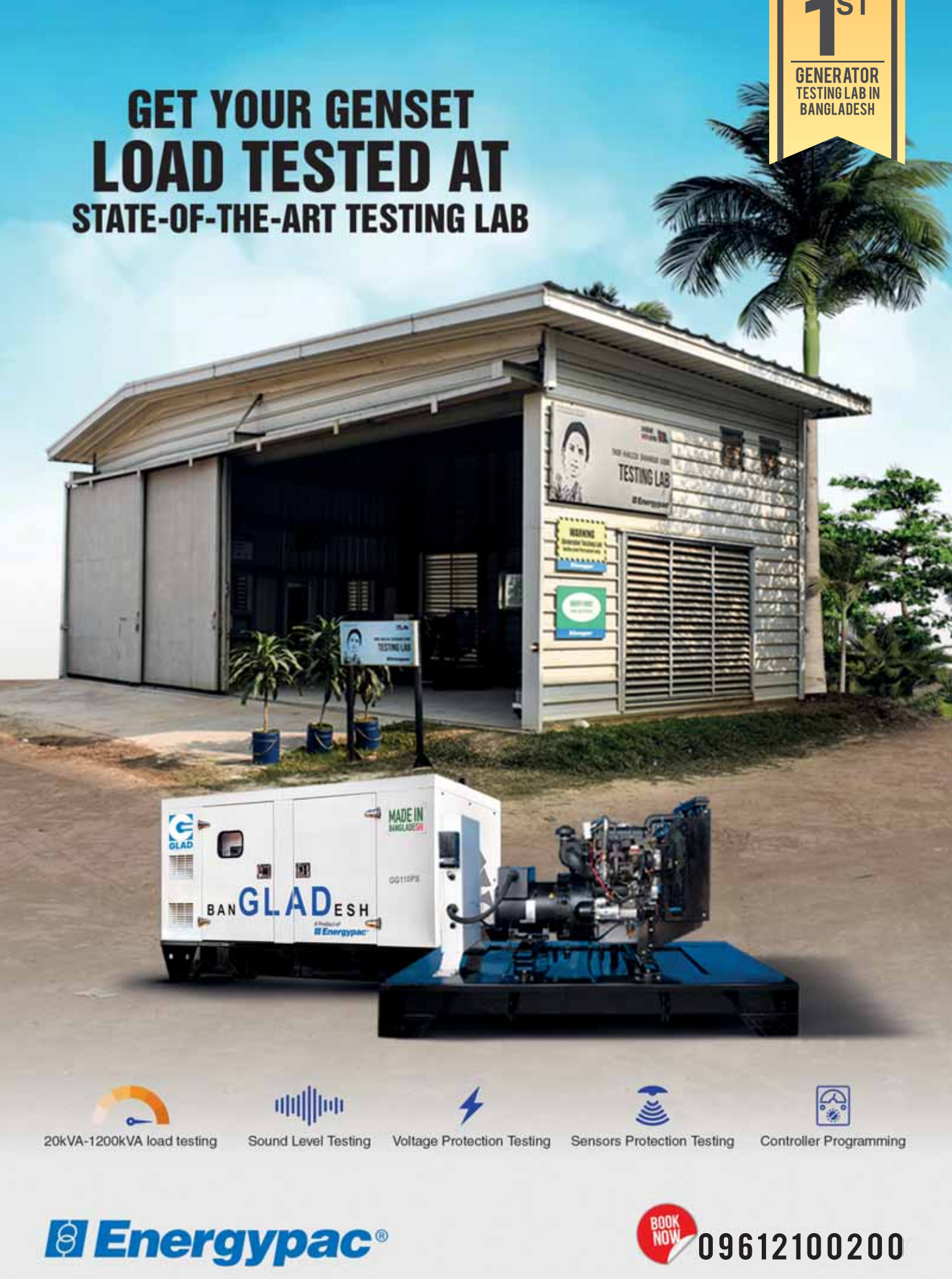
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ENERGY & POWER FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE, REGD. NO. DA. 3048, VOL 23, ISSUE 05, AUGUST 16-31, 2025, PRICE TK.100