

ENERGY & POWER

Deepwater Gamble

- Load-Shedding Cripples Rural Life
- Existing Offshore Data Must Be Better Leveraged
- The Silent Risk in Bangladesh's Gas Sector: Losing Gas Underground Forever



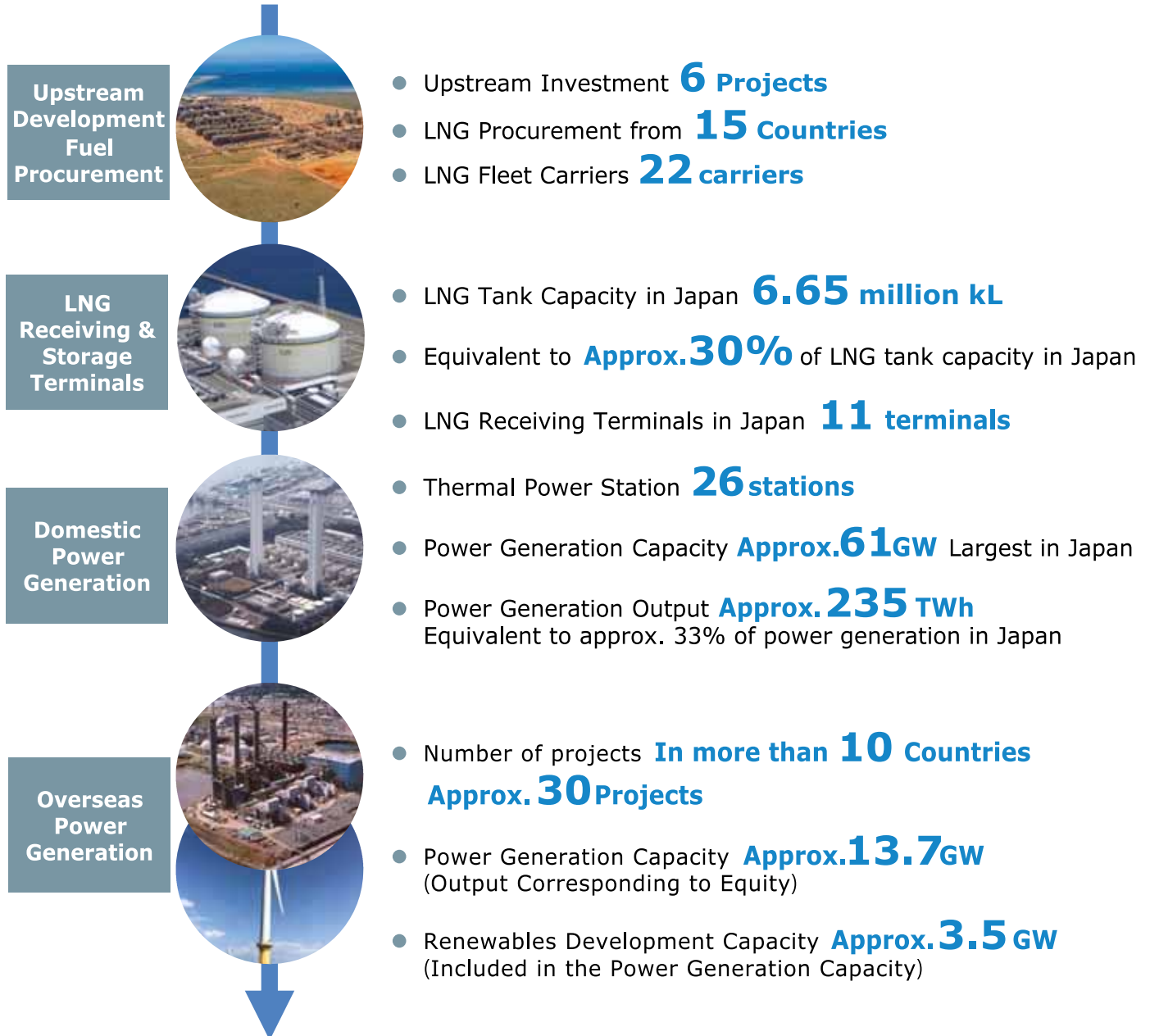
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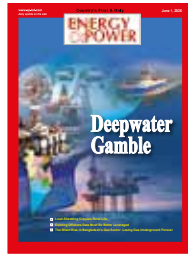
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Policymakers must recognize that offshore oil and gas exploration is a capital-intensive, high-risk undertaking that requires advanced technology, specialized expertise, and substantial financial resources. As a result, there is no realistic alternative to attracting foreign investment and international expertise if Bangladesh hopes to unlock the hydrocarbon potential of its offshore areas... Professor Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Bhuiyan tells EP



EDITORIAL

The launch of Offshore Bidding Round 2026 marks one of Bangladesh's most important energy initiatives in recent years. As domestic gas production declines and dependence on costly imported fuels increases, the country has little choice but to intensify efforts to explore its own hydrocarbon resources. The revised Offshore Model PSC 2026 is undoubtedly a significant improvement. By addressing concerns related to gas pricing, pipeline tariffs, investment protection, and data costs, the government has demonstrated a willingness to learn from the failure of the previous bidding round. These reforms should make Bangladesh more competitive in the global race for exploration capital. However, an attractive contract alone will not guarantee success. International oil companies ultimately invest where they see both commercial potential and confidence in the investment environment. Bangladesh still faces challenges in both areas. The country's offshore geological data remains limited and insufficiently packaged for investors. Reprocessing existing seismic data and presenting a compelling geological narrative should become an immediate priority. At the same time, the government must actively market the opportunity through international roadshows, diplomatic engagement, and direct discussions with potential investors.

Even if successful bids are received, commercial discoveries may take a decade or more to materialize. Patience, consistency, and policy stability will therefore be essential. Whether that potential becomes reality will depend not only on the PSC terms but also on the government's ability to build investor confidence, maintain transparency, and pursue smart energy diplomacy.

The opportunity is significant; now the challenge is execution.

h i g h l i g h t s

COVER



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Stakeholders emphasized that up to 80 percent of LPG-related accidents could be prevented through greater awareness, stricter enforcement of safety regulations, improved training, and stronger institutional oversight. They called for a comprehensive policy framework backed by effective implementation to ensure the sustainable and safe growth of Bangladesh's LPG sector.... More in Roundtable



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Bangladesh has launched its most ambitious offshore energy initiative in years, offering 26 oil and gas blocks under a revamped Offshore Bidding Round 2026. With domestic gas reserves declining and dependence on imported fuel rising, the government is betting that improved contract terms and stronger investor protections can finally unlock the country's largely unexplored offshore potential.



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India Raises Export Duty on Petrol, Cuts Those on Diesel and Aviation Fuel



India raised its export duty on petrol and cut those on diesel and aviation fuel recently, its government said in a statement, within a day of raising retail fuel prices for the first time since the Iran war started.

The duty on petrol exports has been raised to 3 rupees (\$0.0313) per liter, while that on diesel has been cut to 16.5 rupees per liter, the statement said. Export

duties on aviation fuel have been cut to 16 rupees per liter.

The rates are being revised fortnightly and are based on the average international prices of crude oil, petrol, diesel, and ATF during the period since the last review.

There is no change in the existing excise duty rates on petrol and diesel cleared for domestic consumption.

QatarEnergy, ExxonMobil reach first production from Train 1 at Golden Pass

With first LNG production achieved, Golden Pass LNG is on track to commence exports to global markets in second-quarter 2026.



Golden Pass LNG, a joint venture between QatarEnergy and ExxonMobil, reached first production of LNG from Train 1 at the export project in Sabine Pass, Tex.

liquefaction operations, and meet its commercial and strategic objectives, ExxonMobil said in a release Mar. 30.

With first LNG completed, the joint venture advances work to deliver its first cargo, achieve sustained

Train 1 is one of three LNG trains comprising the 18-million tonnes/year plant.

ExxonMobil Sticks to Long-Term Upstream Growth Strategy

ExxonMobil is continuing its long-term upstream investment strategy despite ongoing market volatility, focusing on production growth, technology deployment and operational efficiency.



could significantly boost production from unconventional reservoirs.

Speaking at CERAWeek 2026, ExxonMobil Upstream President Dan Ammann said global energy demand will continue to rise, supporting the company's long-term expansion plans.

Ammann said ExxonMobil is deploying advanced completion technologies, including lightweight proppants, which are already increasing recovery rates by up to 20%.

He highlighted the company's operations in the Permian Basin as a key growth driver, noting that improved recovery technologies

The company aims to further improve recovery efficiency as part of its strategy to strengthen long-term upstream earnings growth.

Santos Starts First Oil Production at Pikka Project in Alaska

Santos Limited has begun first oil production from Phase 1 of the Pikka development in Alaska's North Slope, marking an initial step toward full commercial output.



The project, located in the Nanushuk formation, has started early production as part of commissioning work, with output expected to ramp up to around 20,000 barrels per day in the coming weeks.

Phase 1 of the project includes 28 drilled wells out of a planned 45, along with infrastructure such as a drilling platform, seawater treatment plant, pipelines, and a remote operations center.

The operator said production will remain intermittent as systems are gradually brought online, with stabilization expected after supporting facilities become fully operational.

Once fully ramped up, Pikka is expected to reach peak production of around 80,000 barrels per day in the third quarter of this year.

ADB President Meets PM Tarique, Says It Intends to Provide \$5b Over Five Years

Asian Development Bank President Masato Kanda has met Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in Dhaka to discuss Bangladesh's development priorities during a visit that highlighted funding announcements totalling \$5 billion.



The ADB said it intends to provide \$5 billion over five years for the Integrated Growth Network Development Initiative, presented by Kanda during the visit.

Bangladesh is entering a critical new phase, he said, adding that the ADB will help

the country protect hard-won stability, unlock new sources of growth and build a more diversified and resilient economy that delivers better jobs and wider opportunity, according to a press release issued on 25 May.

During the visit, the lender signed about \$1.4 billion in loans as part of the 2026 annual commitment program.

Mirana Mahrukh Appointed New Secretary of Power Division

Mirana Mahrukh, Additional Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD), has been appointed as the new Secretary of the Power Division.



The appointment was announced in a notification issued recently by the Senior Appointments Wing-1 of the Ministry of Public Administration.

The order, signed by Senior Assistant Secretary Jeti Pru on behalf of the President, stated that the appointment would take immediate effect in the public interest.

Mirana Mahrukh is a member of the 18th batch

of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). She obtained both her bachelor's and master's degrees in Public Administration from University of Dhaka and later earned an MBA from Victoria University in Melbourne.

During her career, she served in various positions in field administration and government ministries.

BGFCL Starts Drilling Kamta-2 Well to Boost Gas Supply

Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFCL) has started drilling operations at the Kamta-2 appraisal-development well in Gazipur's Kaliganj, aiming to boost domestic gas production.



If drilling and testing are completed successfully, the well is expected to add up to 10 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf) to the national grid, according to a BGFCL press release.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Anindya Islam Amit inaugurated the spud-in operation of the well recently

under a project titled "Drilling of Four Appraisal-Development Wells at Titas and Kamta Fields."

Under the project, three wells will be drilled at the Titas Gas Field and one at the Kamta Gas Field.

The release said the government aims to supply around 55 mmcf of gas to the national grid in the first year by June 2027 after the project's completion.

Bangladesh–Angola Move Toward G2G Energy Cooperation Deal

Bangladesh has proposed a long-term government-to-government (G2G) energy cooperation framework with Angola to diversify crude oil and gas imports beyond the Middle East.



The proposal was discussed during the first high-level virtual energy dialogue between the two countries.

Bangladesh also invited an Angolan technical team to Dhaka for further negotiations and expressed readiness to send its own delegation to Luanda.

Bangladesh highlighted its rising energy demand and the need for secure supply

diversification, while Angola outlined its production capacity of around 1.1 million barrels of crude oil per day and plans to expand refining and gas infrastructure.

Both sides agreed to accelerate a proposed MoU on energy cooperation and strengthen technical-level engagement to develop a structured partnership.



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Amirul Haque New President of CCCI



Mohammed Amirul Haque has been elected president of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), cementing the dominance of the United Business Forum after its clean sweep in the biennial polls.

The chamber's directors sealed the leadership decision at their recent presidium meeting at the

chamber office in Agrabad World Trade Center in the presence of the Chamber Election Board.

The newly elected directors unanimously formed the presidium, with Amirul from the Town Association Trade Group chosen as president.

Mr. Haque also the President of LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB).

Bangladesh Hits Record 17,200MW Power Generation



Bangladesh recorded its highest-ever electricity generation, with power production reaching 17,200 megawatts at 9:00pm on a day recently, according to a notification issued by Power Grid Bangladesh PLC.

The new record surpassed the previous peak generation of 16,794MW achieved on July 23, 2025.

The state-owned power transmission company said the record volume of electricity was transmitted smoothly across the national grid without any disruption.

According to the company, the achievement was made possible through coordinated efforts among power generation plants and electricity distribution agencies across the country.

BERC Cuts Aviation Fuel Prices

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) has announced a major reduction in aviation fuel prices for both domestic and international flights, effective from midnight.



Under the latest adjustment, jet fuel prices for domestic flights have been reduced by Tk 39.57 per liter, bringing the new rate down to Tk 165.88 from the previous Tk 205.45 per liter.

For international routes, the duty- and VAT-free jet fuel price for both local and foreign airlines has been cut to \$1.0823 per liter from \$1.34.

BERC reviews and adjusts aviation fuel prices every

month in line with changes in the international oil market.

This is the second reduction in jet fuel prices in May alone.

Earlier on May 7, BERC reduced domestic jet fuel prices from Tk 227.08 to Tk 205.45 per liter, while international rates were lowered from \$1.48 to \$1.34 per liter.

Fire incident at Officers' Canteen in Dormitory Building of JERA Meghnaghat Power Limited

A fire incident occurred at the Officers' Canteen in the dormitory building of JERA Meghnaghat Power Limited (JMPL) at 12:30 pm on 13 May 2026.



A total of 12 individuals were affected by the incident, including four personnel from a third-party service provider working in the kitchen area and eight JMPL personnel who were present in the canteen at the time, says a press release.

JMPL immediately activated its emergency response protocol, and all affected individuals were transported using the in-house ambulance and plant vehicles to the National Institute of Burn and Plastic

Surgery in Dhaka, where they are currently receiving medical treatment.

As the incident occurred in a separate area from the main power plant building, there has been no impact on plant operations. The plant continues to operate in accordance with instructions from National Load Dispatch Center (NLDC) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB).

Bangladesh has launched Offshore Bidding Round 2026, offering 26 offshore blocks in the Bay of Bengal under a revised and more investor-friendly Production Sharing Contract (PSC). The new framework addresses concerns raised during the unsuccessful 2024 bidding round through improved gas pricing, lower costs, enhanced investment protection, and greater commercial flexibility. While experts generally welcome the reforms, they stress that attracting international oil companies will also require better geological data, effective promotion, political stability, and proactive energy diplomacy to unlock the country's offshore potential.



Deepwater Gamble

Md. Monirul Islam

Mollah Amzad Hossain
& Aditya Hossain




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OPERATIONAL & STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



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SIX-YEAR INITIAL PERIOD for surveys | THREE-YEAR SUBSEQUENT PERIOD



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Contractors may sell to third parties or export if domestic buyers are unavailable.

50% REDUCTION IN DATA PACKAGE COSTS
Lowered costs for geological and geophysical information encourage immediate IOC participation.

Bangladesh has launched its most ambitious offshore energy initiative in years, offering 26 oil and gas blocks in the Bay of Bengal under a revamped and investor-friendly Offshore Bidding Round 2026. With domestic gas reserves declining and dependence on imported fuel rising, the government is betting that improved contract terms, stronger investor protections, and aggressive international outreach can finally unlock the country's largely unexplored offshore potential.

Yet attractive fiscal terms alone may not be enough. The real test will be whether Bangladesh can convince international oil companies that its offshore prospects, investment climate, and political stability justify the billions of dollars and years of risk required for deepwater exploration.

Through a public notice and press conference, the Energy and Mineral Resources Division has formally announced November 30, 2026, as the deadline for bid submissions.

At the launch event, Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hasan Mahmood said that although the previous government frequently highlighted Bangladesh's maritime

boundary victories, it failed to take effective steps to explore and develop the Bay of Bengal's hydrocarbon resources. While efforts were made toward the end of its tenure to attract offshore investment, no investors ultimately participated.

The minister said the BNP-led government is working to ensure a favorable investment climate. He recalled that Bangladesh's 1993 bidding round under former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia attracted significant international investment and led to major oil and gas discoveries. According to him, fields developed under those PSC arrangements still account for around 60 percent of the country's domestic gas production.

The Energy Division says a new Offshore Model Production Sharing Contract (PSC) 2026 has been approved after extensive revisions. Compared with the Offshore Model PSC 2023, the new version is designed to be more investor-friendly while protecting national interests. Officials hope the revised terms will encourage international oil companies (IOCs) to participate in offshore exploration.

Petrobangla noted that during the previous bidding round, the submission

deadline was extended until December 2024. Although seven IOCs purchased tender documents and two companies bought data packages, no bids were ultimately submitted.

Subsequent consultations with international companies, industry experts, and consultants identified several reasons behind the failure. These included concerns over gas pricing, pipeline tariffs, the Workers' Profit Participation Fund (WPPF), limited geological data, and the high cost of acquiring data packages. However, investors' lack of confidence in the political environment at the time was widely viewed as the most significant factor.

In response, the government revised the PSC framework and secured approval for the new model. Petrobangla has already begun distributing bid notices to IOCs and has made the Offshore Model PSC 2026 publicly available on its website. A separate publication highlighting Bangladesh's hydrocarbon potential, gas market, and broader energy sector is also being prepared.

Key Features of Offshore Model PSC 2026

Officials from Petrobangla and the Energy Division say the revised contract reflects international best practices

and incorporates provisions commonly used in leading hydrocarbon-producing countries.

Gas Pricing

Natural gas prices will be linked to international Brent crude oil prices.

- Shallow-water blocks: 10.5 percent of Brent crude price
- Deepwater blocks: 11 percent of Brent crude price

To protect both investors and the government from extreme market volatility, floor and ceiling price mechanisms have been introduced.

Deepwater Pipeline Tariff

A new provision allows Petrobangla to pay transportation tariffs for petroleum moved through privately constructed subsea pipelines. The measure is intended to improve project economics for offshore developments requiring major infrastructure investments.

Reduced WPPF Rate

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has reduced the WPPF contribution rate for fully foreign-owned energy companies from 5 percent to 1.5 percent.

Lower Data Costs

To encourage participation, the cost of geological and geophysical data packages has been reduced by 50 percent.

Exploration Period

The total exploration period will be nine years:

- Initial exploration phase: six years
- Four years for geological, geophysical, and seismic surveys
- Two years for drilling
- Subsequent exploration period: three years

Only seismic surveys are mandatory under the minimum work program, while additional seismic and drilling commitments will be determined through bidding.

Bank Guarantees

Required guarantees include:

- Geological and geophysical work: US\$3 million
- Drilling phase: US\$20 million
- Subsequent exploration phase: US\$20 million

Bangladesh has launched Offshore Bidding Round 2026, offering 26 offshore blocks in the Bay of Bengal under a revised and more investor-friendly Production Sharing Contract (PSC). The new framework addresses concerns raised during the unsuccessful 2024 bidding round through improved gas pricing, lower costs, enhanced investment protection, and greater commercial flexibility.

Cost Recovery and Profit Sharing

Investors will be allowed to recover up to 100 percent of exploration and development costs, subject to an annual ceiling of 75 percent of production revenue.

Government profit-sharing limits are:

- 40–65 percent for shallow-water blocks.
- 35–60 percent for deepwater blocks.

For shallow offshore blocks, a 10 percent carried interest for BAPEX will be mandatory.

Tax Benefits

Contractors will enjoy duty-free import facilities for equipment and materials used in exploration and development. Petrobangla will continue to bear contractors' corporate income tax obligations.

Oil Pricing

Any oil discovered will be priced according to prevailing fair market prices in South and Southeast Asia.

Gas Sales and Export Rights

Contractors may sell their share of gas to third parties in the domestic market, subject to Petrobangla's right of first refusal. If domestic buyers are unavailable, exports will be permitted.

Investment Protection

The PSC includes stabilization and anti-expropriation clauses to ensure investor protection.

Fees and Bonuses

- Commercial discovery bonus: US\$3 million
- Production bonuses:
- Gas: US\$500,000 to US\$6 million
- Oil: US\$500,000 to US\$4 million

Research and Development Contributions

Contractors will contribute:

- US\$0.10 per barrel of profit oil
- US\$0.004 per MCF of profit gas

Service Fees

Annual contract service fees:

- Exploration and development phase: US\$200,000
- Production phase: US\$300,000

Training Grants

Annual training contributions:

- Exploration and development phase: US\$150,000
- Production phase: US\$200,000

Production Period

- Gas fields: 25 years
- Oil fields: 20 years

These terms may be extended by an additional 10 years if commercial

production continues.

Officials believe the revised Offshore Model PSC 2026 will significantly improve investor confidence and attract international energy companies to explore the Bay of Bengal's untapped oil and gas resources, helping strengthen Bangladesh's long-term energy security.

Model PSC and Investor Perspectives

Industry experts generally view the new PSC as technically and commercially stronger than previous versions.

Professor Dr. Anwar Hossain Bhuiyan of the Department of Geology at the University of Dhaka described the revised PSC as balanced and attractive for both investors and the state. However, he emphasized that Bangladesh still lacks a major offshore discovery that could significantly boost investor confidence.

According to him, Petrobangla possesses approximately 66,000 line-kilometers of seismic data, but much of it has not been adequately reprocessed or interpreted. He believes improving and packaging this data should be a priority.

Dr. Bhuiyan also noted that Bangladesh's offshore geology may not support giant discoveries of 30–50 trillion cubic feet (TCF), which many major IOCs seek when evaluating investment opportunities. Beyond contractual terms, investors will also assess political stability, the investment climate, and geopolitical considerations.

Energy expert and former BUET Dean Professor Ijaz Hossain welcomed the new PSC but questioned whether it would be sufficient to attract the world's largest energy companies.

In his view, Bangladesh should focus aggressively on attracting capable mid-sized international operators while highlighting the country's investment potential and political stability.

Former BAPEX Managing Director Murtaza Ahmed Faruque said the PSC is substantially improved but argued that additional incentives should have been

The government is now offering 26 offshore blocks—11 shallow-water and 15 deepwater blocks—in what may be its most important offshore investment drive in decades.



offered for joint ventures involving BAPEX and local companies.

According to him, greater domestic participation would help Bangladesh develop technical expertise and operational capacity in offshore exploration over the long term.

Challenges and the Road Ahead

Bangladesh lacks the financial resources, technology, and specialized workforce required to independently conduct offshore exploration. Consequently, foreign investment remains indispensable.

To attract investors, the Energy Division is considering a series of international roadshows. While details have not yet been finalized, experts recommend promotional events in major energy and financial centers, including Singapore, Europe, and North America.

Many also advocate organizing follow-up events in Bangladesh so prospective investors can directly assess the country's investment climate, regulatory environment, and political conditions.

Industry stakeholders note that the number of companies actively investing in offshore exploration worldwide is relatively small. Therefore, Bangladesh must pursue a highly targeted investment promotion strategy.

Experts suggest engaging foreign diplomats stationed in Dhaka and

directing Bangladeshi missions abroad to actively promote offshore opportunities among major energy companies.

The upcoming D-8 Energy Ministers' Meeting in Baku may provide another platform for promoting investment opportunities in Bangladesh's offshore sector.

Conclusion

Many experts estimate that Bangladesh's portion of the Bay of Bengal could contain between 20 and 30 TCF of natural gas resources. However, only extensive seismic surveys and exploratory drilling can determine whether those resources actually exist and can be produced commercially.

Despite becoming one of the first countries in the region to begin offshore exploration in the 1970s, Bangladesh has discovered only one commercial offshore gas field—Sangu—which has already been depleted.

Several major international companies, including TotalEnergies, ConocoPhillips, Santos, POSCO Daewoo, and ONGC, have previously explored offshore blocks in Bangladesh but eventually withdrew after failing to achieve commercially attractive results.

The government is now offering 26 offshore blocks—11 shallow-water and 15 deepwater blocks—in what may be its most important offshore investment drive in decades.

The revised PSC has addressed many investor concerns, but contractual improvements alone may not be enough. Success will depend on how effectively Bangladesh can market its offshore potential, improve data quality, build investor confidence, and navigate an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

For a country facing mounting energy import costs and growing demand, unlocking the Bay of Bengal's resources could transform its energy future. Whether Offshore Bidding Round 2026 succeeds where previous efforts failed may ultimately determine Bangladesh's long-term energy security trajectory.



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OFFSHORE PETROLEUM RESOURCES WOULD BE A GAME CHANGER FOR BANGLADESH



Saleque Sufi

The success of the bidding round will largely depend on how effectively the government manages geopolitical sensitivities, ensures transparency and accountability, and guarantees equal treatment for all bidders.

Against the backdrop of a chronic energy crisis, the Bangladesh government, led by the BNP alliance, has launched a new Production Sharing Contract (PSC) bidding round for offshore exploration in the Bay of Bengal. The initiative is considered a major step toward strengthening the country's long-term energy security through the discovery and development of offshore petroleum resources.

The updated Model PSC (MPSC) 2026 includes a range of incentives aimed at attracting international oil companies (IOCs) to invest in both shallow and deep-sea blocks. Given continuing volatility in global oil and gas markets, along with growing regional energy demand, the revised terms are expected to encourage participation from major global energy companies.

However, the success of the bidding round will largely depend on how effectively the government manages geopolitical sensitivities, ensures transparency and accountability, and guarantees equal treatment for all bidders. Offshore exploration and development typically require six to seven years before production can begin. Some deepwater blocks are located nearly 400 kilometers

from the coast, and major discoveries may require subsea pipelines or Floating Liquefied Natural Gas (FLNG) facilities, potentially extending development timelines to eight to ten years.

Even so, successful offshore gas discoveries could become a game-changer for Bangladesh's medium-term energy security.

Bangladesh secured sovereign rights over a vast maritime area in the Bay of Bengal following international arbitration, gaining control over an offshore region nearly equal in size to its land territory. Geological assessments suggest strong hydrocarbon potential in the offshore basin. Neighboring India and Myanmar have already discovered substantial offshore gas reserves and are benefiting economically from them.

Bangladesh, however, delayed offshore exploration for years due to policy hesitation, overly conservative approaches, and confusion created by sections of civil society lacking a clear understanding of PSC arrangements. Growing geopolitical competition among global powers such as the United States, China, and India in the Bay of Bengal has also added complexity.

Understanding Production Sharing Contracts

A PSC is essentially an agreement between a state-owned enterprise and an international oil company for the exploration and development of petroleum resources. Ownership of the resources remains with the state.

Under the arrangement, IOCs undertake exploration at their own risk and expense. If commercially viable reserves are discovered, the IOC recovers its investment through a portion of production known as “cost petroleum,” while the remaining “profit petroleum” is shared with the state-owned enterprise according to an agreed formula.

Pricing mechanisms are a critical component of PSC agreements, with market risks shared between the IOC and the state entity. Therefore, PSCs do not transfer ownership of national resources to foreign companies. Rather, IOCs serve as investors, developers, and operators.

It is worth noting that Chevron currently accounts for nearly 60 percent of Bangladesh’s total gas production from three gas fields. Many of the country’s major gas fields—including Titas, Habiganj, Bakhrabad, Rashidpur, Bibiyana, Kailashtila, and Sangu—were discovered by international oil companies.

Bangladesh has not concluded any major successful onshore PSC agreements since 2000, and several offshore PSC initiatives were also poorly managed. Much of the current gas crisis could have been avoided if exploration efforts had continued through partnerships between IOCs and BAPEX.

Key Features of Offshore Bidding Round 2026

Earlier offshore bidding rounds received weak responses due to inadequate fiscal and financial incentives. The updated MPSC 2026 attempts to address those concerns through more attractive commercial terms.

The bidding round covers all 26 offshore blocks—11 shallow-sea (SS) blocks and 15 deep-sea (DS) blocks. Separate applications are required for each

category, although bidders may apply jointly for two adjacent deep-sea blocks under a single contract.

Companies may submit bids individually or through consortium arrangements. Separate work programs and bank guarantees must be submitted for each deep-sea block, even under joint applications. Each block will be evaluated independently.

The deadline for bid submission is November 30, 2026.

Prequalification Requirements

For shallow-sea blocks, bidders must demonstrate a minimum production experience of 5,000 barrels of oil per day or 75 million cubic feet of gas per day from at least one offshore acreage.

For deep-sea blocks, the requirement rises to 10,000 barrels of oil per day or 100 million cubic feet of gas per day. Bidders must also have at least one international exploration and production experience outside their home country.

The bid package includes an information package, promotional package, and data package. These provisions are broadly consistent with PSC frameworks used in countries such as India, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Key Features of Bangladesh Offshore MPSC 2026

Contract Feature	Description
Exploration Period	Total Exploration Period-9 Years: Initial Exploration Period- 6 Years [4 (Geology+ Seismic) + 2 (Drilling)] Subsequent Period-3 Years
Mandatory Work Program	Seismic Only
Biddable Work Program	2D/3D seismic, drilling etc.
Cost Recovery	100% cost recovery with a yearly cap of 75% for both Shallow and Deep Sea blocks.
Total Exploration Period-9 Years: Initial Exploration Period- 6 Years [4 (Geology+ Seismic) + 2 (Drilling)] Subsequent Period-3 Years	a) R-factor (Sliding Scale) based. Cumulative Net Revenue b) R-factor = ----- Cumulative Costs c) Shallow Sea (SS) Blocks: 40% to 65% (Biddable upper & lower limits). d) Deep Sea (DS) Blocks: 35% to 60% (Biddable upper & lower limits).
Carried Interest	10% for BAPEX (Shallow Sea blocks)
Import Duty on Equipment	No duty for equipment and machinery imported for petroleum operations during exploration, production and development phases.
Corporate Income Tax	Contractor’s Corporate Income Tax liability will be borne by Petrobangla.
15. Expropriation and Stabilization	Protection of investment through stabilization and expropriation

Attractive Incentives

Previous PSC terms related to gas pricing, third-party sales, export provisions, pipeline tariffs, and bonus structures failed to attract sufficient IOC interest. The updated framework offers more flexible and commercially attractive terms.

The revised provisions on gas pricing, third-party sales, and export rights are

expected to address investor concerns regarding market risks. Bangladeshis should not be overly concerned about export provisions, as domestic gas shortages and rising future demand are likely to absorb most future production within the country.

CONTRACT FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
GAS PRICE	Gas price linked with international benchmark Brent crude at 10.5% for Shallow Sea (SS) Blocks and 11% for Deep Sea (DS) Blocks, with Floor-Ceiling based on the lowest and highest average Brent prices of the preceding five years.
OIL PRICE	Oil price will be determined on the basis of the fair market value prevailing in South and South East Asia.
THIRD PARTY SALES	Contractor has the option to sell Contractor's share of Natural Gas produced from offshore blocks, in the domestic market to a third party, at a negotiated price, subject to Petrobangla's right of first refusal.
GAS EXPORT	Contractor shall have the right to export any marketable Natural Gas subject to Petrobangla's right of first refusal and non-availability of a domestic buyer.
PIPELINE TARIFF	Mutually agreed pipeline tariff provision introduced for both Shallow and Deep-Sea Blocks, payable by the buyer, considering distance, water depth, and gas volume to support pipeline investment.

Bid Evaluation and Negotiation

Petrobangla and the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) must ensure a transparent and competitive evaluation process that builds investor confidence.

The pricing of data packages should also be reviewed to encourage broader participation rather than maximize short-term revenue from data sales. Government agencies should proactively engage with foreign missions and international investors.

Bangladesh could organize a major roadshow in Dhaka, inviting potential investors and development partners. Diplomatic missions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, the Netherlands, Russia, Norway, China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia should actively encourage companies from their respective countries to participate.

BAPEX could also consider forming partnerships with leading Bangladeshi business groups for joint bidding in offshore blocks, helping develop domestic expertise alongside international operators.

Reports suggest that ExxonMobil is particularly interested in all 15 deepwater blocks. Bangladesh has also entered into a long-term energy cooperation framework with the United States. The government must ensure that the open bidding process remains free from geopolitical complications that could discourage participation from companies based in Russia, China, or elsewhere.

Given the Bay of Bengal's strategic importance, Bangladesh must pursue smart and balanced energy diplomacy.

Conclusion

Bangladesh should engage intensively with potential investors through proactive and strategic energy diplomacy. In addition to pre-bid meetings, a well-organized international roadshow should be held in Dhaka, preferably between August and September.

Based on investor feedback, minor adjustments to the MPSC framework may still

The pricing of data packages should also be reviewed to encourage broader participation rather than maximize short-term revenue from data sales. Government agencies should proactively engage with foreign missions and international investors.

be considered. Offshore exploration requires multi-billion-dollar risk investments, and investors must feel confident about the commercial environment and potential returns.

Bangladesh's past PSC experiences, including the Scimitar and Niko controversies, damaged investor confidence. The government must now work proactively with successful bidders to ensure transparent and mutually beneficial agreements.

Offshore gas exploration is critical for Bangladesh's medium-term energy security. At the same time, the government should also consider launching a fresh PSC bidding round for onshore exploration areas. **EP**

Saleque Sufi, Energy Expert, Former Director of Operations, GTCL

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Mortuza Ahmad Faruque

STRENGTHENING BANGLADESH'S LPG SECTOR

Regulatory Reform, Safety Awareness and Future Pathways

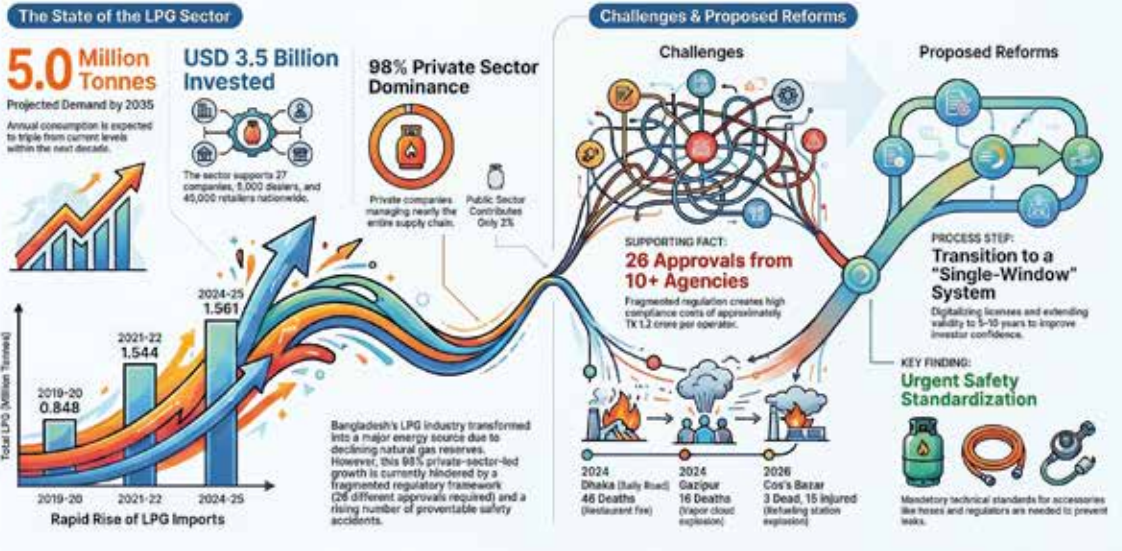
Bangladesh's LPG industry has grown rapidly over the past decade, transforming from a limited alternative fuel into a major energy source for households, transport, restaurants, and industries. The expansion was largely driven by declining domestic natural gas reserves and the suspension of new residential gas connections, which increased reliance on LPG as a cleaner and more accessible energy option.

LPG has significantly improved energy access in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas where pipeline gas infrastructure is unavailable. It also plays an important role in reducing dependence on traditional biomass and supporting cleaner cooking solutions. However, the industry remains heavily dependent on imports, exposing it to global price fluctuations, foreign exchange pressures, and supply chain disruptions. Efficient port handling, storage infrastructure, inland transportation, consumer safety awareness, and a stable regulatory framework are therefore essential to ensure affordability, safety, and uninterrupted supply. As Bangladesh continues its energy transition, LPG is expected to play an increasingly important role in strengthening energy security, supporting industrial growth, and diversifying the country's fuel mix. Sustained policy support, infrastructure development, and improved regulatory coordination will be critical for the long-term sustainability of the sector.

LPG Import, Rising Demand and Growth

LPG import and distribution in Bangladesh are currently dominated by the private sector, while the government plans to engage BPC in imports to stabilize the domestic market and protect consumers. In FY 2024–25, public production through Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL) was 12,560 tonnes, complemented by private sector imports of 1.44 million

Strengthening Bangladesh's LPG Sector: From Rapid Growth to Regulated Safety



tonnes. The LPG production and import from FY 2019–20 to FY 2024–25 is as follows.

Fiscal Year	LPG Production by ERL (tonnes)	LPG Import (million tonnes)	Total (million tonnes)
2019-20	13,414	0.835	0.848
FY2020-21	13,461	1,427	1.441
FY2021-22	12,361	1,531	1.544
FY2022-23	15,215	1,278	1.294
FY2023-24	12,542	1,426	1.439
FY2024-25	12,640	1,548	1.561

The market is overwhelmingly dominated by the private sector, which accounts for approximately 98% of total supply, while the public sector, through BPC, contributes only about 2%. To date, 58 LPG licenses have been issued, supporting 27 companies. Among them, 20 operate import terminals and 7 function as satellite operators, reflecting a diverse infrastructure network. The industry has attracted an estimated USD 3.5 billion in investment, supported by around 5,000 dealers and 45,000 retailers nationwide. Current storage and distribution capacity includes approximately 40 million LPG cylinders.

The rapid growth of the LPG sector began after the government stopped providing new natural gas connections to households in 2008. Since then, LPG has emerged as a key alternative fuel for domestic, commercial, industrial, and transport sectors amid rising natural gas shortages. Current annual consumption is estimated at 1.5–1.7 million tonnes and is projected to exceed 3.5 million tonnes by 2030 and reach 5.0 million tonnes by 2035, highlighting the need for strategic import planning and regulatory reform.

Household consumption accounts for nearly 80% of total LPG use, while industry and commercial users represent

about 12%, and Autogas around 8%. LPG is widely used in sectors such as textiles, ceramics, food processing, metal works, and chemical manufacturing, particularly where pipeline gas is unavailable or insufficient.

The transport sector has also supported LPG expansion. As demand for CNG increased, LPG has been promoted as an alternative automotive fuel to reduce pressure on the domestic gas supply. Its adoption is growing due to lower emissions compared to gasoline and diesel, expanding conversion facilities, and improved fuel availability.

Bangladesh's LPG demand has been growing at nearly 10% annually. At present, LPG accounts for about 2% of the country's primary energy mix and plays an increasingly important role in energy security and fuel diversification.

Ensuring Safe LPG Cylinder Transportation and Distribution

The transportation of LPG cylinders from import terminals to storage depots, from storage facilities to industrial consumers, and onward to Autogas refueling stations should remain the full operational responsibility of LPG operators. Operators must ensure that all cylinder movements are conducted in compliance with approved safety standards, including proper handling, secure loading, certified transport vehicles, and trained personnel.

Regular inspection and verification are essential to confirm that cylinders are stored and transported under safe and compliant conditions throughout the supply chain. This includes checks on stacking practices, ventilation, fire safety arrangements, cylinder integrity, and adherence to designated storage limits.

For monitoring domestic LPG cylinder storage and distribution, a certified and authorized third-party inspection mechanism may be introduced as a supportive oversight system. Such entities should be independently accredited, technically competent, and institutionally structured to carry out routine audits and compliance verification at retail points, godowns, and distribution networks.

The development of clear qualification criteria, certification standards, and capacity-building programs for these third-party organizations is crucial to ensure their effectiveness. This will strengthen regulatory oversight, enhance safety compliance, and reduce operational risks across the LPG distribution chain.

Financial Burden for LPG Operators

The LPG industry in Bangladesh faces a significant financial burden due to multiple layers of licensing, compliance, and regulatory requirements. On average, operators incur direct regulatory costs exceeding about Tk-1.0 crore annually, while indirect costs, including administration, manpower, inspections, travel, and coordination with multiple agencies, can raise total compliance expenses to around Tk-1.2 crore per operator per year.

Major costs include fees to the BERC, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, BPC, and the DoE, along with BSTI compliance and safety certifications. Recently imposed mandatory in-house laboratory requirements have further increased operational costs, as establishing and maintaining a compliant LPG testing laboratory may require investment ranging from approximately Tk-1.5 crore or more per plant, depending on the scope and accreditation requirements.

LPG Cylinder Accidents

LPG cylinder accidents have become a growing safety concern in Bangladesh, reflecting both the rapid expansion of LPG usage and gaps in safety practices. Incidents ranging from household leaks to large-scale explosions at refueling stations and during transportation have resulted in significant loss of life and property.

These accidents highlight the urgent need for stronger safety standards, better consumer awareness, and stricter regulatory enforcement to ensure that the benefits of LPG as a clean energy source are not overshadowed by preventable technological disasters. Recent LPG cylinder accidents are as follows:

- 2026 : Dhaka (Dhanmondi): Burner leakage in an airtight kitchen; 1 death.
- 2026 : Cox's Bazar: Explosion at new refueling station; 3 dead, 15 injured.
- 2025 : Rangpur: Tank explosion during repair; 1 dead, several injured.
- 2025 : Cumilla: A truck with 200 cylinders overturned and exploded; roadside shops were damaged.
- 2024 : Gazipur: Vapor cloud explosion on congested road; 16 deaths, many injured.
- 2024 : Mymensingh: Fire at Autogas station during unloading; 3 dead, 6 injured.
- 2024 : Dhaka (Baily Road): Restaurant fire; 46 deaths, many injured.
- 2023 : Savar (Ashulia): Cylinder leakage; 10 burn injuries.
- 2023 : Savar (Fantasy Kingdom): Warehouse explosion; 5 burn injuries.
- 2023 : Dhaka: Faulty cylinder leakage; 2 deaths.

Role of LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB)

The LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh should play a leading role in promoting safety, efficiency, and sustainable growth in Bangladesh's LPG sector. Working with the Government and BERC, LOAB can help develop safety regulations, strengthen compliance, and raise technical standards across the industry. Regular safety awareness campaigns, stakeholder coordination and promotion of best practices are essential to reducing accidents. Consumer education on the safe use of LPG cylinders and appliances, especially in households, should also remain a priority to improve public safety and confidence in LPG as a cleaner energy source.

Safety Aspects of LPG

Safety is a critical concern in the LPG industry due to its highly flammable nature and risks across the supply chain, including production, storage, transportation, distribution, and end use. Any gas leakage must be treated as a serious hazard requiring immediate action. Although LPG is odorized for leak detection, leaked gas can accumulate in low-lying or poorly ventilated spaces because it is heavier than air, increasing fire and explosion risks. Incomplete combustion may also produce toxic, odorless carbon monoxide.

Most LPG accidents occur at the consumer level due to poor installation, unsafe handling, substandard appliances, and a lack of safety awareness. Improper cylinder placement in confined or poorly ventilated areas further increases danger. As pressure vessels, LPG cylinders require proper inspection, maintenance, and adherence to safety standards.

Strengthening safety, therefore, requires coordinated action by industry, regulators, and consumers through standards enforcement and widespread awareness campaigns. In Bangladesh, rapid LPG expansion makes safety compliance and public education essential to prevent accidents and ensure safe, reliable energy use.

Regulatory and Safety Framework for the LPG Sector

Despite the rapid growth of the LPG industry in Bangladesh, there is still no fully approved and comprehensive national safety regulation governing LPG storage, bottling, transportation, and dispensing operations. BERC prepared drafts of the "LPG Storage, Bottling, Transportation, and Dispensing Codes and Standards (2016)", as well as the "LPG Codes and Standards Regulation (2023)". However, these regulations are yet to be finalized through consultation with key stakeholders, including LOAB, Energy and Mineral Resources Division, LPG operators, and experts.

Bangladesh now urgently needs a modern, integrated, and enforceable regulatory framework to ensure safe, efficient, and sustainable growth of the LPG sector. One of the key priorities should be consolidating approvals, licenses, inspections, and compliance monitoring under a coordinated authority to reduce institutional fragmentation and overlapping responsibilities among different agencies.

The licensing and compliance process should also be fully digitalized to improve transparency, efficiency, and ease of doing business. At the same time, strict safety and quality standards



As Bangladesh becomes increasingly dependent on LPG to address energy shortages, active government oversight and a clear regulatory structure will be essential for establishing a safe, competitive, and reliable LPG market in the long term.

must be enforced for LPG cylinders, storage facilities, transportation systems, bottling plants, and refilling operations. Effective oversight of imports and domestic distribution is equally important to ensure an uninterrupted supply and equitable market access across the country.

In addition, a balanced regulatory mechanism is needed to protect consumers from artificial shortages, unsafe practices, and excessive price volatility. The framework should also encourage new investment in terminals, storage infrastructure, and distribution networks while ensuring accountability, regular monitoring, and strong governance.

As Bangladesh becomes increasingly dependent on LPG to address energy shortages, active government oversight and a clear regulatory structure will be essential for establishing a safe, competitive, and reliable LPG market in the long term.

Regulatory Challenges

The LPG sector in Bangladesh continues to face major regulatory challenges that affect operational efficiency, investment growth, and timely project implementation. At present, LPG

operators are required to obtain about 26 separate approvals and licenses from over ten different agencies, including BEREC, Department of Explosives, DoE, BSTI, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, and the Energy and Mineral Resources Division.

This fragmented and multi-layered approval process involves repeated physical visits, extensive documentation, multiple inspections, and lengthy administrative procedures, significantly increasing compliance costs and delays. In many cases, overlapping responsibilities among regulatory bodies create duplication of work, procedural inconsistencies, and uncertainty in regulatory compliance.

Such inefficiencies not only slow down infrastructure development and business expansion but also discourage new investment in a sector that is becoming increasingly important for Bangladesh's energy security. As LPG demand continues to rise, the need for regulatory reform has become critical.

To support the sustainable growth of the sector, Bangladesh should introduce a more streamlined and integrated regulatory framework with improved coordination among

agencies. Digitalization of licensing and compliance processes, reduction of overlapping approvals, and establishment of a single-window clearance mechanism would significantly improve transparency, efficiency, and ease of doing business in the LPG industry.

Regional Best Practices

International best practices in energy regulation show clear models for Bangladesh. Vietnam uses a consolidated licensing system with 10-year validity, ensuring predictability and efficiency. Turkey's EMRA demonstrates the benefits of a single energy regulator supported by strong digitalization. Pakistan's OGRA offers long-term licenses up to 15 years with simplified inspections, reducing administrative burden. India's PESO combines unified safety regulation with digital licensing through ePESO, balancing oversight and ease of doing business. Sri Lanka maintains a centralized regulator with low fragmentation and a stable, investor-friendly framework. Together, these models highlight the value of consolidation, digitalization, and long-term licensing.

Proposed Regulatory Reform

To strengthen Bangladesh's LPG sector, regulatory reform should focus on stability, efficiency, and alignment with international best practices. A key step is introducing long-term licenses of 5–10 years to reduce frequent renewals, lower administrative burdens, and improve investor confidence, as seen in countries like Turkey, India, and Vietnam.

A fully digitized licensing system is also essential, enabling online applications, integrated payments, automated renewals and time-bound approvals. A centralized digital platform would reduce physical interactions and improve transparency. In addition, duplication among regulatory agencies should be eliminated through a single integrated inspection framework. Designating BERC as the principal authority and establishing a single-window system would streamline licensing, enhance accountability, and support efficient, investor-friendly LPG sector growth.



Safety Standards for Domestic Gas Cooking Appliances

Bangladesh previously had no national safety standards for domestic gas cooking appliances, despite frequent household gas accidents affecting women and children. In 2025, with support from the ADB, Petrobangla, and BSTI developed and published BDS ISO Safety Standards for Domestic Gas Cooking Appliances aligned with international best practices. The standards will become mandatory after a three-year transition period to allow compliance preparation, testing, and enforcement. However, accessories such as hoses, joints, and regulators remain largely unstandardized, although these are the most common sources of hazardous gas leaks in households. Standardizing these and related supply accessories is therefore essential to ensure gas supplies in domestic households are much less prone to leakage of gas.

Consumer Safety Awareness

Consumer safety awareness is a critical component of LPG safety in Bangladesh, especially as household dependence on LPG continues to grow. Effective awareness campaigns should highlight the quality–safety link between gas, appliances, and installation, the risks of poor workmanship, the importance of adequate ventilation, recognition of odorized LPG, and the immediate actions to take in case of a leak.

Despite rapid LPG expansion, public awareness and technical knowledge have not kept pace, creating significant safety risks. Many domestic users lack a basic understanding of safe cylinder handling, regulator use, ventilation requirements, and leak detection. At the same time, a lack of appropriate

training and certification systems allows unskilled technicians to perform installations, increasing accident risks.

Safety gaps are also evident at the distribution level, where some facilities operate without full compliance, and unsafe practices such as unauthorized storage and illegal cross-filling further heighten hazards. These issues highlight the need for stronger enforcement and coordinated action.

A nationwide LPG safety awareness program should be implemented through television, radio, social and print media, focusing on simple, practical safety messages. BERC, in collaboration with LOAB and industry stakeholders, should lead these initiatives.

In addition, mandatory safety instructions in the Bengali language should be provided at the point of sale with visual guidance, while distributors should demonstrate safe installation practices. A basic certification or orientation program for domestic users, especially in urban areas, can further improve safety outcomes.

Finally, strict enforcement should ensure that only certified technicians handle installation and maintenance, supported by LPG operators and LOAB. Overall, improving consumer awareness is essential for reducing accidents and ensuring safe, reliable LPG use across Bangladesh.

Recommendations

Key reforms should include the introduction of long-term licensing, digital governance systems, and a single-window regulatory authority under a unified framework.

Consumer safety and awareness should be strengthened through nationwide awareness campaigns, structured training programs, and strict enforcement of accountability for installation quality, equipment standards, and appliances.

Strong stakeholder engagement between government, regulators, industry operators, and consumer groups is essential for developing a credible and investment-friendly policy framework.

The LPG regulatory framework should be streamlined and made more efficient to reduce fragmentation and compliance costs, strengthen safety outcomes, and create a more investment-friendly environment.

A comprehensive LPG policy is required to cover the full value chain, including import, storage, bottling, distribution, and retail, along with end-user safety standards.

Strategic Roadmap for LPG Regulatory Reform & Safety

Modernized framework balancing operational efficiency and public safety through reduced fragmentation and strict standards.



Safe and reliable LPG cylinder transportation and distribution must remain the responsibility of licensed operators, strictly following established safety standards throughout the supply chain.

Introduce mandatory technical standards certification for all LPG equipment and appliances, with strict market surveillance to eliminate substandard

cylinders, regulators, and burners.

Establish a transparent and predictable LPG pricing mechanism linked to international benchmarks to reduce market volatility while ensuring affordability for low-income households. [EP]

Mortuza Ahmad Faruque, Energy Specialist and Former Managing Director, BAPEX



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LPG SAFETY GAPS

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As Bangladesh's LPG market continues to expand rapidly across households, industries, transport, and commercial establishments, concerns over safety are becoming increasingly urgent.

Industry experts, regulators, operators, and safety officials warn that while LPG remains a safe and efficient fuel when handled properly, weak compliance, poor awareness, inadequate training, and regulatory shortcomings are exposing users to avoidable risks.

At a recent roundtable, stakeholders emphasized that up to 80 percent of LPG-related accidents could be prevented through greater awareness, stricter enforcement of safety regulations, improved training, and stronger institutional oversight.

They called for a comprehensive policy framework backed by effective implementation to ensure the sustainable and safe growth of Bangladesh's LPG sector.

The roundtable, titled "Bangladesh's LPG Sector Facing Growing Safety and

Regulatory Challenges," was jointly organized by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC), the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB), and Energy & Power at the BERC auditorium.

BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed attended as the chief guest, while LOAB President Mohammed Amirul Haque presided over the event. A keynote paper was presented by Dr. Md Easir Arafat Khan, Professor of Chemical Engineering at BUET. The session was moderated by Energy & Power Editor Mollah Amzad Hossain.

Among others, BERC Member (Petroleum) Dr. Syeda Sultana Razia, Joint Secretary of the Energy and Mineral Resources Division AKM Fazlul Haque, REHAB Vice President A.K.M. Barkotullah, LOAB Vice President Humayun Rashid, LPG Autogas Stations and Conversion Workshop Association President Engr. Md. Serajul Mawla, Department of Explosives Assistant Inspector Muhammad Mehedi Islam Khan, Fire Service and Civil Defence Assistant Director Md. Iqbal Bahar Bulbul, and an energy professional Engr. Jakaria Jalal also spoke.

Jalal Ahmed



BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed said Bangladesh continues to suffer from a poor safety management culture.

“If we cannot change this culture, it will be difficult to improve the situation,” he said.

He noted that LPG use is growing rapidly in households, vehicles, and industries, but safety practices have not kept pace. Safety, he said, must remain the priority because indiscriminate use of LPG can create significant risks.

Ahmed emphasized the need for structured training programs, beginning with training trainers who can subsequently educate workers involved in LPG handling, transportation, and distribution. He also said the government is consulting stakeholders to formulate a user-friendly and effective LPG policy that minimizes the need for frequent amendments.

Mohammed Amirul Haque



LOAB President Mohammed Amirul Haque said Bangladesh does not face an LPG supply shortage; rather, the key challenge is developing a safer operating environment.

safer operating environment.

“With cooperation from all stakeholders, we can ensure safe transportation and use of LPG,” he said, stressing the need for strict compliance throughout the supply chain.

He added that industry operators are working together to improve safety standards and called for a rational pricing framework to support sustainable sector growth.

Easir Arafat Khan



In his keynote presentation, Dr. Md. Easir Arafat Khan argued that LPG is inherently safe when hazards are managed properly through established safety protocols.

According to him, risks associated with storage, transportation, and handling can be effectively controlled through compliance, training, and disciplined operations. However, weak enforcement, poor safety culture, and inadequate oversight continue to create vulnerabilities.

Dr. Arafat highlighted several major concerns, including widespread non-compliance among autogas stations, many of which reportedly operate without proper licenses and documentation. He also pointed to the absence of certified gas detection systems, emergency shutdown systems, and adequate leak detection

mechanisms at many facilities.

The lack of specialized training and licensing for technicians and transport operators further increases safety risks, he said. Illegal cylinder cross-filling, unauthorized cylinder cutting and scrapping, and the operation of unlicensed LPG road tankers remain major concerns.

Public awareness is also insufficient. Many consumers are unfamiliar with proper leak response procedures and safe equipment usage, increasing the likelihood of accidents.

To address these challenges, Dr. Arafat recommended stricter licensing requirements, stronger regulatory enforcement, mandatory safety audits, third-party inspections of high-risk facilities, and nationwide awareness campaigns. He also called for mandatory gas detection, fire protection, alarm systems, preventive maintenance programs, and standardized equipment specifications.

A comprehensive national LPG policy aligned with international standards is also needed, he said.

Syeda Sultana Razia



BERC Member Dr. Syeda Sultana Razia agreed that awareness alone could reduce LPG-related accidents significantly.

“Safety cannot be compromised,” she said, noting that many accidents go



unreported and that public education and training campaigns could prevent a large number of incidents.

She acknowledged manpower shortages at the Department of Explosives and said authorities are considering involving third-party organizations to strengthen inspection and monitoring activities.

Razia also stressed the importance of maintaining proper propane-butane mixtures in LPG cylinders, warning that deviations from prescribed standards could create serious safety hazards.

While regulations and guidelines already exist, she noted that their effectiveness depends on proper implementation and compliance by all stakeholders. She also identified high-rise buildings as particularly vulnerable and called for additional precautions in such facilities.

AKM Fazlul Haque



Joint Secretary AKM Fazlul Haque said the rapid growth of the LPG sector has naturally increased safety concerns.

“Safety is everyone’s responsibility,” he said, emphasizing that poor-quality equipment and non-compliance significantly increase risks.

He acknowledged existing regulatory gaps and assured participants that the government is working to update regulations. Regular monitoring, stronger enforcement, and improvements in sector infrastructure will be necessary to address safety challenges, he added.

A K M Barkotullah



Vice President A.K.M. Barkotullah said developers now incorporate fire exits and fire safety plans in high-rise buildings, but specific guidelines for LPG use in such structures remain inadequate.

He called for dedicated safety standards for LPG installations in high-rise developments and stressed the need to improve maintenance and management systems.

Engr. Md Serajul Mawla



Meanwhile, Engr. Md. Serajul Mawla argued that existing LPG policies contain practical limitations that make compliance difficult.

He said operators frequently struggle with substandard equipment and insufficient user training. While supporting stronger safety regulations, he urged policymakers to revise existing rules through greater consultation with industry stakeholders.

“Rules should reflect the realities on the ground,” he said.

Taking part in the discussion, LOAB president Amirul Haque said they want to ensure safety and security in the LPG sector with the cooperation of all concerned, and want to build a common platform to address all the problems. “The problem is there, but with getting all together we can prevent it, and will go ahead for the betterment of all.”

Humayun Rashid



Vice President Humayun Rashid called for year-round training programs under BERCS supervision to strengthen stakeholder awareness and improve operational safety.

Mizanur Rahman



BERC Member Mizanur Rahman stressed the importance of maintaining proper gas composition and pressure levels, saying that adherence to technical standards could significantly reduce accident risks.

Muhammad Mehedi Islam Khan



Department of Explosives Assistant Inspector Muhammad Mehedi Islam Khan highlighted severe manpower

shortages within his department, which limit inspection and enforcement activities. Despite these constraints, he said efforts are underway to digitize services, speed up regulatory approvals, and seek technical support from BUET experts.

Iqbal Bahar Bulbul



Fire Service and Civil Defence Assistant Director Md. Iqbal Bahar Bulbul noted that most LPG accidents occur in households due to inadequate awareness.

Many users lack even basic knowledge of safe handling practices, he said, stressing the importance of preventive measures such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and proper ignition procedures.

“It is much easier to extinguish a small fire before it becomes a major incident,” he said.

Bulbul pointed to the garment sector as an example of how compliance and safety awareness can significantly reduce accidents.

Mohiuddin Khaled



Mohiuddin Khaled of G-Gas LPG said multiplication of cylinders will multiply the risk as well. And he suggested a single cylinder

to reduce the risk of accidents. And also suggested policy regulation in this regard. Mehedi Hasan of Beximco LPG said the main focus should be on awareness of the people. Jakaria Jalal of Bashundhara Group said that while 2.5 lakh people are involved in India to look

A BLUEPRINT FOR NATIONAL LPG SAFETY: STRENGTHENING THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Shifting from reactive enforcement to a preventive safety culture through strengthened legislation, mandatory infrastructure upgrades, and standardized training.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT & ENFORCEMENT



UNIFIED NATIONAL SAFETY POLICY

Develop a comprehensive policy aligned with international standards to reduce inter-agency overlap.



MANDATORY LICENSING & ZERO TOLERANCE

Enforce strict licensing for all operators and eliminate illegal cylinder cross-filling and scrapping.

THIRD-PARTY SAFETY AUDITS

Introduce independent agencies to conduct periodic external audits of storage depots and transport systems.

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS & PUBLIC SAFETY



MANDATORY SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE

Require gas detection and Emergency Shut-Down (ESD) systems in all storage facilities.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Establish mandatory training for LPG transport drivers, technicians, and station operators.

INSTITUTIONAL REFORM OBJECTIVES

DEPT. OF EXPLOSIVES

Increase technical manpower and digital inspection systems.

FIRE SERVICE & CIVIL DEFENCE

Improve emergency response readiness and inspection efficiency.

ENERGY REGULATORY AGENCIES

Strengthen policy coordination and institutional capacity building.

HOUSEHOLD & BUILDING SAFETY

Integrate LPG safety provisions into building codes, specifically for high-rise residential usage.

Industry participants called for amendments to existing LPG policies, streamlined licensing procedures, and the establishment of a one-stop service center to improve regulatory efficiency.

after the gas explosion safety issues, a few people are involved in Bangladesh.

Abu Sayeed Raza



Abu Sayeed Raza of Mehgna Fresh LPG suggested running the LPG road truck by the licensed persons, adding that an uncontrolled situation will be created if these are done by non-professionals. He also requested the authority to stop cross-filling of cylinders at the Autogas station, saying that otherwise the situation will go beyond control. Engr Liaqat Ali of Omera Gas also said cylinders should not be filled at Autogas stations. Engr Maidul said that cylinders should not be filled at an auto gas station, apprehending a high risk.

Engineer Saidul Islam



Engineer Saidul Islam, Partner, Siangas Trading, said that compliances to be practiced by force. He also suggested some incentives, like tax vat benefits in this regard. 90 percent of installations have no reticulation permission, he said, suggesting controlling the reticulation system by force and introducing a safety audit system.

Osman Celik




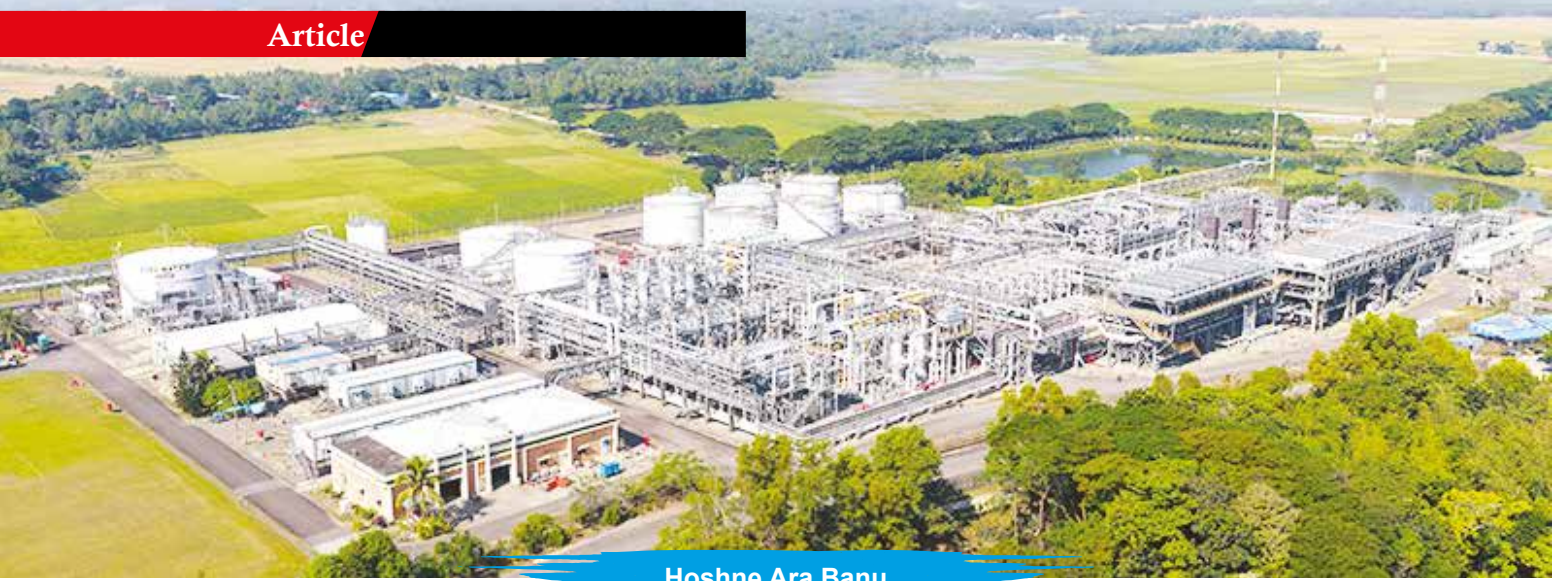
Osman Celik, Chief Financial Officer of United Aygaz LPG, said the safety rules should be followed and maintained properly. He said concerned people should also be cautious while they are taking LPG from one place to another by transport. He said proper training and giving a license are also necessary for the operators.

Conclusion

The discussion concluded with a broad consensus that Bangladesh needs stronger enforcement, greater public awareness, improved training, and more practical regulations to ensure safe LPG use.

Industry participants called for amendments to existing LPG policies, streamlined licensing procedures, and the establishment of a one-stop service center to improve regulatory efficiency.

Most importantly, stakeholders agreed that safety must become a shared responsibility among regulators, operators, transporters, technicians, and consumers if Bangladesh is to sustain the rapid growth of its LPG sector while protecting lives and property. 



Hoshne Ara Banu

The Silent Risk in Bangladesh's Gas Sector: Losing Gas Underground Forever

Over time, these problems can leave large volumes of gas permanently trapped underground, with serious long-term consequences.

Bangladesh's energy debate usually centers on declining reserves, rising LNG imports, and rising electricity and fuel oil costs. While these concerns are real, another critical issue receives far less public attention: the permanent loss of natural gas underground due to inadequate and inefficient reservoir management.

Most people think gas is only "lost" when it is burned, flared, or leaked from pipelines and surface facilities. Instead, it happens silently within gas reservoirs when fields are produced without proper long-term engineering planning. When reservoirs are not properly managed or technical challenges are not addressed in time, significant volumes of gas can become technically unrecoverable, remaining underground forever.

For a country heavily dependent on natural gas for domestic, infrastructural, and industrial needs, this is not merely a technical matter; it is a question of national energy security and economic protection.

The Silent Loss of Gas Beneath the Ground

The discovery of gas is only the first step. Efficient gas recovery from the field requires strong engineering management throughout the field's life.

A portion of the discovered gas can remain unrecoverable if reservoirs are not managed carefully. This can

happen for several reasons:

- Poorly placed wells or improper well design may leave parts of the gas reservoir untouched.
- Advancing underground water can trap pockets of gas if it is not properly monitored and managed.
- Delayed installation of compression facilities can cause production to decline too early, reducing the amount of gas that can ultimately be recovered.

Over time, these problems can leave large volumes of gas permanently trapped underground, with serious long-term consequences.

A simple example shows how gas can be lost underground. Consider a gas field with 200 billion cubic feet (BCF) of gas. With proper management, about 90 percent of this gas, which is around 180 BCF, can be produced.

But if the field is poorly managed — such as allowing sand or water to enter the well, ignoring unexplained drops in production, delaying use of compression, or improper monitoring — the recovery may fall to about 50 percent of recoverable reserves or even less. In that case, only about 100 BCF of gas would be produced, and nearly 80 BCF could remain trapped underground forever.

Losing such volumes of gas from multiple fields due to poor reservoir management would lead to significant

economic loss for the country.

Preventing such losses is precisely what petroleum engineers are trained to do. One of their key roles is to anticipate potential problems before they become critical. Through reservoir monitoring, modeling, and production analysis, petroleum engineers can identify early warning signs and take timely action by adjusting production strategies, improving design, or installing necessary facilities to ensure that the maximum amount of gas is ultimately recovered from the reservoir.

The Oil & Gas Sector is Entering a Sensitive and Challenging Stage

Bangladesh's gas sector is no longer in the stage of easy production. Many major fields are now mature and face increasing challenges, mostly of a technical nature. At this stage, even small mistakes, negligence, or wrong decisions can have large consequences. In mature fields, careful engineering management becomes more important than ever.

Globally, new oil and gas discoveries are becoming increasingly complex. Future reservoirs are often deeper, smaller, and technically more challenging to develop and extract. Developing such resources requires careful planning, risk assessment, economic evaluation, and continuous monitoring - precisely these are areas where petroleum engineers provide essential expertise.

Companies such as Saudi Aramco, Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, and Qatar Energy have achieved high recovery rates through advanced reservoir monitoring, detailed field modeling, and careful long-term reservoir management. Their heavy investment in petroleum engineering expertise demonstrates that maximizing recovery depends on strong and continuous petroleum engineering oversight.

Petroleum Engineers Protect Both Resources and Revenue

Petroleum engineers are not only technical specialists; they are also trained to evaluate the economic implications of engineering decisions.

Every gas development involves a series of critical decisions that rely heavily

Future reservoirs are often deeper, smaller, and technically more challenging to develop and extract.

on petroleum engineering analysis -from exploration to production. These decisions require balancing technical performance and long-term economic assessment. Petroleum engineers evaluate reservoir behavior, production potential, and development feasibility to guide key choices in different phases of the whole process, such as:

- Exploration stage: Assessing reservoir potential, drilling risks, and estimating recoverable resources to determine whether a discovery can be commercially viable.
- Field development planning: Determining when and how a newly discovered field should be developed, based on engineering calculations of reservoir performance, production forecasts, and economic feasibility.
- Production strategy: Deciding whether production should be accelerated or moderated to protect long-term recovery.
- Facility planning: Determining the appropriate timing for installing a compressor or other surface facilities.
- Well management: Evaluating whether new wells should be drilled or existing wells optimized.
- Resource management: Deciding whether to prioritize developing smaller new fields or maximizing recovery from existing ones.

Without rigorous engineering evaluation, such decisions can lead

to lower recovery, higher costs, and reduced long-term value of national gas resources.

Strategic Decisions Can No Longer Wait

The involvement of petroleum engineers in Bangladesh's gas sector remains extremely limited compared to global standards. One major reason is that, for many years, local universities in the country did not produce petroleum engineers. However, a positive change has recently begun -over the past few years, several of Bangladesh's own universities have started producing petroleum engineering graduates.

To ensure the country's energy security, several strategic measures must now be taken:


First, petroleum engineers must be given an active and institutional role in decision-making, planning, and management of gas fields.

Second, regular reservoir monitoring and scientific analysis must be strengthened in every gas field.

Third, production management must be strengthened through the timely development and modernization of essential technical infrastructure.

Fourth, skilled and talented petroleum engineering graduates from local universities should be effectively placed and utilized in the gas sector without any bias.

Bangladesh's energy future will not depend solely on new gas discoveries or LNG imports. Rather, true energy security will depend on how efficiently existing gas fields and related resources are managed. With proper reservoir management, it is possible to recover up to 80-90 percent of the gas underground.

Therefore, utilizing petroleum engineering expertise at the center of planning and management in the gas sector is no longer optional - it is an essential strategic decision for ensuring Bangladesh's long-term energy security and economic stability. 

Hoshne Ara Banu, Petroleum Engineer, Adjunct Professor of BUET and MIST



Türkiye Highlights Water-Centered Climate Action

EP DESK

Prof. Halil Hasar, Director of Climate Change, participated in the 5th Istanbul International Water Forum, held under the theme “Strengthening Water Resilience: Innovation to Action.”

Hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the forum is regarded as one of Türkiye’s leading international platforms on sustainable water governance.

The event brought together ministerial delegations, policymakers, and representatives from major international organizations, including the United Nations, OECD, OIC, and the World Bank.

Addressing the opening session, Director Hasar emphasized that water has become the most visible and immediate manifestation of the global climate crisis.

He noted that COP31, which Türkiye will host this November, represents a historic opportunity to accelerate implementation-oriented climate action.

Highlighting the intensifying impacts of climate change, Hasar stated that 2024 has officially become the hottest year on record, while disruptions in the hydrological cycle are increasing the frequency and severity of droughts and extreme weather events.

Referring to UN findings, he underlined

that nearly 40 percent of the global population currently lives in water-stressed regions, placing more than 700 million people at severe risk of water scarcity.

“Water should no longer be viewed solely as a natural resource,” Hasar said. “It must be recognized as a strategic priority for global resilience, security, and sustainable development.”

Global Leaders Gather in Colombia for Landmark Conference on Fossil Fuel Transition

The “First International Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels” convened in Santa Marta, Colombia, bringing together global leaders and stakeholders to advance international cooperation on climate action and energy transition.

Co-hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands, the conference was attended by representatives from 57 countries, along with delegates from local governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and academia.


Representing Türkiye at the event, Mehrali Ecer, Deputy Director of Climate Change, participated in the high-level segment alongside an accompanying delegation.

Addressing the opening session, Ecer emphasized that Türkiye will guide its COP31 Presidency under



the core principles of “dialogue, consensus, and action.”

He further highlighted that COP31 would prioritize implementation-driven outcomes, focusing on transforming high-level climate commitments into concrete and measurable actions.

Throughout the conference, thematic sessions addressed key issues including energy security, the gradual phase-down of fossil fuel production, economic transformation, and strengthening international cooperation in support of a just energy transition. 

In his remarks, Hasar described COP31 as the “COP of Implementation,” emphasizing that the summit will focus on transforming commitments into measurable outcomes.

He stated that Türkiye aims to position COP31 as a bridge-building platform that strengthens trust, deepens international partnerships, and delivers practical solutions across sectors.

He further stressed that adaptation efforts worldwide remain insufficient due to financing gaps, limited implementation capacity, and



disconnects between policy frameworks and realities on the ground.

According to Hasar, COP31 must become the turning point that moves the international community “from commitment to implementation, and from rhetoric to action.”

The outcomes of the Istanbul International Water Forum are expected to contribute to the upcoming UN Water Conference later this year, as well as the 11th World Water Forum and the 20th IWRA World Water Congress, both scheduled to take place in Istanbul in 2027. [EP](#)

Türkiye Emphasizes Inclusive Climate Finance in Meeting with Loss and Damage Fund Officials

Prof. Halil Hasar, Director of Climate Change, met with Mathilde Laurans, Deputy Executive Director of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, and Program Manager Jihyea Kim at the Directorate of Climate Change.

The meeting focused on strategic discussions regarding the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, one of the most significant climate finance mechanisms established to support countries facing the adverse impacts of climate change.

Discussions also addressed improving access to climate finance and strengthening implementation processes ahead of COP31.

Welcoming the delegation, Director Hasar emphasized that COP31 will represent a critical milestone in advancing the Fund from institutional design to practical implementation on the ground.

Describing the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund as a historic achievement of the multilateral climate process, Hasar noted that the consensus reached during the opening day of COP28 played a vital role in building confidence among parties.

“The Fund is one of the most important



instruments for strengthening international solidarity with countries confronting the destructive impacts of climate change,” he stated.

Director Hasar further stressed that one of the core challenges in climate finance remains the timely and effective access to resources.

He underlined that the long-term success of the Fund depends on the availability of adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing mechanisms.

“Under Türkiye’s COP31 Presidency vision, we are committed to supporting a transparent, rapid, and fit-for-purpose

access framework for the Fund,” Hasar said.

“We aim to ensure that COP31 delivers tangible outcomes for those most in need.”

He also reaffirmed Türkiye’s constructive and inclusive engagement throughout the Bonn climate negotiations, the Pre-COP process, and the Fund’s Board discussions.

Referring to the devastating February 6 earthquakes in Türkiye, described nationally as the “Disaster of the Century,” Hasar highlighted the universal nature of climate-related and disaster risks. [EP](#)

Bangladesh, US Sign Strategic Energy Cooperation Agreement

Bangladesh and the United States have signed a strategic energy cooperation memorandum aimed at strengthening bilateral collaboration and enhancing Bangladesh's long-term energy security.



The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed at the US Department of Energy in Washington, D.C. by Dr Khalilur Rahman and Chris Wright.

Under the agreement, the two countries will cooperate in capacity building, technical knowledge exchange, and joint studies on oil, gas, geothermal energy, and bioenergy.

The MoU is also expected to support Bangladesh's import of US liquefied natural gas (LNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and other energy products at competitive prices.

Officials said the agreement comes at a time of growing global energy uncertainty and is intended to help Bangladesh diversify energy sources and strengthen supply chain resilience.

China Coal Mine Blast Kills At Least 90

A recent gas explosion at a coal mine in northern China has killed at least 90 people, state media reported, the country's biggest mining disaster in 17 years.



A total of 247 workers were underground at the time of the blast, which occurred at the Liushenyu coal mine in Shanxi province, according to state news agency Xinhua. Most of them were brought to the surface, it said, confirming that at least 90 people had died.

A total of 345 emergency personnel were dispatched to the site, with rescuers earlier searching "intensively" for

nine people who remained unaccounted for. The explosion was the worst mining disaster in China since 2009, when 108 people were killed in a mine blast in northeast Heilongjiang province.

Helmeted rescuers were carrying stretchers at the site, with ambulances visible in the background, video by state broadcaster CCTV showed.

Bangladesh's Energy Crisis Biggest Obstacle to Investment: BIDA Chief

Bangladesh Investment Development Authority Executive Chairman Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun has said Bangladesh's ongoing energy crisis remains the biggest barrier to attracting both local and foreign investment.



Speaking at a roundtable discussion in Dhaka recently, Ashik warned that investors would remain hesitant unless the country ensures a reliable supply of electricity and gas.

"Until we solve the energy problem, it will be very difficult for local and foreign investors to believe in the Bangladesh growth story," he said.

The discussion, titled Trade

Policy, Industrial Protection, Investment Impacts, and Consumer Welfare, was organized by the Policy Research Institute with support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office at PRI's Banani office.

Ashik said Bangladesh's main challenge is not the lack of policy but weak implementation. He pointed to persistent delays in clearing raw materials at Chattogram Port despite existing policies aimed at resolving such problems.

UAE to Fast-Track New Oil Pipeline Bypassing Hormuz

The UAE is to fast-track construction of a new oil pipeline bypassing the Strait of Hormuz, official media said recently, after the Middle East war crippled exports through the vital waterway.



The West-East Pipeline will double state oil giant ADNOC's capacity through Fujairah port and is expected to become operational next year, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said.

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan "directed ADNOC to accelerate delivery of the project", the report said.

An existing, 360-kilometre (224 miles) pipeline from the Habshan oil fields to Fujairah has a capacity of 1.8 million barrels per day, according to the Port of Fujairah website.

The UAE, which made waves by quitting oil cartel OPEC at the start of this month, has plans to raise production capacity to five million barrels a day by next year.

Govt Sets 5 Energy Security Milestones to Break Import Dependence: Titumir

The government has begun work on achieving five key milestones to secure Bangladesh's energy future, with a strong push toward renewable energy and reducing dependence on imports, said Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir recently.



surrendered to oligarchs under import-dependent policies that left Bangladesh economically vulnerable.

The adviser outlined five priority milestones guiding the government's energy roadmap:

First, the upcoming budget will allocate greater resources toward renewable energy which he described as the sector's top priority.

Speaking at a dialogue titled "Renewable Energy in the Upcoming Budget: Expectations and Reality" organized by think tank Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at a city hotel, Titumir said the country's energy sector had long been

High Inflation, Investment Stagnation, Energy Crunch Spotted for Policy Action

Persistent high inflation, investment stagnation and energy crunch are severely affecting economic stability and escalating the cost of doing business, economists and business leaders have said on revelation by a new parameter.



made at a seminar titled 'Economic Position Index (EPI): Quarterly Macroeconomic State of Dhaka', organized by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) at its auditorium recently.

They have suggested expanding the newly launched EPI beyond over-concentrated Dhaka to make it a nationally effective policy tool.

They observed owing to the failure of traditional indices in capturing immediate economic transitions, evidence-based decision-making at the policy level is becoming significantly constrained.

The observations were

RNPP Power Transmission Project Cost Likely to Go Down by Tk 23.3b

The cost of the project to build transmission infrastructure for supplying electricity from the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) has been reduced by Tk 23.30 billion under a revised proposal after some expensive components were removed from the original design, officials said.



The Planning Commission has recommended approval of the first revised proposal at a meeting chaired by Dr Nurun Nahar Chowdhury, member (secretary) of the Industry and Energy Division of the Planning Commission.

According to officials, the revised cost represents a 21.22 per cent reduction from the original estimate, resulting in significant savings for the government.

The project, titled "Development of Transmission Infrastructure for Power Evacuation of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant", will now cost Tk 86.52 billion, down from the original estimate of Tk 109.82 billion.

At the same time, the implementation deadline for the project has been extended until June 2026.

The project is being implemented by Power Grid Bangladesh PLC.

Power-Sector Subsidy Overshoots Allocation

Government exchequer gasps under fiscal-pressure buildup as power-sector subsidy is projected to overshoot its budgetary mark in the current fiscal year (FY)-much of the burden stemming from overrated hiring of private plants.



The government had already disbursed Tk 320 billion during the first nine months (July-March) of FY2025-26, and the amount is likely to reach some Tk 430 billion at the fiscal yearend, Ministry of Finance (MoF) officials say.

With an estimated Tk 110 billion required to make up the gap for the remaining

three months (April-June), the total subsidy requirement for the fiscal comes to nearly Tk 430 billion, says a senior MoF official.

Consequently, the finance ministry is finalizing a revised national budget substantially raising the power-sector allocation from its initial cap at Tk 370 billion, they say.

JICA Eyes Funding for Karnaphuli Hydro Plant Upgrade

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has shown interest in financing the overhaul of two aging units at the Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Power Station, Bangladesh's only hydropower plant, as the project remained stalled for more than seven years due to procurement complications.



and structural weaknesses, reducing the plant's overall output by nearly 20 MW.

Officials from the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) said preparations are underway to develop a detailed project proposal with JICA support for the rehabilitation of Units 4 and 5 at the Kaptai-based power station.

The units have exceeded their scheduled overhaul periods. Unit 4 was last renovated in 2010, while Unit 5 underwent overhaul in 2011.

According to plant officials, the two 50 MW units are currently generating only around 40 MW each because of mechanical deterioration

Engineers said cracks in generator support structures and other mechanical faults have forced operators to carry out regular inspections, welding, and temporary maintenance to keep the units operational.

Rampal Power Plant Seeks Tk1,000cr Urgently to Sustain Operations

Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (BIFPCL) has urgently sought Tk1,000 crore from the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) to maintain



uninterrupted operations at the Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant, also known as the Rampal power plant, one of the country's largest power generation facilities.

disruptions in coal imports and exposure to demurrage charges.

In a letter sent to the BPDB chairman on 10 May, the company's Managing Director Ramanath Pujari said delays in fund release could cause the company to default on loan repayments.

As banking operations will end on 24 May due to Eid-ul-Adha holidays, he requested that the funds be released by 20 May.

He also warned of possible

Attempts to contact the BPDB chairman and power secretary for comments on whether the requested funds would be released were unsuccessful.

Rooppur Unit-1 Completes Nuclear Fuel Loading

Fresh nuclear fuel has been successfully loaded into the reactor core of Unit-1 at the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, marking a major milestone toward the plant's commissioning and electricity generation.



The fuel loading process began on 28 April and involved the sequential insertion of 163 fuel assemblies into the reactor core, according to officials involved in the project. The operation is considered one of the most critical stages before the unit begins commercial power generation.

in full compliance with the initial core loading program, operational regulations and international nuclear safety standards.

Alexey Deriy, vice president of Atomstroyexport, said the work was carried out

"The next stage includes installation of the upper reactor unit and integration of all required in-core instrumentation systems," he said.

Govt to Generate 5,000MW Solar Power over Next 5 Years

The government has a plan to generate 5,000 megawatts of electricity from solar panels over the next five years, Iqbal Hasan Mahmood, the minister for power, energy and mineral resources, said recently.



"Immediately after taking office, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman raised the issue of solar power in his second cabinet meeting and asked us for a concrete plan on how to increase solar power generation," he said pointing out the government's move towards establishing solar power.

seminar titled, "Roadmap Towards 10,000 Megawatts Solar Power, 2030," at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), marking its 78th founding anniversary.

The minister made these remarks while speaking as the chief guest at a

Engineer Mohammad Riazul Islam, president of the IEB and chairman of the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (RAJUK), chaired the event.

JAMUNA GAS

নিরাপত্তার সাথে চলে দীর্ঘদিন

নিরাপদ ও সাম্রয়ী জ্বালানি যমুনা এলপি গ্যাস

সারা দেশ জুড়ে এলপি গ্যাস এর প্রয়োজনে
আমরা আছি আপনার পাশে



কুকিং গ্যাস



বাসাবাড়িতে
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Greenpage

Bangladesh Moving Toward Green, Self-Reliant Energy Future: PM

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman recently said Bangladesh is steadily advancing toward clean energy, a green economy, and a self-reliant energy system through expanded use of renewable energy technologies.

He made the remarks while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the “Renewable Solar Power On-Grid Rooftop” initiative at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in Dhaka.

“Today we are inaugurating an initiative that is not only a power generation project, but also a symbol of Bangladesh’s sustainable future,” the Prime Minister said.

Referring to the launch of the one-megawatt rooftop solar power system



at the parliament complex, he said the project sends a strong message that Bangladesh is moving steadily toward clean energy, sustainable economic growth, and energy self-reliance.

At the request of the Prime Minister, Speaker of Parliament Major (retd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, Bir Bikram, formally inaugurated the rooftop solar initiative.

Govt to Finalize Investor-Friendly RE Policy by June 2026

The government is set to formulate an investment-friendly renewable energy policy by June 2026 to attract both local and foreign investment in Bangladesh’s clean energy sector, Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Iqbal Hassan Mahmood said recently.

Speaking at the “Market Sounding Workshop on Sonagazi 130MW Solar PV with BESS PPP Project” organized by the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), the minister said the government had formed a committee to identify policy incentives and support mechanisms for investors in renewable energy.



He said the government would act as a facilitator by introducing measures such as reduced duties on solar equipment, tax incentives, and improved policy support to encourage profitable investment in the sector.

Govt Unveils Onshore Wind Power Project Guidelines

Draft guidelines for onshore wind-power-project development have been unveiled under a government priority as this clean energy remains under explored despite offering a “complementary and increasingly cost-competitive pathway”.

Until now, the country generates only 62 megawatts of electricity from wind resources out of total 1,774mw power generated from renewable sources, according to Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA).

In the Renewable Energy Policy 2025 the government has set a target of generating 20 per cent of total energy by 2030 and 30 per cent by 2040 from renewable sources.

“The guideline establishes a clear, transparent, and bankable framework for the development of land-based (onshore) wind-power projects,” SREDA says.

It says Bangladesh possesses modest but commercially viable onshore wind resources, concentrated primarily along its 710-kilometre coastline, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and across selected open plain areas in the north-west. Bangladesh market analysis.

Garment Sector Far Off RE Target: Study

Local garment factories remain far from meeting clean energy consumption targets, held back by high renewable energy costs, limited rooftop space and policy bottlenecks that are slowing adoption across the sector, according to a new study.

The findings come as global buyers tighten sustainability requirements and increase pressure on exporters to cut emissions across supply chains under the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). The directive, which came into effect last year, requires garment factories in Bangladesh to generate 35 percent of their power from renewable energy sources by 2035 for smooth Western exports.

On the ground, however, just 3 percent of electricity used by garment factories currently comes from renewable



sources, according to the study.

It was prepared by Mapped in Bangladesh (MiB) of the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) at BRAC University after surveying 878 factories in Gazipur and Narayanganj.

The findings, presented at an event at Sheraton Dhaka yesterday, show that the apparel sector remains heavily dependent on conventional energy despite the 2035 deadline.



PPP Solar Plant Planned in Economic Zone

Bangladesh has moved to build its first public-private partnership (PPP)-based solar power project in a special economic zone, as the government seeks to ease pressure from costly fuel imports and attract private investment into renewable energy.

The proposed project, planned at Sonagazi in Feni, aims to generate 130-140 megawatts (MW) of grid-tied solar electricity along with battery storage facilities on 412 acres of land owned by the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza).

Idcol Hosts Roundtable on Norfund's Green Energy Investment Interest in Bangladesh

Infrastructure Development Company Limited (Idcol) hosted a roundtable at its head office in Dhaka on May 14.

The event brought together the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Norfund (Norway's development finance institution), and a select group of sponsors of bankable renewable energy projects to explore strategic partnership opportunities in support of Bangladesh's renewable energy transition.

The roundtable was attended by Håkon Arald Gulbrandsen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Bangladesh, who served as chief guest.

He was joined by Bayzid Muntasir Sayeed, economic affairs and trade adviser at the Royal Norwegian Embassy, and Razi Amin, partner at Aspen Capital Solutions LLC, who serves as an advisor to Norfund and the Royal Norwegian Embassy.



The session was chaired by Alamgir Morshed, managing director of Idcol, and moderated by Nazmul Haque, chief investment officer of Idcol.

In his welcome address, Haque underscored that Bangladesh's renewable energy transition will require long-tenor, patient capital aligned with the mandates of development finance institutions such as Norfund.

Following his remarks, Md Enamul Karim Pavel, head of renewable energy at Idcol, presented a comprehensive overview of Bangladesh's renewable energy landscape and outlook.



Officials unveiled the plan at a workshop in Dhaka yesterday, attended by representatives from the power division, Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), Power Grid Bangladesh PLC (PGCB), development partners, and private investors.

Joining a workshop at the project site the same day, Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood said the government could announce an investment-friendly policy for the solar sector by June, expressing hope that the renewable energy sector could witness growth similar to the country's garment industry.

Govt Offices in 21 Districts to Get Solar Power

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Anindya Islam Amit has said initiatives have been taken to install solar power in the government buildings of 21 district in the country.

Solar panels will be installed in office of Deputy Commissioners, Police Supers and hospitals in 21 districts within two to three months, he said while virtually inaugurating installation of rooftop solar power at Zobaida Korim Jute Mills Limited in Faridpur recently.

He urged the private companies to follow the government saying Zobaida Korim Jute Mill can be a model for other private companies.

Power Secretary Minara Mahrukh, Additional Secretary and Chairman of



West Zone Power Distribution Company Limited Noor Ahmed were present. The State Minister also participated in a views exchange meeting with officials.

JA Solar International Ltd, China has installed the solar power with a capacity to generate 4.29 MW power. According to project, SMA Solar Technology AG, China (Model: STP-110-60) will be installed with Net Meter facilities.

World should Target 35% Electrification by 2035: IRENA

To stay on track with a 1.5 degrees C pathway, electricity will need to make up 35% of global final energy consumption by 2035 and exceed 50% by 2050, up from 23% today, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) said recently.

This is according to IRENA's revised 1.5 degrees C Scenario in the forthcoming World Energy Transition Outlook.

The organization said its analysis points to the need for the adoption of a 2035 electrification target.

"To keep the 1.5 degrees C goal within reach, the world needs a clear global direction of travel. IRENA data supports the establishment of a global electrification target for 2035, complemented by targets for grids and system flexibility," said IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera as IRENA released its new



report, called "Transitioning away from fossil fuels: A roadmap based on renewables, electrification and grid enhancement."

According to the study, while the global goals of tripling renewable power capacity and doubling energy efficiency improvements by 2030 remain key, they are not alone enough to achieve the global energy transition.



India's Open-Access Solar Capacity Reaches 32.9 GW

India added 2.7 GW of open-access solar capacity in the first quarter of 2026, marking a 170 percent year-on-year increase, according to a report by Mercom India.

With the latest additions, the country's cumulative installed open-access solar capacity reached 32.9 GW by March 2026.

The report said strong growth was driven by supportive state policies, faster project approvals, and accelerated installations ahead of new ALMM compliance requirements for solar components.



Rajasthan led new capacity additions during the quarter, accounting for 39 percent of installations, while Karnataka remained the top state in cumulative installed capacity with a 23 percent share.

Open-access solar allows large commercial and industrial consumers to purchase renewable electricity directly from off-site solar developers through long-term power purchase agreements (PPAs).

The report also noted rising project costs due to supply-chain disruptions, higher component prices, land constraints, and evolving regulations.

PM Test-Drives Bangladesh's First Locally Made EVs, Pledges Govt Support

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman recently test-drove locally manufactured electric vehicles (EVs) and praised the initiative, assuring full government support for the country's growing EV industry.



He visited an exhibition of electric vehicles organized at his office in Tejgaon by Bangladesh Auto Industries Limited, according to Deputy Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu.

During the visit, Tarique Rahman personally drove a sports utility vehicle (SUV) and a covered van manufactured by the company.

Company representatives informed the Prime Minister that Bangladesh Auto Industries Limited is the country's first electric vehicle manufacturer.

They said the vehicles are fully battery-powered, environmentally friendly, and require no fuel oil, while electricity costs remain comparatively low.

Bangladesh Launches CRIS Project to Strengthen Sundarbans Conservation and Climate Resilience

The inception workshop of the "Conservation and Restoration Initiatives in the Sundarbans Region (CRIS) Project" was held recently in Dhaka, bringing together government officials, development partners, researchers, conservation experts, and civil society representatives to strengthen collaborative efforts for the sustainable protection of the Sundarbans.



resilience, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, and community engagement in and around the Sundarbans region.

The workshop, held at InterContinental Dhaka, focused on the project's implementation strategies, restoration priorities, coordination mechanisms, and long-term sustainability plans for the world's largest mangrove forest ecosystem.

The project is being implemented jointly by the Bangladesh Forest Department, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

The initiative aims to enhance ecosystem

Govt Encouraging Shift to EVs to Reduce Carbon Emissions: Mintoo

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo has said the government plans to introduce electric vehicles on a larger scale than they are today, in a bid to reduce carbon emissions and build an environment-friendly transportation system in the country.



Bangladesh Max Tuñón met him at his ministry office recently, said a PID handout.

He told the ILO Country Director that the government has taken various effective initiatives under the 'Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)' policy to ensure sustainable waste management.

The government is working relentlessly to make plastic waste management more organised and mandatory, he said.

"The government is already planning to introduce 'electric vehicles' to develop an environmentally friendly transportation system and reduce carbon emissions," he said.

The minister made this remark when International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Director for

Bangladesh, UK Discuss Expanding Cooperation on Climate

Abdul Awal Mintoo, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, held a meeting with British Deputy High Commissioner James Goldman at the ministry office in Dhaka recently.



State Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Sheikh Faridul Islam was also present during the meeting.

The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom in areas including environmental protection, sustainable development, pollution control, renewable energy

expansion, carbon credits, climate finance, biodiversity conservation, and protection of the Sundarbans.

Welcoming the British diplomat, the Minister said Bangladesh highly values its long-standing bilateral relationship with the United Kingdom. He noted that pollution control is one of the government's top priorities and said authorities are implementing various initiatives to reduce air, water, and waste pollution.

Transport Ministry Seeks Tk 4.0b Grant to Procure 100 EVs for BRTC

The road transport and bridges ministry has sought a Tk 4.0 billion grant from the finance ministry to procure 100 electric buses for the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) fleet.



The move is aimed at developing an environmentally friendly and sustainable public transport system in the country, officials said.

As part of efforts to modernise public transport and reduce carbon emissions, the transport ministry has submitted the proposal to the finance ministry, requesting

budgetary support in the form of a grant for the procurement of electric vehicles.

The initiative aligns with the government's election manifesto to build an integrated, efficient, and green transport system, under which the introduction of electric buses in the BRTC fleet is considered both timely and necessary.

Govt Must Heed COP31 Presidency's Urgent Call for Electrification

350.org welcomed COP31 President-Designate Murat Kurum's call to urgently increase the pace of global electrification, made at the Copenhagen Climate Ministers' Meeting recently.



Climate campaigners, however, urged governments to heed this call for electrification by raising revenues through windfall taxes on fossil fuel profits, accompanied by concrete plans to phase out fossil fuels.

Clémence Dubois, 350.org Campaigns Manager, said: "There is no doubt that electrification is urgently needed and a permanent tax on the fossil fuel industry

can bridge the gap between promise and reality. G7 governments are sitting on the answer to the crisis of unaffordable energy. Fossil fuel companies are making their biggest profits yet, while households around the world can't afford their energy bills. Tax those windfall profits and use revenues to accelerate electrification and deliver energy justice."

India Targets 100 GW Nuclear Capacity by 2047

India's BJP Rajya Sabha MP Harsh Vardhan Shringla said his country aims to expand its nuclear energy capacity to 100 gigawatts by 2047, as a US executive nuclear delegation visited the country.



Speaking on 18 May, Shringla highlighted the recent passage of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025, calling it the foundation for the planned expansion.

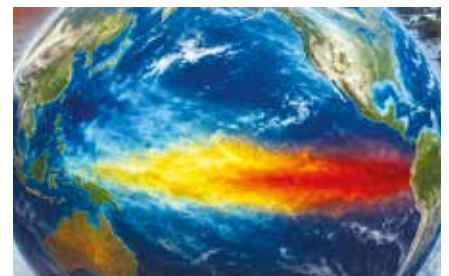
"In December, Parliament approved the 'SHANTI Bill,' which subsequently became the SHANTI Act. This Act created a framework under which both domestic and

foreign investment can be deployed in the nuclear energy sector. Our goal is to scale up nuclear capacity from 8.8 gigawatts to 100 gigawatts by 2047," he said.

Shringla said India's fast-growing economy required reliable baseload power in addition to renewable energy sources, adding that nuclear energy was uniquely positioned to meet that need.

What Scientists Know about a Potential 'Super' El Nino

Forecasters say a potentially "super" El Nino is rapidly taking shape in the Pacific -- but whether it evolves into a history-making event could hinge on fickle winds and other volatile atmospheric shifts.



The fast-warming tropical Pacific is pointing to a major event, but a crucial weakening of trade winds -- capable of turbocharging or throttling the phenomenon -- has yet to materialise.

Scientists say these interactions are notoriously complex and difficult to predict -- making it too early to confidently forecast

how powerful this El Nino could become.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says there is about an 80 percent chance of El Nino developing by July.

Sea temperatures in key El Nino zones of the equatorial Pacific are rapidly rising, and an enormous pool of abnormally warm water is massing beneath the surface.

OECD Climate Finance Reaches \$136.7b in 2024

New data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) indicates that climate finance provided and mobilised by developed countries increased to USD 132.8 billion in 2023 and USD 136.7 billion in 2024.



may be significantly smaller under stricter and more transparent accounting rules.

While this suggests continued growth, campaigners argue that the headline figures hide deeper structural problems.

According to critics, the OECD's accounting approach has long been seen as overstating actual climate finance delivered. As a result, the reported increase

At the same time, many developed countries are reducing overall development aid budgets, raising concerns that climate finance is increasingly being drawn from shrinking aid pools rather than representing genuinely new and additional funding.

Pakistan's Solar Capacity Surges to Around 51 GW

Pakistan's operational solar power capacity has reached an estimated 51 GW as of March 2026, according to a new report by Renewables First.



The report, titled Pakistan Electricity Review 2026, said the country's rapid solar expansion is being driven mainly by households, farms, and businesses adopting distributed solar systems to reduce reliance on the national grid.

It noted that distributed solar systems — including net-metered, behind-the-meter, and off-grid installations — generated around 51 TWh of electricity during fiscal year 2025, accounting for nearly 46

percent of grid-supplied electricity.

Meanwhile, electricity generation from utility-scale power plants declined for the fourth consecutive year, falling to 135 TWh in FY25 from a peak of 154 TWh in FY22.

According to the report, rising electricity prices and lower solar panel costs are accelerating Pakistan's transition toward decentralized solar energy.

Govt Inks Deal with 12 IPPs for 918 MW Solar Power

The government has signed contracts with 12 independent power producers (IPPs) to generate 918-MW electricity at an average cost of 7.80 cents (Tk 9.12) per kilowatt-hour, with officials saying the amount was roughly 2.5 cents lower than previous such costs.



means the average generation cost will fall significantly from earlier average prices that hovered around 10.50 cents per kilowatt-hour," said an official.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) officials said that the recent deals were part of an extensive energy mix campaign to maximize renewable energy generation, reducing dependence on traditional and, particularly, on imported fossil fuel sources.

BPDB officials said as part of the campaign, the new government annulled a past interim regime decision to scrap earlier adopted six power projects, alongside taking six new projects to get the 918 MW electricity at lower tariffs.

"The tariff drop of 2 to 3 cents

Anker Solix Unveils New 5 kWh Modular Solar Battery System

Anker Solix has launched its new Solarbank 4 E5000 Pro, a modular 5 kWh residential battery storage system designed for rooftop solar applications.



Unveiled in Berlin, the system features four integrated maximum power point trackers (MPPTs), allowing up to 5 kW of solar input and connection of up to 12 solar panels.

operating under an 800 W grid feed-in limit.

The battery capacity can be expanded modularly up to 30 kWh by stacking additional units.

The system also supports backup power during grid outages, with automatic switchover within 10 milliseconds to maintain an uninterrupted electricity supply.

The Solarbank4 Pro includes a bidirectional inverter capable of supplying households with up to 2.5 kW of power while

According to the company, the battery uses lithium iron phosphate (LFP) cells rated for up to 10,000 charging cycles and a 15-year lifespan.

Existing Offshore Data Must Be Better Leveraged

Bangladesh does not yet have sufficient geological evidence to conclusively classify its offshore territory in the Bay of Bengal as a hydrocarbon-rich province by global standards. However, the geological and geophysical data already available should be systematically analyzed, reprocessed, and packaged to present a compelling investment case to international oil companies (IOCs). At the same time, policymakers must recognize that offshore oil and gas exploration is a capital-intensive, high-risk undertaking that requires advanced technology, specialized expertise, and substantial financial resources. As a result, there is no realistic alternative to attracting foreign investment and international expertise if Bangladesh hopes to unlock the hydrocarbon potential of its offshore areas.

In an interview with Mollah Amzad Hossain, Editor of Energy & Power, Professor Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Bhuiyan, Department of Geology at the University of Dhaka, shared his views on Bangladesh's Offshore Bidding Round 2026.

Bangladesh has formally launched the Offshore Bidding Round 2026 following the finalization of the Offshore Model PSC 2026. How do you assess the country's preparations to attract investment for offshore oil and gas exploration?

There is no alternative to exploring, developing, and utilizing domestic energy resources if Bangladesh is to ensure long-term energy security. From that perspective, the launch of the Offshore Bidding Round 2026 is a welcome initiative. However, Bangladesh has fallen significantly behind in offshore exploration.

A bidding round was previously announced in 2024 under a model PSC developed with the support of international consultants. Although

seven IOCs purchased bid documents, none submitted bids due largely to the changed political environment at the time.

The Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources subsequently reviewed the reasons behind the lack of participation. Based on those findings, Petrobangla updated the Offshore Model PSC 2026. From both financial and technical perspectives, the revised PSC is attractive for investors.

However, IOCs do not make high-risk, multi-billion-dollar offshore investments based solely on contractual terms. A stable economic, social, and political environment is equally important. In my view, the current government is committed to creating such an environment.

Are the changes introduced in the Offshore Model PSC 2026 sufficient to attract IOCs?

The revised PSC is certainly more attractive from both commercial and technical standpoints. Gas pricing has been linked to Brent crude oil prices, while a floor and ceiling mechanism has been introduced to provide greater price certainty.

The PSC also allows investors to recover pipeline infrastructure costs and earn wheeling charges after a gas discovery. Furthermore, the WPPF rate has been reduced from 5 percent to 1.5 percent.

Despite these improvements, there remains a significant challenge. Major IOCs typically invest in offshore regions where geological evidence suggests the possibility of discovering reserves in the range of 30 to 50 trillion cubic feet (TCF). At present, there is insufficient data to indicate that Bangladesh's offshore areas contain reserves of that magnitude.

Moreover, successful discoveries



Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Bhuiyan

Some experts believe the Bay of Bengal may contain between 20 and 30 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas resources. However, until comprehensive data acquisition, interpretation, and drilling activities are completed, no one can make definitive claims. That is why there is no alternative to attracting investment for offshore exploration. It is important to remember that in petroleum exploration, even a negative result can be valuable. As the saying goes, "No finding is good finding."

tend to attract additional investment. Bangladesh lacks such a landmark offshore success story. Therefore, investment risks in the country's offshore sector remain comparatively high.

Petrobangla possesses substantial offshore data, while third-party companies have also conducted 2D seismic surveys and developed data packages. What more should be done to present Bangladesh's offshore potential effectively?

Compared to onshore areas, offshore data may be limited, but it is certainly not insignificant.

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Since independence, Petrobangla has accumulated approximately 66,000 line-kilometers of vintage seismic data, a limited amount of 3D seismic data, drilling information from exploration wells, and around 12,000 line-kilometers of recently acquired multi-client seismic survey data.

However, what is urgently needed is the reprocessing of these datasets and the development of a comprehensive hydrocarbon prospectivity model. This is not something Petrobangla can accomplish alone.

A more effective approach would be to engage internationally recognized firms for advanced data interpretation and jointly prepare a modern, integrated data package. Although this would require additional investment, it could significantly enhance the attractiveness of Bangladesh's offshore acreage and improve investor confidence.

Bangladesh's greatest exploration success came from the 1993 bidding round. Although many companies showed interest in the 1997 round, the country failed to capitalize on that momentum. How do you evaluate Bangladesh's PSC process over the years?

That observation is correct. However, I would prefer to focus specifically on offshore exploration.

The reality is that Bangladesh has not yet been able to convincingly demonstrate the offshore resource potential of the Bay of Bengal to prospective investors. Offshore success remains largely limited to the Sangu gas field, which has already been depleted and abandoned. The Kutubdia discovery has also not reached commercial production.

As a result, despite repeated efforts by successive governments to attract investment, offshore exploration activity has remained limited.

Several internationally renowned companies, including Totalgaz and ConocoPhillips, conducted exploration under PSCs and achieved some technical success. However, they ultimately withdrew because the projects failed to meet their commercial expectations.



IOCs do not make high-risk, multi-billion-dollar offshore investments based solely on contractual terms. A stable economic, social, and political environment is equally important. In my view, the current government is committed to creating such an environment.

The companies sought adjustments in gas pricing terms that could have improved project economics and facilitated the conversion of contingent resources into commercially viable reserves. Those proposals were not accepted, leading to their departure.

Another challenge is the shortage of petroleum economists in Bangladesh. While the country has capable geologists and petroleum engineers, it lacks sufficient expertise in petroleum economics and commercial negotiations. Consequently, some of the concerns raised by international companies may not have been adequately evaluated.

This has contributed to Bangladesh's slow progress in offshore exploration.

What should Bangladesh do to ensure a successful outcome from the Offshore Bidding Round 2026?

Success will depend on adopting the right strategy. Bangladesh must make the best possible use of its existing geological and geophysical data, reprocess and reinterpret those datasets using modern technologies, and present offshore prospects in a compelling and scientifically credible manner.

At the same time, maintaining policy stability, ensuring transparency, and providing a predictable investment environment will be essential.

If Bangladesh can effectively package its offshore potential and communicate it to investors, the likelihood of attracting quality international oil companies will increase substantially. The current bidding round represents an important opportunity, but success will require both technical preparation and strategic engagement with the global petroleum industry.

The 1993 bidding round could be described as a hybrid approach, where roadshows were followed by negotiations with selected companies before contracts were signed under the Model PSC. This time, Bangladesh is seeking bids directly through a formal bidding process. How attractive do you think this will be for IOCs?

The answer is not straightforward. The 1993 PSC round led to significant successes both onshore and offshore. While offshore production from the Sangu gas field has already been depleted, three onshore fields developed under PSC arrangements currently contribute nearly 60 percent of Bangladesh's domestic gas supply.

The key issue is that Bangladesh needs offshore investment to strengthen its long-term energy security. Therefore, while safeguarding national interests and considering geopolitical realities, the government should keep all possible avenues open to attract investment under the Offshore Model PSC framework. From that perspective, I see no reason why some of the

strategies used in the 1993 bidding round could not be considered again if they help secure investment.

The Energy Division has indicated that a series of international roadshows will be organized to promote the Offshore Bidding Round 2026. What preparations should Bangladesh undertake to make these roadshows effective?


The primary objective of any roadshow is to attract investors. We should recognize that Bangladesh has developed considerable capabilities for onshore oil and gas exploration. However, when it comes to offshore exploration, the country lacks the necessary investment capacity, advanced technology, and specialized manpower required for such high-risk ventures.

Therefore, the sole purpose of these roadshows should be to attract IOCs. Many international consulting and advisory firms specialize in investor outreach and promotion. Bangladesh can engage such firms to help bring investors to the table and create a favorable environment. However, the responsibility for convincing investors ultimately rests with Bangladesh itself.

Petrobangla should prepare and present a comprehensive and attractive data package based on the geological and geophysical information already available for Bangladesh's offshore areas in the Bay of Bengal. At the same time, investors must be provided with clear information regarding the investment climate, political stability, regulatory framework, and legal protections.

The government may also consider involving academics, civil society representatives, and media professionals alongside its own officials in promoting Bangladesh's offshore potential. A coordinated strategy that builds investor confidence and trust will be essential if Bangladesh hopes to attract the large-scale and high-risk investments required for offshore exploration.

India and Myanmar have achieved several significant discoveries in



Major IOCs typically invest in offshore regions where geological evidence suggests the possibility of discovering reserves in the range of 30 to 50 trillion cubic feet (TCF). At present, there is insufficient data to indicate that Bangladesh's offshore areas contain reserves of that magnitude.

the Bay of Bengal. Based on the available data, how would you assess Bangladesh's hydrocarbon prospects?

One important point needs to be understood. Bangladesh's offshore geology is not directly comparable to India's east coast. The geological setting and hydrocarbon systems are fundamentally different.

Although Bangladesh shares some geological similarities with Myanmar, there are also substantial differences. Therefore, discoveries in India or Myanmar do not automatically imply that similar resources exist in Bangladesh's offshore territory.

One of Bangladesh's biggest weaknesses is the lack of detailed geological and

geophysical studies. Moreover, the data that we do possess has not yet been presented effectively to potential investors. We have some additional information from exploration activities conducted in five or six offshore blocks, but much of the offshore area remains largely unexplored.

IOCs are fully aware of these limitations. Consequently, they understand that any investment in Bangladesh's offshore sector will require them to undertake detailed surveys using their own capital, technology, and expertise.

Global offshore exploration statistics indicate that in deepwater areas, only about one out of every ten exploration wells results in a commercial discovery. However, when discoveries are made, the reserves are often very large. In Bangladesh's case, the probability of finding giant reserves appears comparatively lower.

Given these uncertainties, what should Bangladesh's strategy be?

Bangladesh should keep every possible option open for attracting offshore investment.

Some experts believe the Bay of Bengal may contain between 20 and 30 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas resources. However, until comprehensive data acquisition, interpretation, and drilling activities are completed, no one can make definitive claims.

That is why there is no alternative to attracting investment for offshore exploration.

It is important to remember that in petroleum exploration, even a negative result can be valuable. As the saying goes, "No finding is good finding." Even if commercially viable reserves are not discovered, the information gained will help Bangladesh make informed decisions regarding its future energy security strategy.

At the same time, policymakers should recognize that even if investment is secured today, it may take 10 to 15 years before Bangladesh can fully determine the hydrocarbon potential of its offshore areas. **EP**

LOAD-SHEDDING CRIPPLES RURAL LIFE


During this Eid-ul-Azha vacation I spent a couple of days in two separate villages away from the capital city. During my short stays I had had first-hand experiences on how the villagers endure frequent load-shedding caused short supply of power to the Rural Electrification Board. At my Suradia village home in Munshiganj district's Sreenagar upazila I found electricity going off for hours together amid sweltering Jaishta heat. Whenever it returns it stays not for long, leaving consumers to endure not only sweat but concerns about irrigation pumps and agricultural activities. The outages

that there had recently been more disruptions in power supply obstructing smooth flow of business. The summer is really going to be difficult.

The same is not seen in Dhaka, the capital city and the seat of power. There are discriminations between the capital city and the rural Bangladesh. With peak electricity demand crossing 16,000MW on a typical summer day Bangladesh Power Development Board can supply maximum up to 14,000MW to Power Grid Company Bangladesh for distribution through the six distribution companies, including the REB, which

law and order are among the perils faced by the capital city residents. But they scream more when electricity goes off rendering refrigerators and fans idle. This is also the city where the rich, elite and the power live. Also the media sits here. So, the subsequent governments have always adopted the policy of keeping the capital city free of load-shedding. The rural people are left to suffer as they are too weak to protest. They are the voiceless people. The city people matter more than the villagers. The discrimination has been going on for many years. No doubt, it will go on.

But the economic development and the efforts to reduce poverty suffer. When the lack of electricity stops electric irrigation pumps the production of rice and vegetables get the hit. Though declining, the agriculture's contribution to Bangladesh's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is still sizeable. The sector accounts for over 11% of the GDP, which is currently \$510 billion in nominal term. But it provides employment to the country's up to 40% of the population acting as a backbone of the economy. Bangladesh suffers when its agriculture gets weak. It has been weakening over the years. In the early 1970s agriculture accounted for 38% of the GDP. In FY24-25 it declined to 1.79%, the lowest rate of growth recorded in the last 11 years, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. This means Bangladesh is lagging behind in its drive for economic recovery amid global fuel prices turmoil. The drive to cut down the rate of poverty is also witnessing setbacks.

Everyone everywhere requires electricity. This is citizens' rights. Political parties while seeking votes always promise a fair distribution of electricity between rural and urban residents. In practice, the rural people remain neglected. No government has ever been able to reverse this trend. 

Reverse Swing



Farid Hossain



cause losses also to poultry farms apart from causing damages to refrigerators whoever owns the cooling appliances. The short vacation also took me and some of my friends to a restaurant close to River Padma in Dohar-Nawabganj area where we found customers and staff members struggling with on-again off-again power outages. We suffered too on a hot and humid day. Though the leave of power here was a bit short the restaurant authorities complained

bears the brunt of the short supply. The mainstream media does not provide space and time the sufferings of the villagers actually deserve. The media's coverage in this regard is discriminatory too. The Dhaka city dwellers are being spared the load-shedding as part of the government's tactic to keep them silent especially on this subject. Dhaka residents have too many problems to deal with. Rising cost of living, high fuel prices, traffic chaos and not-so-good

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