

ENERGY & POWER

Rooppur: Power, Price And Promise

- **LPG Crisis: Who Is To Blame?**
- **Rooppur NPP: Safety, Grid Readiness And Strong Governance Must Come First**
- **Fiji Pre-COP31: Pacific Puts 1.5°C, Climate Finance And Ocean Action At The Heart Of COP31**

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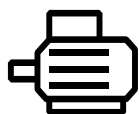
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PRODUCT NOTE

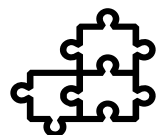
Expanding IE6 SynRM Portfolio

Efficient, sustainable and highly reliable motors

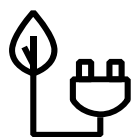


IE6 hyper-efficiency

ABB's IE6 Hyper-Efficiency Synchronous Reluctance (SynRM) motors set a new benchmark for industrial sustainability and performance. They deliver consistently high efficiency in demanding applications, helping reduce energy use and CO₂ emissions while supporting maximum productivity and long-term reliability.



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ABB's safe-area SynRM motor range has received two major upgrades. Motors from 110kW upwards have been upgraded to meet IE6 efficiency level and power range of 3000-3600 r/min SynRM motors is extended up to 450kW. The new IE6 Hyper-Efficiency SynRM motors use an advanced magnet-free design with no rare earth materials, delivering anticipated IE6 efficiency while cutting operational risk and environmental impact.

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Highest efficiency level help to reach sustainability targets

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Motor scope

IE5 and IE6 SynRM Motors for safe areas	
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Motor type	M3BL
Supply	VSD
Design	Cenelec and Compact

1) See SynRM catalog, available in abb.com

2) See data tables on pages 3-5



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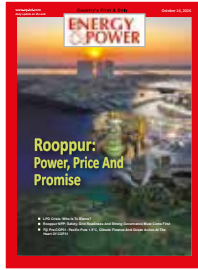
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Bangladesh's nuclear power journey has reached a historic milestone: the first unit of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) achieved initial criticality on 11 October 2026. This marks the beginning of a crucial phase of reactor commissioning, testing and preparation for commercial operation... Dr Mohammad Shawkat Akbar tells EP



EDITORIAL

Bangladesh stands on the threshold of a new era in electricity generation. After decades of planning, years of construction and repeated delays, the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is approaching its first electricity supply to the national grid. The milestone promises to diversify the country's energy mix, but it also brings significant financial, technological and institutional responsibilities. Nuclear power is particularly important for an economy exposed to domestic gas shortages, volatile international fuel prices, and foreign-exchange pressures. Once both units reach their designed capacities, Rooppur could provide 2,400MW of electricity, strengthening supply security and reducing dependence on fossil-fuel generation. Its low operational carbon emissions also offer potential climate benefits. Yet the promise must be weighed against the price. Although the government maintains that the project's dollar-denominated cost has not increased, the depreciation of the taka has raised the local-currency burden of financing and debt repayment. Delayed generation has also postponed the expected economic returns. An unresolved power purchase agreement adds uncertainty over electricity pricing, payment obligations and the project's financial sustainability. Safety must remain nonnegotiable. Commissioning should proceed only after all technical tests and regulatory requirements are met. Bangladesh must also strengthen its nuclear workforce, emergency preparedness, regulatory independence and long-term arrangements for spent-fuel management.

The ultimate test will not be the date electricity generation begins, but whether Rooppur delivers safe, reliable and affordable power over decades. Turning its promise into a lasting national asset will require financial discipline, institutional competence and unwavering commitment to safety.

h i g h l i g h t s

COVER



Pre-COP has given COP31 a clearer political narrative. The Pacific has placed 1.5°C, finance and oceans at the center; governments have announced new financial and energy initiatives; civil society has demanded accountability; women and youth have pressed for meaningful participation; and Indigenous knowledge has been brought closer to the heart of climate policy.... More in Special Report



After decades of planning, years of construction and repeated delays, Bangladesh is approaching a historic turning point in its energy sector. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is expected to begin supplying around 300 megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national grid by December 2026. Yet, the milestone will be only the beginning of a far more demanding journey.



Greenpage

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

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Problems are plenty, solutions are slim |
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Aramco Cuts Asian Oil Prices to Six-Year Low



Saudi Aramco has sharply cut its November oil prices for Asian buyers to the lowest level in six years, while raising prices for European customers amid soaring shipping costs linked to disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz.

Aramco will sell Arab Light to Asian buyers at a \$5-per-barrel discount to the Dubai/Oman benchmark in November, a \$3 reduction from October and the deepest

discount since June 2020.

In contrast, prices for all Saudi crude grades sold to Europe will rise by \$3 per barrel. Prices for US buyers will remain unchanged.

The Asian price cut comes as shipping costs through the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz have surged. Saudi Arabia has resorted to ship-to-ship transfers in the Gulf of Oman to reduce risks to its crude shipments.

South Korea Eyes \$54b Investment in Alaska LNG Project

South Korea is considering a potential \$54 billion investment in the long-delayed Alaska LNG project as part of a broader US energy investment package, US President Donald Trump said on September 30.



However, the announcement does not represent a final investment commitment. South Korean officials said the two countries had agreed to assess the project's commercial feasibility before proceeding.

The Alaska LNG project would transport natural gas from Alaska's North Slope through an 807-mile pipeline to a liquefaction and export

terminal at Nikiski on the Kenai Peninsula. The proposed facility is designed to produce up to 20 million tonnes of LNG annually, primarily for Asian markets.

Glenfarne Group is the project's lead developer and majority owner, holding a 75% stake acquired in 2025 from the Alaska Gasline Development Corp. (AGDC), which retains 25%

India Raises Deepwater Gas Price Ceiling



India has raised the ceiling price for natural gas produced from deepwater, ultra-deepwater and high-pressure, high-temperature fields to \$9.89 per MMBtu, up from \$8.90, for the six months beginning October 1, 2026.

The revised ceiling, applicable until March 31, 2027, is expected to support investment in technically challenging offshore gas projects, including Reliance Industries-BP's KG-D6 block.

Meanwhile, the government

has kept the ceiling for legacy gas produced by state-run ONGC and Oil India at \$7 per MMBtu, despite the October APM price being notified at \$11.22 per MMBtu.

New wells in their nomination blocks can receive a 10% premium, allowing prices of up to \$7.70 per MMBtu.

The policy is aimed at encouraging higher domestic gas production while containing costs for priority sectors such as fertilizer, power and city gas distribution.

TotalEnergies Plans \$10b Investment in Argentina

French energy major TotalEnergies plans to invest \$10 billion in Argentina across several projects, including new wells in Tierra del Fuego and expanded gas production in Neuquén, CEO Patrick Pouyanné said on October 1.



The company aims to increase gas production to 16 million cubic meters per day. Pouyanné said investments of \$4 billion to \$5 billion are expected over the next decade. TotalEnergies currently accounts for around one-quarter of Argentina's natural gas production.

The investment plan comes as Argentine President Javier

Milei seeks to attract foreign capital into strategic sectors, including energy, mining and infrastructure.

Argentina's Vaca Muerta shale formation is central to the country's energy expansion. In August, it produced 670,000 barrels of oil and 95 million cubic meters of natural gas per day, accounting for 72% of national oil output and 62% of gas production.

JS Body Seeks Realistic Plan to Keep Fuel Prices Affordable



The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Public Administration has recommended that the authorities formulate a realistic plan to keep fuel prices affordable for the public and assess the country's preparedness to meet future demand.

At its first meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan recently, the committee also asked the authorities to present detailed information on current fuel demand, storage capacity and institutional preparedness

at its next meeting.

The meeting, chaired by committee chairman and Chief Whip Nurul Islam Moni, reviewed the activities of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) and its affiliated organizations.

Members discussed the reasons for periodic petroleum price increases and adjustments, measures to keep prices affordable, and the roles of Padma Oil PLC, Meghna Petroleum PLC and Jamuna Oil PLC in fuel pricing.

Rampal Power Plant Generates 1,234.2 MW at Peak Hour



The Rampal coal-fired power plant in Bagerhat generated 1,234.2 megawatts (MW) of electricity during the peak hours on October 3, according to the National Load Dispatch Centre of Power Grid Bangladesh (PGB).

The plant has an installed capacity of 1,320MW.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) officials said that 1,234.2MW generated by the Rampal plant was supplied directly to the national grid.

According to the authorities, the Rampal power plant was initiated as a joint venture between Bangladesh and India in 2010.

Indonesian Vice Foreign Minister Meets Amit

Indonesian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Muhammad Anis Matta paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Aninda Islam Amit at his office recently.



During the meeting, the two sides reaffirmed the long-standing and fraternal ties between Bangladesh and Indonesia and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

They also expressed their keen interest in exploring avenues for mutually beneficial cooperation in the days ahead.

Anis Matta is on an official visit to Bangladesh from October 5 to 9.

Magura Palli Bidyut GM, Four Others Suspended Over Tk507Cr Erroneous Bill



The Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) has suspended the general manager of Magura Palli Bidyut Samity and four other officials over an erroneous electricity bill of around Tk 507 crore issued to a residential consumer for using just 235 units of electricity.

The suspended general manager is Md Mohitul Islam. The other officials are Deputy General Manager Md Rezaul Karim, billing supervisor Shema Rani Roy, billing assistant Shoma Rani Ghosh and meter reader Torab Ali.

The action followed a

directive from Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood over what the ministry described as gross negligence.

The September bill, issued to Aleya Khatun, wife of retired teacher Shahidul Islam of Kechuadubi village in Magura Sadar upazila, showed a charge of Tk 506,83,11,593 for 235 units of electricity.

After learning of the incident through the media and social media, the minister contacted the consumer and apologized for the distress caused. He assured her that the bill had been corrected and a revised bill delivered.



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Bangladesh, US Sign Civil Nuclear Cooperation Deal

Bangladesh and the United States have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, opening a new avenue for collaboration in nuclear science, technology and energy security. The agreement was signed on 25 September in New York by Rehan Asad, adviser to the Bangladesh prime minister on science and technology, and Jacob Helberg, US Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

The MoU emphasizes the importance of civil nuclear



cooperation in meeting the energy needs of both countries. It also commits both sides to maintaining high standards of nuclear safety, security, safeguards and non-proliferation.

Bangladesh and the US have safeguards agreements and additional protocols in force with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

BPDB Engineer Suspended after Video of Alleged Bribery Goes Viral

The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) has suspended an executive engineer at its Lakshmipur office after a video allegedly showing him receiving cash and discussing financial transactions worth Tk 2 crore went viral on social media.



The suspended official, Nurul Amin, was serving as executive engineer at BPDB's Sales and Distribution Division in Lakshmipur.

According to an office order issued by the board's Inquiry and Discipline Directorate recently, the suspension followed the circulation of the video, which sparked widespread criticism online.

In the video, Nurul Amin is seen receiving cash from several people whose faces are not visible.

He is also heard discussing project materials, contractors' bills and financial transactions. At one point, he reportedly says he would not accept less than Tk 2 crore. He also refers to a Tk 6 crore bill and says he is willing to approach the BPDB chairman if necessary.

The allegations have drawn public attention to concerns over transparency and accountability in the power sector. However, the claims shown in the video have not been independently verified.

Furnace Oil Price Up Tk 11.92 a Liter

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission has raised the price of furnace oil by Tk 11.92 a liter for October, an increase of more than 12 per cent from the previous month. The price has been fixed at Tk 108.78 a liter for October, up from Tk 96.86 in September.



The commission approved the revised rate at a special meeting on Wednesday following proposals from the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation and oil marketing companies, according to a BERC press release.

BERC said the adjustment took into account the revised Platts rate for imported furnace oil between July 29

and August 28, the CIF price of crude oil for September and fluctuations in the US dollar exchange rate.

Meanwhile, the government has kept the retail prices of other key fuels unchanged for October, retaining the rates fixed on September 20. Diesel will continue to sell at Tk 135 a liter, octane at Tk 165, petrol at Tk 160 and kerosene at Tk 155 at the consumer level, according to a notice issued by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division.

Police Told to Tighten Security at Power Plants Nationwide



Home Ministry has directed police units across the country, including the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), to strengthen security at power plants.

The directive was issued on September 17 following a decision at a core committee meeting of the ministry on August 26, according to ministry officials. On September 23, DMP headquarters also sent a letter to its units instructing them to take necessary measures to reinforce

security at power plants.

DMP Deputy Commissioner for Media and Public Relations Akter Hossain said security at power plants was monitored regularly.

Asked about the directive, Home Ministry Senior Secretary Manjur Morshed Chowdhury said he was unaware of it. However, he added that ensuring the security of key point installations (KPIs) was the responsibility of the relevant agencies.

Rooppur: Power, Price And Promise

Mollah Amzad Hossain

Md. Monirul Islam



Bangladesh's Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is approaching a historic milestone, with its first 1,200MW unit expected to begin supplying around 300MW to the national grid by December 2026. However, the project's long-term success will depend on regulatory approvals, safety verification, grid integration and the resolution of financial and contractual challenges. Although the government says the dollar-denominated project cost remains unchanged, taka depreciation has increased the domestic financial burden. Reliable operation, skilled personnel and effective spent-fuel management will be essential to strengthening energy security.



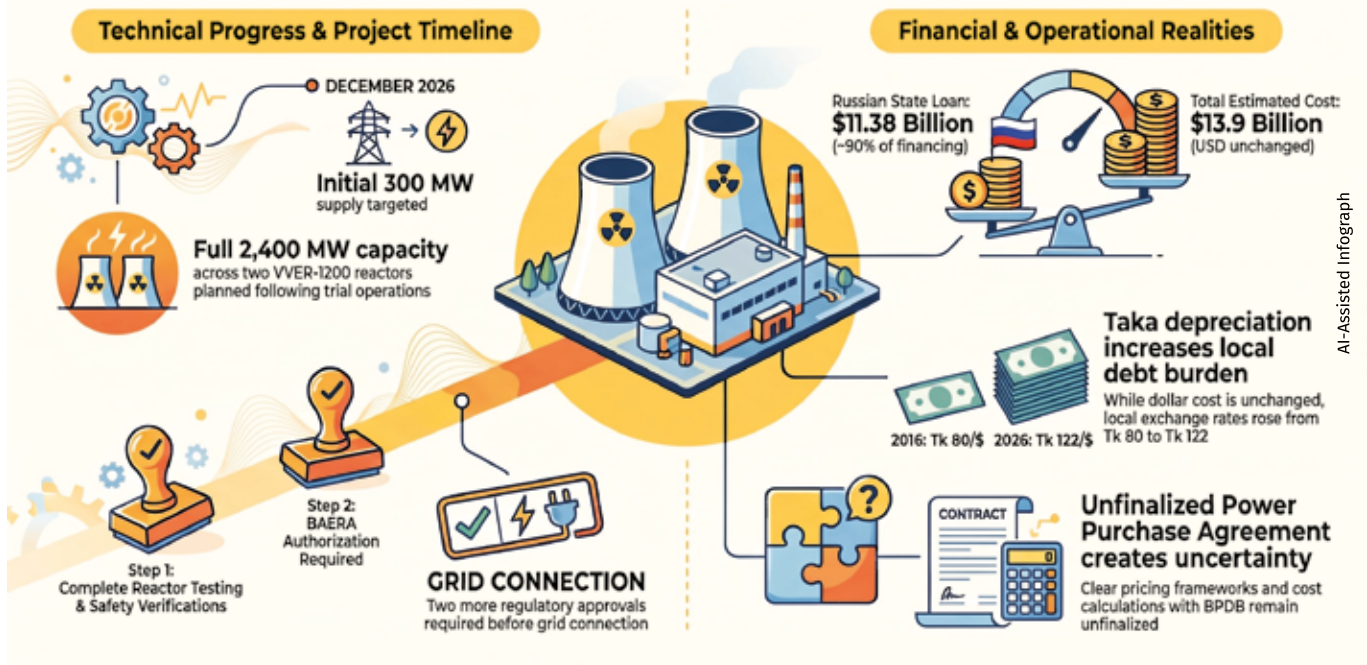
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Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant: Progress, Costs, and Next Steps



After decades of planning, years of construction and repeated delays, Bangladesh is approaching a historic turning point in its energy sector. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is expected to begin supplying around 300 megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national grid by December 2026, marking the country's entry into nuclear electricity generation. Yet, the milestone will be only the beginning of a far more demanding journey—from commissioning and safety verification to grid integration, financial management and full-capacity operation. Full-capacity operation is targeted within the following seven to eight months. Preparations for the trial operation of the second unit are also expected to be completed around that time.

The plant's long-term significance will depend on more than its ability to generate electricity. Currency depreciation, dependence on Russian financing and technical assistance, unresolved power-purchase arrangements and the challenges of managing nuclear fuel and spent fuel will shape its contribution to national energy security. For Bangladesh, the real test is whether it can turn this

landmark investment into a safe, reliable and economically sustainable source of power while strengthening the institutions and expertise needed to operate a nuclear facility for decades.

From Planning to Implementation: A Long Journey

Plans to establish a nuclear power plant in Bangladesh date back several decades. Although discussions began soon after independence, the project remained at the planning stage for years because of financing constraints, technology selection and implementation challenges.

The initiative gained fresh momentum in 2013 through cooperation with Russia. The main construction contract was signed in 2015, and construction of the first unit formally began with the pouring of the first concrete for the reactor building on November 30, 2017. Construction of the second unit began in 2018.

The plant is being developed with technical assistance from Russia's state-owned nuclear corporation, Rosatom. It features two VVER-1200 reactors, each with a designed generating capacity of 1,200 MW.

Under the initial schedule, electricity generation from the first unit was expected to begin around 2023. However, construction delays, equipment installation, commissioning activities, supply chain disruptions and various technical and administrative challenges have repeatedly affected the timeline.

The revised completion deadline for the overall project has been set for June 2028. However, completion of the entire project and the start of trial electricity generation from the first unit are separate milestones. The first unit may begin supplying electricity to the grid while construction and commissioning activities continue on the second unit and other parts of the project.

Project Cost: Currency Depreciation, Not an Increase in Dollar Terms

An important distinction must be made when assessing the cost of RNPP. Although the project's estimated cost has increased in Bangladeshi taka, the government has stated that its overall cost has not increased in U.S. dollar terms.

The project was initially approved in 2016 at an estimated cost equivalent to

approximately \$13.9 billion. Although the revised project cost was approved in January 2026, the dollar-denominated cost was reported to remain unchanged.

The project is financed primarily through a Russian state loan of approximately \$11.38 billion, representing around 90% of the original project financing. The remaining portion is to be provided by the Bangladesh government.

When the project was initially approved, the exchange rate was approximately Tk 80 per dollar. By the time of the revision, it had risen to around Tk 122 per dollar. Consequently, Bangladesh now needs substantially more local currency to meet the same dollar-denominated financial obligations.

This distinction is crucial. The increase in the project's taka equivalent does not, by itself, indicate that the original dollar-based contract price has increased or that the Russian contractor has demanded additional payment in dollars.

Nevertheless, an unchanged dollar-denominated project cost does not mean that Bangladesh's financial burden has remained unchanged. The government must still arrange the foreign currency needed to service its debt. Depreciation of the taka increases the local-currency cost of meeting the same dollar repayment obligations.

Three factors should therefore be considered separately when evaluating RNPP's financial position: the original dollar-denominated project cost, the amount of the Russian loan and the additional taka burden resulting from exchange rate movements.

Impact of COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine War

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war have contributed to delays in implementing the RNPP project. However, it would be inaccurate to attribute all delays to these two events. Construction difficulties, equipment installation, testing, commissioning, and administrative and technical challenges have also affected the schedule.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, international travel, the movement of specialists,

equipment deliveries and construction activities were disrupted. Nuclear power projects require highly specialized equipment, extensive testing and the involvement of experienced engineers and technicians from the technology supplier. Disruptions to international mobility and supply chains increased the risk of delays in these activities.

The Russia-Ukraine war, which began in February 2022, further complicated the project's international financial and commercial environment. Western sanctions against Russia and restrictions affecting international banking transactions created challenges for certain cross-border payments and financial arrangements.

Given the project's heavy reliance on Russian state financing, maintaining the flow of loan disbursements, payment arrangements and financial transactions with Russian entities became particularly important.

The impact of the war extends beyond financial transactions. Continuity in the supply of specialized components, access to technical assistance, the availability of experts and the maintenance of supply chains are all essential to the successful implementation of a nuclear power project.

However, implementation delays and an increase in the dollar-denominated project cost are not the same thing. Even if the original dollar cost remains unchanged, delayed electricity generation postpones the economic benefits expected from the investment.

The economic impact of these delays should therefore be assessed separately from the effects of exchange rate depreciation.

From Nuclear Fission to Grid Supply: Two More Regulatory Approvals Required

Fuel loading in the first unit began on April 28, 2026. Subsequently, the installation of 163 fuel assemblies in the reactor core was completed, followed by tests of various systems and safety-related components.

During commissioning, a problem involving the performance of an automatic

depressurization safety valve delayed authorization to proceed to criticality. The necessary tests and corrective measures were subsequently undertaken before the regulator permitted the next stage.

Criticality is the stage at which a self-sustaining, controlled nuclear fission chain reaction is established inside the reactor. However, achieving criticality does not mean that commercial electricity generation has begun.

The reactor must subsequently undergo a series of tests as its power output is increased in stages. The performance of the generating equipment, reactor systems and associated infrastructure must be verified before electricity can be supplied reliably to the national grid.

According to the information available, two further regulatory approvals from the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA) are required before grid supply can begin. The plant must meet the relevant technical and safety requirements at each subsequent stage.

Safety must remain the overriding consideration throughout this process. Every stage of nuclear commissioning serves a specific purpose, and meeting a target date must never take precedence over establishing safe and reliable operating conditions.

December Target: How Realistic Is the 300 MW Supply Plan?

Project officials expect the first unit to begin supplying approximately 300 MW to the national grid on a trial basis in December 2026, provided that the required tests and regulatory approvals are completed on schedule.

However, this target should not be treated as a guaranteed start date. Following criticality, the reactor's output must be increased progressively, equipment performance must be tested under different operating conditions, and the generator must be integrated with the national grid. All applicable safety and regulatory requirements must also be fulfilled.

These procedures are particularly important for a country entering

nuclear power generation for the first time. Progression to each subsequent stage depends on the results of the preceding tests.

Furthermore, the beginning of trial electricity supply is not equivalent to the start of regular commercial operation. Initial supply at a limited output may be followed by a gradual increase in generation. Reaching the unit's full generating capacity will require additional time.

If the December target is achieved, it will represent a significant milestone for Bangladesh. However, it would be unrealistic to expect the first unit's entire 1,200 MW capacity to become immediately available.

The expectation that full-capacity operation could begin within the following seven to eight months will depend on the commissioning results, regulatory approvals and the successful integration of the plant with the national grid.

Unfinalized Power Purchase Agreement Raises Questions

Despite approaching the electricity generation stage, the failure to finalize a power purchase agreement with the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) remains a significant administrative and financial concern.

Technical readiness alone is insufficient to ensure the smooth integration of a major power plant into the national electricity system. The price of electricity, payment arrangements, power offtake obligations, operational responsibilities and the financial relationship between the relevant entities must also be clearly established.

Pricing electricity from a nuclear power plant is particularly complex because a substantial portion of its cost is associated with construction and financing. Capital costs, foreign currency debt, interest payments, nuclear fuel, maintenance and safety systems all influence the overall cost of generation.

The power purchase agreement must therefore address not only the price per unit of electricity but also the methodology for calculating costs, the

RNPP's contribution to energy security will ultimately depend on how effectively the government integrates nuclear generation into the wider power system.

treatment of exchange rate movements and the allocation of long-term financial obligations.

Further delays in finalizing the agreement could create uncertainty in financial planning and power sector accounting. The necessary contractual, regulatory and technical arrangements should be completed in a timely and transparent manner.

The pricing framework must also balance the plant's financial sustainability with the broader interests of the electricity sector and consumers.

RNPP's Potential Contribution to Energy Security

Bangladesh's electricity generation remains dependent on natural gas, coal, liquid fuels and imported electricity. Gas shortages and fluctuations in international fuel prices have placed increasing pressure on electricity generation costs and supply reliability.

Against this background, nuclear power could diversify Bangladesh's electricity generation mix over the long term. Once both units are operational at their designed capacities, RNPP is expected to contribute a combined 2,400 MW to the national grid.

One of the principal advantages of

nuclear power is its ability to generate large quantities of electricity over extended periods using relatively small quantities of fuel. Unlike gas- or coal-fired power plants, nuclear facilities do not require continuous deliveries of large volumes of fossil fuel. Nuclear generation also produces very low direct carbon dioxide emissions during operation.

However, nuclear power will not eliminate Bangladesh's dependence on international suppliers. RNPP will continue to require nuclear fuel, specialized components, technical assistance and maintenance support. The management of spent nuclear fuel and long-term safety obligations will also remain important considerations.

Nuclear power plants are generally suited to continuous electricity generation. Their integration into the national grid must therefore be coordinated with renewable energy, hydropower and other generation sources. Grid stability, transmission capacity, variations in electricity demand and contingency arrangements will be essential to reliable operation.

RNPP's contribution to energy security will ultimately depend on how effectively the government integrates nuclear generation into the wider power system.

Long-Term Economic Benefits Depend on Operational Efficiency

The start of electricity generation at RNPP will introduce a new technological capability into Bangladesh's power sector. However, the project's economic success will depend on reliable operation and the actual cost of electricity delivered over its operating life.

Although the dollar-denominated project cost remains unchanged, according to the government's stated position, the extended construction period and delayed generation affect the timing of the investment's economic returns. Conversely, the plant's long operating life and relatively stable fuel costs could provide long-term benefits.

Realizing these benefits will require competent management, regular maintenance, trained personnel, reliable

fuel supplies and strict adherence to international nuclear safety standards.

The electricity pricing framework must ensure that the plant can cover its operating costs and debt servicing obligations without placing an unreasonable additional burden on the wider power sector.

A comprehensive assessment of RNPP's economic performance should consider the original dollar-denominated project cost, generation costs per unit, capacity utilization, maintenance expenditure, debt repayment schedules and the costs of alternative electricity generation sources.

It should also distinguish between the effect of exchange rate movements on Bangladesh's local currency liabilities and any genuine change in the project's underlying dollar costs.

Safety, Human Resources and Spent Fuel Management

Installing nuclear technology is only the beginning of a long-term operational commitment. Safe and sustainable operation requires skilled personnel, independent regulatory oversight, emergency response capabilities and regular safety assessments.

Bangladesh must develop an operating framework that enables local engineers, technicians and operators to assume increasing responsibilities while continuing to benefit from international expertise.

The commissioning difficulties involving a safety valve have reinforced the importance of completing every stage of testing and verification before moving forward.

Spent nuclear fuel management must also be addressed through a clear long-term strategy. Whatever arrangements are adopted with Russia for the return or management of spent fuel, the associated financial, technical and legal responsibilities must be clearly defined.

Emergency preparedness, radiation monitoring, protection of surrounding communities and coordination between local and national authorities must also be regularly assessed.

Transparent disclosure of relevant safety information will be important in building public confidence in Bangladesh's nuclear power program.

What Bangladesh Needs to Do Next

Authorization to proceed toward criticality in the first unit marks a major milestone in Bangladesh's nuclear power program. Turning this achievement into a lasting contribution to energy security will require action in several areas.

First, BAERA's remaining two approvals must be secured after the required tests and safety assessments have been completed. The commissioning process must remain guided by technical evidence and regulatory requirements rather than pressure to meet a predetermined deadline.

Second, BPDB and the relevant project authorities must finalize the financial and operational terms of the power purchase agreement. Transparency in electricity pricing and generation cost calculations will be essential.

Third, Bangladesh must maintain reliable long-term arrangements with Russia for nuclear fuel supplies, specialized components, technical assistance, training and spent fuel management. Contingency planning will be necessary to minimize disruption from future geopolitical developments.

Fourth, transmission infrastructure and grid stability must be ensured as electricity supply increases from the initial 300 MW toward the unit's full capacity.

Fifth, the government should regularly disclose reliable information on the project's dollar-denominated cost, foreign currency debt obligations, expected generation costs and implementation progress. This would strengthen public confidence and improve financial accountability.

Finally, nuclear power should be integrated into a broader energy strategy that includes renewable energy, energy efficiency, grid modernization and diversification of fuel supplies. RNPP can strengthen energy security, but it should form part of a balanced and resilient national electricity system.

Conclusion

The authorization to begin controlled nuclear fission in the first unit of RNPP marks a historic development in Bangladesh's energy sector. After years of planning, construction delays, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and technical commissioning challenges, the project is approaching electricity generation.

According to the government's stated position, the project's dollar-denominated cost has not increased, although depreciation of the taka has raised its equivalent cost in local currency. This distinction is essential when assessing the project's financial performance and Bangladesh's long-term obligations.

If the first unit begins supplying approximately 300 MW to the national grid in December 2026, it will represent a major step toward diversifying the country's electricity generation mix. However, achieving this target will depend on the remaining regulatory approvals, safety verification, grid integration and completion of the necessary contractual arrangements.

For Bangladesh, the real achievement will extend beyond becoming the world's 33rd country to generate electricity from nuclear power. It will lie in establishing safe, reliable and economically sustainable nuclear generation, managing international dependencies and applying the lessons of RNPP to future energy planning.

One consideration must remain paramount: RNPP is not merely an electricity generation project; it is also a strategic national security priority. The government must safeguard that priority throughout commissioning and subsequent operation by ensuring rigorous safety oversight, financial discipline, operational preparedness and long-term institutional capacity.

The success of RNPP will ultimately be measured not simply by when electricity generation begins, but by how safely, reliably and efficiently the plant serves Bangladesh over the coming decades. ■



Dr. Mohammad Shawkat Akbar

ENERGY SECURITY OF BANGLADESH

Strategic Actions Urgent To Address Challenges

1. Introduction:

Energy is defined as the ability to do work. Without energy, no work is possible. The physics concept of energy applies directly to the human body. The human body uses energy from food to sustain life and perform various activities, ranging from physical movement to mental processes like dreaming and emotion.

Just as the human body needs good food for energy, a nation's economy and social structure depend on a steady supply of power. Without energy, a country cannot meet basic needs like food, housing, healthcare, and education. This connection between energy and economics has always been true, and it always will be.

Access to an uninterrupted, affordable, and sustainable energy supply is the bedrock of modern society. It is essential to improve living standards, create opportunities for new businesses and industries, attract foreign investment, and enable sustainable development in a nation like Bangladesh. Declining energy self-sufficiency leaves a nation vulnerable to supply chain disruptions, geopolitical tensions, social unrest, and stunted development, all of which

directly undermine domestic economic stability and sovereignty. Because this represents a critical non-traditional threat to national security, countries with limited energy resources and underdeveloped economies must prioritize energy security to protect national stability and economies. The International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy security by four As: Availability, Accessibility, Affordability, and Acceptability.

Global energy systems rely on the First Law of Thermodynamics. According to this law, the total amount of energy in the universe is constant. We cannot create new energy; we can only transform it. The vast amount of energy currently generated worldwide by burning fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas) is essentially just the transformation of chemical energy stored underground for millions of years. Fossil fuel reserves are limited and depleting. Moreover, the processes involved in their conversion cause severe environmental damage. Despite fossil fuels currently dominating the energy mix, this foundational physics principle dictates that long-term security requires a global shift toward new energy flows and improved energy efficiency. This reality also applies to the declining natural gas reserves of Bangladesh.

A modern, diversified, and optimal energy mix for power generation includes renewables, flexible natural gas as a bridge fuel, limited coal (with carbon capture if needed), and proven high-efficiency options like nuclear power for a stable baseload. It also incorporates emerging technologies such as small modular reactors (SMRs) and green hydrogen. This strategy is known as the diversified low-carbon portfolio approach.

The transformation of the national energy system into a modernized sector depends on population dynamics, geography, existing infrastructure, resource availability, societal conditions, and long-term strategies for economic growth, social equity, environmental protection, and sustainability.

Our country, Bangladesh, is a densely populated developing nation. Our nation is standing at a dangerous crossroads in its energy journey due to the rapid depletion of domestic natural gas, rising reliance on costly imported fossil fuels, and volatile global supply shocks. The country urgently needs a diversified energy mix to enhance energy security. Achieving this requires accelerated deployment of renewables, exploration of natural resources, early commercial production of the 2400 MW Rooppur NPP, and the expansion of baseload nuclear energy, alongside critical structural reforms in governance, infrastructure, and policy frameworks.

2. Current Picture of Energy and Power Sectors of Bangladesh

Bangladesh relies heavily on a fossil-fuel-dependent energy mix. This includes declining domestic gas, imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), imported coal (which recently surpassed gas), limited domestic coal, imported Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) and High-Speed Diesel (HSD), cross-border electricity imports, and a small share of grid renewables and off-grid solar. The country also uses a significant quantity of LPG.

The power sector of the country is heavily reliant on fossil fuels. Approximately 92.33% of the total capacity still relies on gas, coal, and liquid fuels (HFO/HSD). Most of the infrastructure is built based on fossil fuel imports. This situation poses a major challenge for Bangladesh's power generation sector and creates significant

economic and environmental risks. Excessive reliance on fuel imports leads to price hikes in the global market and places immense pressure on foreign currency reserves. Widespread load-shedding is taking place across the country due to the fuel crisis.

According to the latest database of the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) from September 2026, the country's total grid-based power generation capacity is approximately 29,595 MW (including off-grid systems, it reaches approximately 32,332 MW). Fuel-based power generation capacity (September 2026) includes: Natural gas (/LNG) - 12154 MW (42.21%), coal- 8,423 MW (28.46%), HFO - 5,641 MW (19.06%), HSD- 768 MW (2.60%), Solar: 797 MW (2.69%), hydro - 230 MW (0.80 % MW), Wind - 62 MW (0.22 %), Power import - 1160 MW (4.03 %) and others - 40 MW (0.14 %).

The peak electricity demand fluctuates considerably between working hours and evening surges, ranging from a daytime expectation of 15,520 MW to an evening peak of 17,200 MW.

Natural gas has long been the backbone of Bangladesh's energy system. It is widely used for (i) power generation, (ii) fertilizer production, (iii) other industries including textiles, glass and ceramics, (iv) captive power, (v) domestic uses, (vi) commercial activities and (vii) transportation (CNG).

Bangladesh is currently facing a severe structural gas crisis, stemming from a long-standing lack of domestic exploration activities and the failure to discover any new, commercially viable gas fields. While the country's own natural gas production is declining at an annual rate of approximately 5%, the demand for gas is rising by 4% each year. The compounding effect of this declining production and rising demand creates a rapid, unsustainable widening of the energy deficit, resulting in a final gas crisis for the nation. To overcome this crisis and meet growing demand, the country is increasingly relying on imported LNG. However, the LNG import process is severely hampered by infrastructural limitations and "single-point vulnerability," as the country's two operational Floating Storage

and Regasification Units (FSRUs) are anchored in the same offshore zone at Moheshkhali, Cox's Bazar.

Presently, national gas demand fluctuates in the range between 3,800 and 4,000+ mmcf, but the net supply from combined domestic output and imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is roughly 2,610-2,800 mmcf. The daily deficit is about 1,000- 1,300+ mmcf. The severe gas shortage in Bangladesh creates a complex domino effect across the country's main economic sectors and daily citizen welfare.

1. **Power Generation:** Bangladesh has a grid-based natural gas power generation capacity of approximately 12,472 MW, alongside about 3,460 MW of gas-based off-grid/captive power capacity used mostly by industries. Nearly 50% of gas-based power plants sit completely idle or operate well below capacity, putting over 20 billion USD in infrastructure at risk of becoming stranded assets.
2. **Agriculture Support:** Gas shortages have heavily impacted fertilizer production, leading to the temporary suspension of several state-owned and private fertilizer factories. Shutdowns at domestic fertilizer factories force the government to spend over \$800 million annually on imports to protect crop yields.
3. **Ready-Made Garments (RMG) & Textiles:** Major textile and garment export factories report production dropping by up to 50% due to fluctuating gas pressure. This delays shipping deadlines, incurs expensive air-freight penalties, and damages relationships with global brands.
4. **Transmission Network:** Bangladesh's modern gas transmission infrastructure is severely underutilized due to a critical supply-demand gap. Underutilization of modern pipeline infrastructure effectively traps about 2 billion USD in idle capital.
5. **Public Transportation:** Chronic low pressure at CNG stations creates massive, time-wasting vehicle queues across major highways.
6. **Domestic Households:** Urban residents face severe daily disruptions, with prolonged daylight gas outages making routine cooking nearly impossible in cities like Dhaka.

To unlock \$30 billion in gas-based infrastructure value while safeguarding the nation's economic engine, the present government has adopted strategies for aggressive domestic exploration to boost domestic gas production, established LNG import and storage infrastructure for sustaining imports by expanding from both long-term and spot market sources rather than relying on any single country or region, and implemented emergency demand management to maintain uninterrupted connectivity for economically critical infrastructure and industrial sectors.

Bangladesh is currently using Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in the residential and transport sectors to address natural gas shortages. Since domestic production is extremely limited, the country relies on imports for almost its entire LPG demand. Rising international LPG prices directly affect household energy affordability, disproportionately impacting lower-income groups. Initiatives to produce LPG from domestic gas fields are necessary.

Bangladesh's energy mix increasingly relies on imported coal as shifting policies and depleting reserves have sidelined indigenous sources. The 525 MW Barapukuria Thermal Power Plant is the sole facility designed to utilize indigenous coal. Most of the nation's 8,000+ MW coal capacity runs on imported coal. Due to the failure to increase coal extraction from domestic mines and by shifting toward an import-dependent coal model, the country has exposed its power sector to international volatility. Delays in international deliveries have caused capacity shortfalls, contributing to rolling load-shedding during peak summer demand periods. Moreover, most of these plants are strategically situated along the coastline. This makes the energy sector highly vulnerable to geographical & climate risks. These centers face climate-related risks such as cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal, storm surges, and rising sea levels. If coal unloading at the port is disrupted by a disaster, the country's entire power supply network could face a crisis.

Bangladesh is a mineral-rich country based primarily on five discovered coal mines, with total in-situ reserves of approximately 2,000 to 3,000 million

tonnes. The proven reserve amounts to about 1,000 million tonnes. While domestic coal shields the country from dollar shortages and global shipping issues, depleting reserves and political/environmental resistance to opening new open-cast mines have severely limited the expansion of indigenous coal power. The government has adopted a plan to expand the Barapukuria mine and extract roughly 160 million tonnes of coal between 2031 and 2035. Bangladesh must adopt long-term and environmentally friendly strategies regarding other potential mines alongside Barapukuria.

Oil and petroleum products play a crucial role, especially in the transport and power sectors, and remain significant in the energy mix of the country. Over the years, oil-fired generation has increased significantly. The total installed power generation capacity based on HFO and HSD in Bangladesh is 6,409 MW combined (5,641 MW from HFO and 768 MW from HSD). Liquid fuels, including HFO and HSD, run peaking power plants to meet emergency grid demands, which costs the state billions in imports and operational subsidies. For energy security, Bangladesh must urgently reduce its heavy reliance on imported oil and oil products by shifting from oil-fired power generation to clean energy technologies.

Renewable energy (sunlight, wind, water, biomass, biogas, etc.) refers to net-zero carbon energy produced from natural resources. Bangladesh is far behind in terms of the commercial use of renewable energy. The contribution of renewable sources to the country's total electricity generation is relatively small. Non-agricultural land, underutilized areas, and urban rooftops are being considered for potential solar projects. The country's hydro-potential is very limited.

The government aims to significantly increase its renewable energy share, targeting solar, rooftop solar, and wind energy. As of September 2026, Bangladesh has initiated its National Renewable Energy Development Strategy 2026–2030, establishing a target to generate 20% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030. The target has been set to generate a total of 10,000 MW of solar power, with 5,500 MW coming from rooftop solar and 4,500 MW from ground-mounted solar.

Additionally, the plan aims to generate another 450 to 550 MW of electricity from other renewable sources, including wind, waste-to-energy, hydropower, floating solar, and agrivoltaics. Ambitious targets and strategies for the use of renewable energy by 2040 and 2050 have been set to ensure Bangladesh's long-term energy security.

Alongside renewable energy expansion, Bangladesh must set a target of reducing fossil fuel imports through the early production of roughly 2,400 MW from the Rooppur NPP, the expansion of large NPPs, and the introduction of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for uninterrupted baseload power supply. For Bangladesh, one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, the nuclear and renewable energy strategy represents a critical step toward reducing emissions while protecting economic growth and strengthening resilience against climate impacts.

3. Energy Security of Bangladesh: Issues & Challenges and Actions & Strategies

We, Bangladeshis are living through many energy security threats. The country is facing a severe energy crisis due to rapid depletion of proven domestic gas resources, historic underinvestment in exploration for discoveries, unmined domestic coal, slow adaptation of renewables, unclear vision of nuclear adaptation, and overreliance on fossil fuel imports.

The current issues and threats to national energy security and recommended actionable strategies are proposed below.

Issue 1: Rapid depletion of the proven domestic natural gas reserves and historic underinvestment, lack of aggressive and sustained domestic gas exploration, mainly offshore for new discoveries.

Actions: Invitation for international bids (Bidding Round) for offshore (deep and shallow sea) and onshore (land-based) exploration.

Modernization of the Model PSC (Production Sharing Contract).

Deep exploration onshore.

Completing rapidly deep-sea multi-client 2D/3D seismic surveys and presenting

the data to international companies to encourage them to participate in the bidding process.

Issue 2: Slow renewable adaptation due to financial barriers and incentive bottlenecks for large-scale solar projects and wind projects, high import costs and heavy duties on essential solar components, inconsistent tariff structures and pricing models, lack of large-scale open land near cities or major load centers, grid limitations, and limited private equity and FDI.

Actions: Rooftop & Decentralized Solar: Adopting decentralized rooftop solar installations; implementing the Fast-Track Rooftop Solar Program targeting 3,000 to 4,000 MW of rooftop solar before summer 2027 and 5,500 MW by 2030.

Implementing the Public Institution Solar PPP programme at 46,000 Schools, hospitals, and government offices, targeting 1,454 MW before summer 2027.

Installing smaller grid-tied installations on unused public infrastructure and power plants to prevent delays from land acquisition issues.

Policy Reform & Financing: Setting legal targets for renewable energy, accompanied by transparent tariffs and specific strategies, and encouraging the private sector through multilateral and climate finance programs.

Land & Resource Mapping: Fast-tracking nationwide land mapping to identify unused government land/khas land, riverbanks, and coastal areas suited for utility-scale solar, and fast-track wind resource mapping in high-velocity coastal zones.

Creating national infrastructure to generate at least 30% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2040 and more than 50% by 2050 by attracting private investment.

Grid Upgradation: Allocating fast-track priority funding to upgrade national transmission infrastructure and battery storage integration, allowing the grid to absorb intermittent renewable energy.

Issue 3: Non-utilization of domestic

reserves of coal due to government policy hesitations and debates over mining methods.

Action: Formulating a swift and transparent coal policy or framework. Increasing the generation of indigenous coal base-load electricity (which ensures uninterrupted power supply) through the extraction of domestic coal, thereby reducing reliance on imports.

Issue 4.1 : Premature, rapid investments in natural gas, coal and liquid fuel plants have led to massive overcapacity and severe underutilization.

Issue 4.2 : The existence of a significant portion of generation capacity consisting of old, inefficient, outdated oil and gas plants, combined with aging transmission/distribution infrastructure, has resulted in energy security risks for the country. This results in frequent outages, high system losses (technical and non-technical losses >10-15%), and high generation costs, threatening reliability despite having surplus generation capacity.

Issue 4.3 : Reliance on imported LNG, coal, and oil has led to an 83% increase in electricity generation costs.

Issue 4.4 : Absence of a quality supply chain risk management approach to mitigating the impact of sudden fossil fuel import stoppages. This causes severe energy insecurity, frequent power outages, and economic volatility.

Action: Addressing Issues 4.1 and 4.2 requires the rapid phase-out of old, inefficient oil-, gas-, and coal-fired power plants, modernizing transmission and distribution lines, and reducing the burden of capacity charges by cutting down on unnecessary overcapacity.

To address Issue 4.3, reliance on fossil fuel imports must be gradually reduced through a transition to modern and eco-friendly energy technologies by increasing the use of modern technologies such as solar and wind power.

To address Issue 4.4 for coal imports: increasing the country's strategic fuel reserve from 90 days to 120 days to mitigate the risk of a sudden supply disruption.

To address Issue 4.4 for LNG imports: developing advanced sea- and river-based LNG infrastructure utilizing virtual pipelines to deliver gas directly to load centers.

Issue 5.1 : The historical lack of diverse strategic alliances and long-term contracts with primary energy suppliers has exposed the nation to severe supply shortages and inflated costs.

Issue 5.2 : Heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels (LNG and coal) from a narrow geographic pool exposes the country to volatile shipping lanes and geopolitical shocks.

Actions: To address Issue 5.1, it is necessary to balance competitive long-term and short-term contracts, including direct government-to-government (G2G) agreements. Emphasis must be given to locking in predictable pricing and volume guarantees and reducing spot-market exposure by maintaining a portfolio of 70% long-term G2G contracts for baseload stability and 30% flexible short-term/spot contracts to capitalize on market dips.

To address Issue 5.2, it is inevitable to adopt concrete policy frameworks for geographical diversification. Multi-region sourcing and diverse shipping routes. In addition, a policy framework on establishing joint energy task forces via signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to secure diplomatic priority during global energy crunches is necessary.

Issue 6: Bangladesh can significantly reduce its dependence on imports by increasing the production of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) from gas fields and condensate. Currently, the annual demand for LPG in Bangladesh is approximately 1.5 million metric tonnes (MT), a significant portion of which must be imported from abroad at a high cost, placing a heavy burden on the country's economy.

Actions: Promptly conducting the necessary technical and economic surveys at the country's major gas fields to determine which gas fields contain adequate reserves of propane and butane.

Setting up propane and butane fractionation plants at major gas fields in the shortest possible time.

Maximizing the utilization of condensate obtained from the country's refineries and gas fields to convert it into LPG.

Distribution with Government Support: Strengthening government-level distribution networks and subsidy policies to supply LPG at affordable prices to remote areas and the transport sector (Autogas).

Issue 7 : Despite the vast gas reserves in the Bhola gas fields (Shahbazpur, Bhola North, and Ilisha), industrial zones on the mainland are unable to fully reap the benefits due to the lack of a permanent pipeline and protracted delays.

Actions: 1. CNG/LNG Transportation (Short-term):

Transporting CNG/LNG cascade cylinders to the mainland using specialized barges or large vessels. Utilizing the PPP model to expedite the establishment of CNG conversion stations and the implementation of transport operations.

2. Pipeline connection to the national grid (long-term):

Accelerating the pipeline project as a long-term solution for permanently connecting Bhola's gas to the main national grid using modern 'HDD' (Horizontal Directional Drilling) technology to avoid the complexities of crossing the Meghna River.

3. On-site use in Bhola (alternative strategy):

Fertilizer factories and power plants: Even if gas cannot be transported to industrial zones, the produced fertilizer and electricity can easily be sent to the mainland via river routes or grid lines.

Economic Zone: Establishing a Special Economic Zone (EZ) in Bhola and providing direct gas connections to gas-dependent industrial units located there.

Issue 8: Without rigorous analysis of geopolitical risks, the development of the energy and power sector leaves the country vulnerable to severe energy security risks. Ignoring these external factors exposes critical infrastructure to supply disruptions, price shocks, and strategic coercion from foreign powers.

Actions: Diversifying the energy mix to reduce import dependency, accelerating investments in domestic and industrial renewable energy, and ramping up indigenous offshore gas exploration.

Installing solar power systems on factory rooftops directly to protect the industry from grid failures and price hikes in the international market.

Expediting offshore gas exploration.

Issue 9: Climate change poses a severe threat to Bangladesh's energy security. Rising ambient heat drops power plant efficiency and strains transformers, while extreme weather and rising sea levels endanger vulnerable coastal stations, which provide roughly 30% of the nation's generation capacity.

Action: Expanding distributed solar and biomass energy systems helps coastal and rural communities withstand grid failures from central power stations.

Upgrading transmission grids, modernizing coastal substations to be flood-resistant, and implementing smart-grid monitoring can minimize energy disruptions during severe weather.

Issue 10: Reliance on a centralized, old national grid infrastructure creates severe operational and financial strain and causes significant challenges with peak demand management, frequent outages, high system losses (technical and non-technical losses >10-15%), and high generation costs.

Action: Transitioning from an analog system to an automated and modernized electric grid system and electricity distribution networks by deploying SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) and Prepaid Smart Meters across distribution networks helps immediately track and reduce losses and improve power supply.

Replacing degrading overhead lines with underground cables in dense urban load centers (like Dhaka) reduces technical losses and prevents outages caused by adverse weather or line faults.

Encouraging the expansion of Rooftop Solar and Net Metering for industrial,

commercial, and urban residential zones alleviates peak grid stress and limits long-distance transmission losses.

Utilizing Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) balances intermittent generation and provides dispatchable power during sudden spikes in demand, preventing localized blackouts.

Lessening reliance on expensive, imported fossil fuels (LNG and coal) protects the grid against global supply shocks and foreign exchange volatility.

Issue 11: Lack of strong and long-term bilateral diplomacy and strategic alliances with regional cross-border partnerships and also international suppliers has exposed Bangladesh's structural vulnerabilities in energy security. Today's energy diplomacy is characterized by the challenge of managing the traditional geopolitics of fossil fuels while simultaneously navigating the emerging geopolitics that accompany the modern and green transition.

Actions: Pursuing both strategic bilateral agreements and regional cross-border partnerships to diversify its primary energy mix.

Collaborating to leverage cross-border partnerships to clean hydropower potential.

Seeking energy collaborations in Southeast Asian nations.

Enabling national energy diplomacy to negotiate trade routes and build strategic alliances to ensure the continuous, reliable, and affordable flow of power resources while balancing national security and economic prosperity.

Issue 12: Unclear Long-Term Policy Vision and Strategic Partnerships in Nuclear Power

Due to the limitations of coal, gas, and hydroelectric power, nuclear energy is the only long-term 'baseload' (continuous) source for Bangladesh. However, an unclear long-term policy vision severely limits the potential of the country's nuclear sector. Due to the lack of long-term and specific policies, foreign financiers and technology partners hesitate to make large

investments. Furthermore, developing nuclear engineers and scientists for the long term is hindered in the absence of a clear roadmap.

Because a civil nuclear programme ties a nation to foreign vendors backed by technology holder nations for decades, robust nuclear diplomacy and strategic partnership are essential to secure technology transfers, supply chains and nuclear infrastructural support for an NPP facility's 60- to 100-year lifecycle.

Actions: These proposed measures are highly timely and specific for the long-term development of Bangladesh's nuclear power sector, the successful implementation of the Rooppur project, and the elimination of policy uncertainties.

Rapid and safe implementation of the 2,400 MW Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant:

Expediting the commissioning and grid synchronization of two units of the 2,400 MW Rooppur NPP.

Enhancing the capacity and stability of the national grid (high-voltage grid) for the safe transmission of electricity generated at Rooppur NPP.

Monitoring and implementing the bilateral agreement with Russia regarding the safe management of spent nuclear fuel.

Clarification of long-term nuclear policy and vision:

Formulating a 'Nuclear Energy Roadmap' that defines the contribution of nuclear energy in alignment with the country's 2050 net-zero target.

Adopting a long-term fixed strategic capacity target of 2,400 MW by 2030, 5,000 MW by 2040, and 9,000 MW by 2050 to match rapid industrialization.

Establish a dedicated regulatory cell to shield international investors from administrative complexities and overlapping jurisdictions.

Initiating the preliminary work for the construction of two additional units (3rd and 4th) by utilizing the existing infrastructure at Rooppur would reduce both costs and time.

Determining Future Reactor Technology (Large-Scale & SMRs):

Assessing the feasibility of SMR technology for integration in Industrial hubs & high-demand zones, Export Processing Zones (EPZs), Coastal areas, and Off-Grid and remote areas, and rapidly incorporating it into policy frameworks for integration. Finalizing the site selection and technical feasibility assessment for the second large-scale nuclear power plant in the country.

Human Capital & Institutional Capacity Building:

Formulating a specific 'Human Resource Development Roadmap' is crucial for the long-term success of Bangladesh's nuclear energy program and for the safe and efficient operation of the Rooppur NPP.

Strengthen the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA) for independent safety oversight by regularly updating national nuclear safety and security guidelines in alignment with IAEA safety standards and developing internationally qualified regulatory inspectors for the inspection and licensing processes of nuclear power plants.

Capacity building of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) as a technical support organization (TSO) to the national nuclear power programme and enhancing the capacity of the BAEC by modernization of BAEC laboratories for radioactivity measurement, waste management and environmental monitoring, nuclear research reactor facilities, and also implementing a 'Knowledge Management System' to document the knowledge and experience of seasoned scientists and transfer it to young scientists.

Developing the management and technical skills of the personnel of Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh Limited (NPCBL) for operation and maintenance of Rooppur NPP independently and also fostering a 'Safety First' mindset and organizational culture among officials and employees at all levels of the NPCBL.

Robust Nuclear Diplomacy & Lifecycle Security:

Assurance of Spare parts and critical components supply and operational support: Securing a legal agreement with the nuclear reactor supplier country for the supply of spare parts for a period of 20-30 years.

Establishing a 24/7 on-call support framework with the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) team for urgent technical issues and maintenance. Training local engineers so that the manufacturing of small components and basic-level repairs can be carried out domestically.

Fuel Supply Guarantees: Institutionalize long-term nuclear fuel supply agreements to prevent geopolitical disruptions.

Radioactive Waste Management, Nuclear Liability and Decommissioning Funds: Establish an independent, legally protected "Radioactive Waste Management", "Nuclear Liability" and "Nuclear Decommissioning Trust Fund" (NDTF) from the very first day of the nuclear plant's operation.

Depositing a fixed percentage of the revenue from the sale of each unit of electricity generated directly into these funds. Investing the funds in long-term, secure government bonds, while taking into account a 100-year lifecycle and factoring in inflation.

Strengthen Global Alliances:

Deepen strategic diplomatic ties with international nuclear bodies (e.g., IAEA) and diverse technology-holder nations to expand the nuclear power programme, diversify future supply chains, fuel security, and technical training.

Public Trust:

Launching national public awareness campaigns regarding nuclear safety and waste management.

Raising awareness about nuclear safety systems (such as the multiple barrier system) through schools, colleges, mass media, and social media.

Involving residents of the areas surrounding the nuclear plant in regular safety drills and interactive meetings. 

Dr. Mohammad Shawkat Akbar, Chairman (Retired), Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission



GLOBAL DIESEL CRISIS DEEPENS

EMERGENCY STOCKS OFFER RELIEF, BUT WHERE IS THE LONG-TERM SOLUTION?

Saleque Sufi

The global fuel market is facing renewed pressure over diesel, with supplies tightening and prices remaining elevated across major markets. The Middle East conflict, disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, attacks on Russian refineries, reduced refined-product exports from China, and declining refinery output in several regions have combined to create a serious squeeze in global diesel supplies.

Unlike crude oil, which can often be redirected relatively quickly between markets, refined products such as diesel depend heavily on available refinery capacity, product specifications, storage and transport infrastructure. This has made diesel particularly vulnerable to the current supply shock.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has warned that the impact of the Strait of Hormuz crisis remains especially severe in diesel markets. Although crude oil exports from the Middle East have

recovered significantly, refined-product flows remain severely constrained. The IEA says attacks on Russian refineries have further aggravated the diesel shortage, resulting in tighter markets and higher prices.

The problem is therefore not simply a shortage of crude oil. A major bottleneck is now refining capacity.

IEA data showed that global refinery crude throughput in July remained nearly 5 million barrels per day below the previous year's level, while diesel exports from Russia, the Middle East and Asia were around 1.3 million barrels per day lower year-on-year—equivalent to about one-fifth of global seaborne diesel trade.

Why has the Diesel Market Become So Tight?

Diesel is much more than a transport fuel. It powers trucks, ships, agricultural machinery, construction equipment, mining operations and industrial facilities. In some countries, diesel is

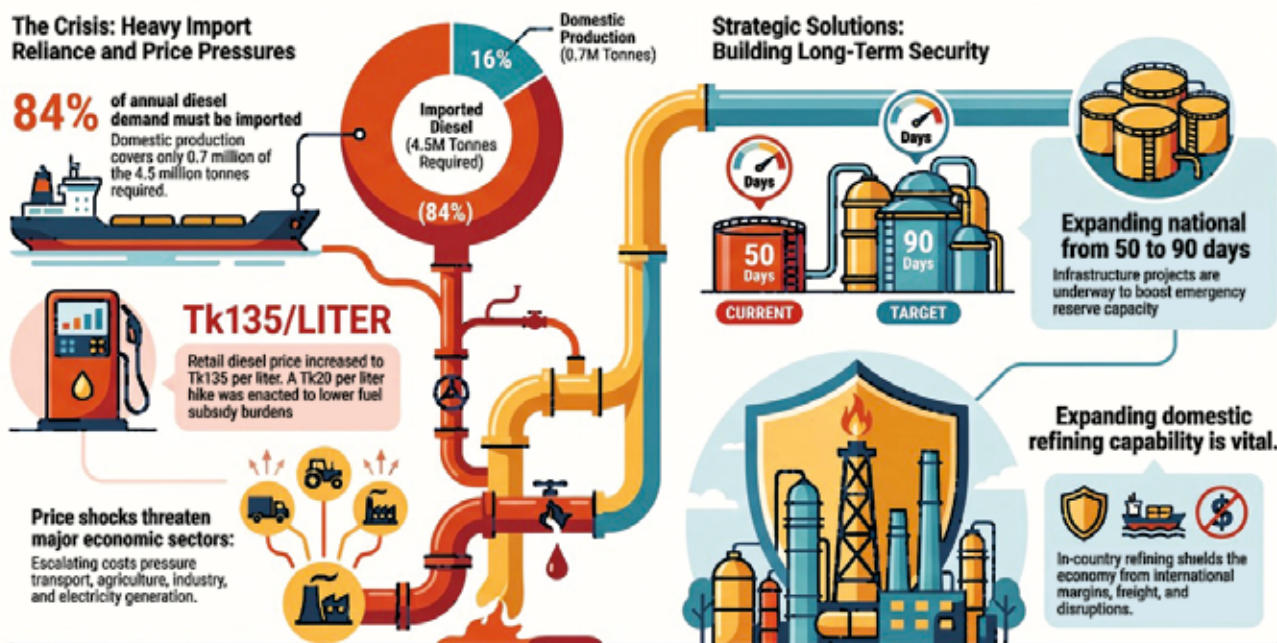
also used for electricity generation.

As a result, a prolonged increase in diesel prices can spread rapidly through an economy, raising transport costs and eventually increasing the prices of food, industrial products and other essential goods.

The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) says global distillate supplies—including diesel—are tight because of reduced refining activity in Russia, China and the Middle East. Lower production overseas has pushed up international prices and increased demand for US diesel exports.

The United States itself is under pressure despite operating its refineries at near-maximum rates. US distillate production averaged about 5.1 million barrels per day during January-August 2026, the highest level since 2019. Yet distillate inventories were 15.8 million barrels, or 13%, below the five-year seasonal average in the week ending September 11.

Bangladesh's Diesel Crisis: Dependency, Impact, and Strategic Resilience



AI-Assisted Infographic

The EIA expects US distillate inventories to remain below the five-year range through the end of 2026 and most of 2027. The agency says tight global supplies are encouraging US exports, putting additional pressure on domestic stocks.

This illustrates the fundamental problem: even when one major producer increases output, a global shortage of refined products can continue to drain its inventories through exports.

Europe Faces High Prices, But Not a Physical Supply Shortage Yet

Europe is also experiencing significant pressure, although the European Commission says the region has not yet faced an immediate physical diesel supply shortage.

On October 2, the European Commission's Energy Union Task Force said EU diesel supplies remained stable for the time being, but prices were high because of tight global markets. The Commission is closely monitoring developments and coordinating with member states.

The Commission had earlier reported that European refineries were operating close to maximum capacity and that supplies were being maintained through both higher domestic refinery output and alternative international

sources. Commercial stocks at the Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp hub remained below the five-year average, although they had been relatively stable in recent weeks.

This means Europe's current problem is primarily a price and market-tightness crisis rather than a continent-wide physical shortage. However, another major supply disruption or a further deterioration in inventories could quickly change the situation.

G7 Turns to Emergency Reserves

With the market under severe pressure, governments are increasingly turning to strategic reserves as an immediate response.

On October 2, G7 countries agreed to release around 100 million barrels of crude oil and refined products from emergency stocks over the coming four months, with a substantial volume of diesel expected to be released during the first 20 days. The action is being coordinated through the IEA.

The move is significant because releasing crude oil does not immediately solve a diesel shortage. Crude must first be transported and refined. Releasing finished diesel and other refined products can therefore provide faster relief to the market.

The latest action comes on top of the IEA's earlier collective response. IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said on October 2 that around 325 million barrels of oil and oil products had already been released from strategic reserves, representing more than 80% of the 400 million barrels pledged in March.

The reserve releases may help narrow the immediate supply gap and reassure markets, but they are not a substitute for restoring normal production, refining and trade flows.

China Adds to the Pressure

China's refined-product export policy has added another layer of uncertainty.

As one of the world's largest refining centers, China normally provides substantial volumes of refined products to international markets. But when Chinese refiners prioritize domestic supplies and reduce exports, countries that depend on international diesel markets have fewer alternative sources.

This is particularly important when supplies from Russia and the Middle East are already constrained.

The result is a more competitive global market in which Asian, European and American buyers are competing for a smaller pool of available refined products.

Russia and the Middle East Remain Critical

The disruption to Russian refinery operations following attacks and restrictions on Russian refined-product exports has significantly affected the international diesel market.

At the same time, the conflict in the Middle East and disruption around the Strait of Hormuz have affected both crude and refined-product flows.

IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said the current energy-market impact of the Hormuz crisis remains acute, particularly for diesel. He noted that while Middle Eastern crude exports have recovered substantially, refined-product flows remain severely constrained. Russian refinery disruptions have compounded the problem.

This distinction is critical. The world may have access to crude oil, but that does not automatically mean there is enough diesel available where it is needed.

What Can Provide a Long-Term Solution?

Emergency stock releases can provide short-term relief, but the present crisis has exposed deeper weaknesses in the global refined-fuel system.

First, refinery capacity needs to become more resilient. The immediate bottleneck in many markets is not simply crude supply but the ability to convert crude into diesel and other products. Investment in refinery maintenance, upgrading and additional capacity will therefore remain important.

Second, strategic fuel stocks need to be strengthened. The crisis has demonstrated the importance of maintaining not only crude reserves but also adequate stocks of diesel, jet fuel and other critical refined products. A country with large crude reserves can still face a diesel shortage if refining or logistics are disrupted.

Third, import sources must be diversified. Dependence on a small number of suppliers or a single geographic region increases vulnerability. Alternative suppliers, ports, pipelines, storage terminals and flexible procurement arrangements are becoming increasingly

important components of energy security.

Fourth, fuel efficiency and alternative transport must accelerate. Greater use of electric vehicles, railways, public transport and electrification in industry can reduce structural dependence on diesel. However, replacing diesel will be considerably more difficult in heavy transport, agriculture, construction, mining and shipping.

What Does the Crisis Mean for Bangladesh?

For Bangladesh, the global diesel crisis is particularly significant because the country remains heavily dependent on imported refined petroleum products.

The recent increase in Bangladesh's diesel price illustrates the pressure. The government has raised the retail price of diesel by Tk20 per liter to Tk135, partly to reduce the burden of fuel subsidies.

Bangladesh's annual diesel demand is around 4.5 million tonnes, while the country's sole refinery, Eastern Refinery, currently supplies only about 0.7 million tonnes annually. The remaining roughly 3.8 million tonnes must be imported as finished diesel.

This dependence makes Bangladesh particularly exposed to international refined-product prices. Any prolonged increase in global diesel prices can raise the import bill and put pressure on transport, agriculture, industry and electricity generation costs.

The country's storage capacity is currently equivalent to roughly 50 days of diesel demand. Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation is working on infrastructure plans aimed at increasing this reserve capacity to around 90 days.

That investment is becoming increasingly important.

The present crisis demonstrates that energy security is not simply a question of having enough money to buy fuel. It also requires adequate strategic stocks, diversified import sources, sufficient storage capacity, reliable transport infrastructure and greater domestic refining capability.

For Bangladesh, expanding refinery capacity could therefore be as important as expanding storage. If most diesel continues to be imported as a finished product, the country will remain exposed to international refinery margins, freight costs and supply disruptions even when crude oil itself is available.

The Bigger Question

The current crisis also raises a broader question for the global energy system: Is the diesel shortage merely a temporary geopolitical shock, or is it exposing a structural weakness in the world's refined-fuel supply chain?

The evidence points to elements of both.

The immediate crisis is being driven by war, attacks on refineries, disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz and changes in international trade flows. But the severity of the price response also reflects structural constraints—limited spare refining capacity, low inventories and dependence on a relatively concentrated network of suppliers.

The G7 reserve release and the IEA's coordinated action can help contain the immediate pressure. European governments are closely monitoring stocks and prices, while US refineries are operating at very high utilization rates.

But strategic reserves can only buy time.

The longer-term solution lies in rebuilding refinery resilience, strengthening strategic stocks, diversifying supply chains and accelerating the transition towards more efficient and less oil-dependent transport and industrial systems.

For countries such as Bangladesh, the lesson is even more direct: importing more fuel is not by itself an energy-security strategy. Building adequate storage, expanding domestic refining capacity, diversifying suppliers and reducing dependence on diesel must become integral parts of the country's long-term energy planning. ■

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

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FIJI PRE- COP31

Pacific Puts 1.5°C, Climate Finance And Ocean Action At The Heart Of COP31

The four-day Pacific Pre-COP31 in Fiji ended on October 8 with the Pacific putting a clear political message before the world: keeping the 1.5°C temperature goal alive, making climate finance accessible to vulnerable countries and communities, and bringing the ocean to the center of global climate policy must be among the defining outcomes of COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye.

Co-hosted by Fiji, Tuvalu and Australia from October 5–8, the Pre-COP brought governments, climate ministers, negotiators, Indigenous representatives, civil society, women, youth, scientists and other stakeholders together ahead of the formal UN climate summit in November. The meeting was designed not as a substitute for COP31 negotiations but as a political and diplomatic bridge to help identify areas of convergence before the full negotiations begin.

Its most important political outcome was the Taku Pakasoa Declaration: Strength in Unity, adopted at the Leaders' event on October 6 after leaders and senior representatives travelled to Tuvalu to witness firsthand the impacts of sea-level rise and climate change. Taku Pakasoa, a

Tuvaluan expression meaning strength through unity and collective action, calls on the international community to stand with communities on the frontline of the climate crisis. Representatives from around 30 countries and regions endorsed the declaration.

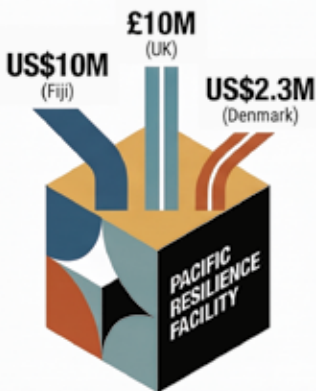
The declaration makes the survival of the 1.5°C goal a central political message for COP31. It calls on all Paris Agreement parties to accelerate action during this critical decade, achieve “deep, rapid and sustained emissions reductions”, and minimize both the magnitude and duration of any temperature overshoot. It also urges countries that have not yet submitted their 2035 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to do so as soon as possible.

The declaration goes beyond emissions targets. It reaffirms the need to accelerate the clean-energy transition, triple renewable-energy capacity and double the rate of energy-efficiency improvements by 2030, consistent with the COP28 Global Stocktake, while transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems in a just, orderly and equitable manner. It also welcomes momentum toward 35% electrification of global final energy use by 2035, supported by investment in energy storage and grids.

PACIFIC PRE-COP: MOBILIZING ACTION & FINANCE FOR COP31

Co-hosted by Fiji and Australia, the Pre-COP gathered 4,000+ participants from 100+ countries. Established financial commitments for Pacific climate resilience and introduced action plans to streamline undisbursed climate funds.

FINANCIAL PLEDGES & REGIONAL INITIATIVES



US\$7.29M PACKAGE FOR PACIFIC ENERGY TRANSITION



US\$3M INITIATIVE FOR RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Combines nature-based solutions & infrastructure to protect coastlines & riverbanks from flooding.

POLICY FRAMEWORKS & BOTTLENECKS

ADDRESSING THE \$5 BILLION UNDISBURSED FINANCE BOTTLENECK

Action plan launched to simplify access to stalled global climate finance commitments.



TAKU PAKASOA DECLARATION ADOPTED

A Pacific-led call for global unity to keep the 1.5°C goal within reach.



AI-Assisted Infograph

1.5°C: From political slogan to survival issue

The Pacific succeeded in reframing 1.5°C not simply as a negotiating number but as a question of survival. During the closing day, COP31 President and Türkiye's Climate Minister Murat Kurum said the 1.5°C goal was a matter of survival for Pacific societies, cultures, homes and countries.

"This 1.5 degree goal ... is a matter of survival," Kurum said, warning that there was "not a single minute, a single day to lose." He also argued that the international community must match climate ambition with finance.

The Taku Pakasoa Declaration similarly recognizes that every fraction of additional warming increases climate impacts and the risk of irreversible loss and damage, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). It therefore calls for the magnitude and duration of any overshoot to be kept as small as possible.

This is politically important because the Pre-COP did not produce a new legally binding global emissions agreement. Rather, it created a stronger political basis for countries to seek such outcomes at COP31. The central test in

Antalya will therefore be whether the language of "deep, rapid and sustained" emissions reductions is translated into stronger NDC implementation, faster renewable deployment, electrification, energy-efficiency measures and a credible transition away from fossil fuels.

Climate finance: The gap between announcements and delivery

Climate finance emerged as perhaps the most difficult and practical issue of the Pre-COP.

The Taku Pakasoa Declaration recognizes that achieving the new collective climate-finance goal will require a substantial increase in finance, particularly for adaptation in countries with limited institutional capacity. It calls for reform of the international financial architecture so that grant-based and concessional finance can reach SIDS and LDCs at the speed and scale required.

Australia also launched a Declaration on Access to Climate Finance for SIDS and LDCs, accompanied by an action-oriented approach aimed at making climate finance simpler, faster and fairer. Australia had already identified access—not merely the volume of money—as a central COP31 priority.

Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown gave perhaps the clearest description of the Pacific's frustration. He said countries were trapped in a "painful loop" in which the world repeatedly discussed the same financing barriers while communities continued to wait.

"A fund can report that money is available. A government can report that an application is progressing. Both statements can be true, while a community remains unprotected," Brown said.

He proposed three practical tests for the new finance-access plan: providers should publish decision and disbursement timeframes; countries should not repeatedly have to prove the same institutional requirements; and finance should be structured around the realities of small island states, including predictable and grant-based finance where additional debt would undermine resilience.

This could become one of the most significant negotiating tracks at COP31. The issue is no longer only how much money is promised, but how quickly it reaches vulnerable communities.

Pacific Resilience Facility gets new money

The pre-COP also produced concrete financial commitments.

Fiji announced US\$10 million for the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), designed to support community-level resilience, including seawalls, clean-water security and protection of homes. Fiji and Ireland were among countries announcing new contributions, bringing total pledges to just under US\$200 million, although the facility remains far below its stated post-COP31 target of US\$500 million and its longer-term ambition of US\$1.5 billion.

Papua New Guinea committed 25 million kina, about US\$5.6 million, to support Tuvalu's land-reclamation efforts. Australia announced an AUD7.29 million (about US\$5.1 million) renewable-energy package for the Pacific, including support for Vanuatu's renewable-energy transition, plus another AUD3.0 million for protecting existing infrastructure.

These commitments demonstrate a shift from declarations towards implementation, but their scale also exposes the continuing financing gap. The PRF's funding remains well below its target, underscoring the challenge COP31 will face in converting political solidarity with the Pacific into predictable long-term finance.

Ocean moves closer to the center of climate negotiations

A second major achievement of the Fiji meeting was the elevation of the ocean-climate nexus.

For Pacific states, the ocean is not a separate environmental issue. It is central to food security, livelihoods, culture, sovereignty, climate regulation and national survival. The Taku Pakasoa

Declaration recognizes ocean warming, acidification, sea-level rise and marine biodiversity loss as interconnected global risks and calls for stronger ocean science and greater integration of ocean solutions into UNFCCC processes.

Fiji Climate Minister Lynda Tabuya said the Pacific wanted the ocean to have its "rightful place" in the global climate agenda. Fiji also announced a National Action Plan for Coral Reef Conservation 2026–2032, while its five-year costed carbon-market plan is intended to open additional sources of international climate finance for renewable energy and ecosystem protection.

This gives Pacific countries a specific agenda to carry to Antalya: COP31 should not treat oceans simply as a side issue but connect ocean protection with mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity, food security and climate finance.

Women, youth, Indigenous peoples and civil society: a stronger voice

One of the distinguishing features of the Fiji Pre-COP was the breadth of stakeholder participation. The accompanying stakeholder program ran from October 5–8 and included more than 130 sessions involving governments, communities, academics, scientists, entrepreneurs, Indigenous representatives, civil society organizations, women and youth.

Women and young people were not confined to symbolic participation. Sessions specifically addressed young women's voices, locally led adaptation, climate mobility, ocean governance, loss and damage, renewable energy, workers and just transition.

Youth delegate Miliana Iga delivered one of the strongest civil-society messages to negotiators. "The Pacific is not a sacrifice zone and no price can capture the loss of our land, language and culture," she said, while warning against presenting activities such as deep-sea mining as climate solutions.

Iga also argued that young people should not be placed in separate consultation structures but included in existing decision-making systems. Her message was significant because it moved youth participation from representation towards a demand for decision-making power.

Fiji's Permanent Secretary for Environment and Climate Change, Dr Sivendra Michael, similarly argued that climate finance should be judged by how quickly it produces results for communities.

"How long did it take for a particular financing arrangement to go from inception to result on the ground?" he asked, saying that finance architecture should be designed around the needs of adaptation rather than forcing adaptation to fit existing financing systems.

SPREP Director-General Sefanaia Nawadra captured the Pacific position succinctly: "The Pacific is not asking for special treatment. We are asking for a system that fits our realities."

Fiji Foreign Minister Sakiasi Ditoka also stressed the importance of bringing the lived experience of Pacific communities into the negotiations, saying the conference gave voice to people on the frontline of climate change.



Indigenous knowledge becomes part of the climate solution

The Pre-COP also demonstrated the increasing political importance of Indigenous and traditional knowledge.

Fiji's closing assessment emphasized that many of the week's achievements were rooted in Indigenous knowledge and traditions of environmental custodianship combined with climate science. The Taku Pakasoa Declaration explicitly recognizes the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to climate decision-making.

This approach matters particularly for adaptation. Pacific communities have generations of experience managing reefs, coastlines, fisheries, forests, water and food systems. The challenge for COP31 will be to move beyond recognizing this knowledge and provide financial and institutional mechanisms that allow locally led solutions to be implemented at scale.

What Fiji has changed for COP31

The most important legacy of the Pre-COP may therefore be its ability to shape the political architecture of COP31 rather than settle the formal negotiations in advance.

Four issues now have a clearer Pacific mandate:

First, 1.5°C must remain central. The Taku Pakasoa Declaration provides political support for stronger emissions reductions, faster clean-energy deployment, electrification and implementation of new NDCs.

Second, climate finance must become accessible. The emerging Access to Climate Finance Declaration and Action Plan provide a possible pathway for changing the way SIDS and LDCs receive funding.

Third, the ocean must become a mainstream climate issue. Pacific governments want ocean protection, ocean science and ocean-based solutions embedded more deeply into the COP31 outcome.

Fourth, Pacific voices must influence the final decisions. Fiji, Tuvalu and other island states have gained political visibility and now have a stronger basis for demanding



that their priorities are reflected in the Antalya negotiations. The COP31 Pacific Partnership has already established three Pacific envoys covering 1.5°C, climate-finance access and ocean issues.

But major gaps remain

The Fiji meeting should not be interpreted as a breakthrough agreement that has already solved the central disputes of COP31.

The Taku Pakasoa Declaration is a political declaration, not a new legally binding treaty. Its call for deep, rapid and sustained emissions reductions will have to be tested against national interests, fossil-fuel dependence, energy-security concerns and the contents of countries' NDCs.

Likewise, the new finance commitments remain modest compared with the scale of adaptation and loss-and-damage needs. The PRF's funding gap illustrates the problem: political support is growing, but the flow of capital is still far below what Pacific governments say is necessary.

There is also a potentially difficult political question around the 1.5°C goal. Current scientific assessments indicate that a temporary overshoot is increasingly likely, making the issue not simply whether 1.5°C is crossed but how far and for how long temperatures remain above it. The Pre-COP therefore placed emphasis on limiting the magnitude and duration of overshoot, rather than abandoning the 1.5°C objective.

A Pacific test for COP31

Fiji Climate Minister Lynda Tabuya

summed up the transition from Pre-COP to COP31 by saying: "The Pacific is no longer just raising the alarm. We are leading the global response to climate change."

Her message also contained the key challenge for Antalya: political momentum must become delivery.

The four-day Pre-COP has given COP31 a clearer political narrative. The Pacific has placed 1.5°C, finance and oceans at the center; governments have announced new financial and energy initiatives; civil society has demanded accountability; women and youth have pressed for meaningful participation; and Indigenous knowledge has been brought closer to the heart of climate policy.

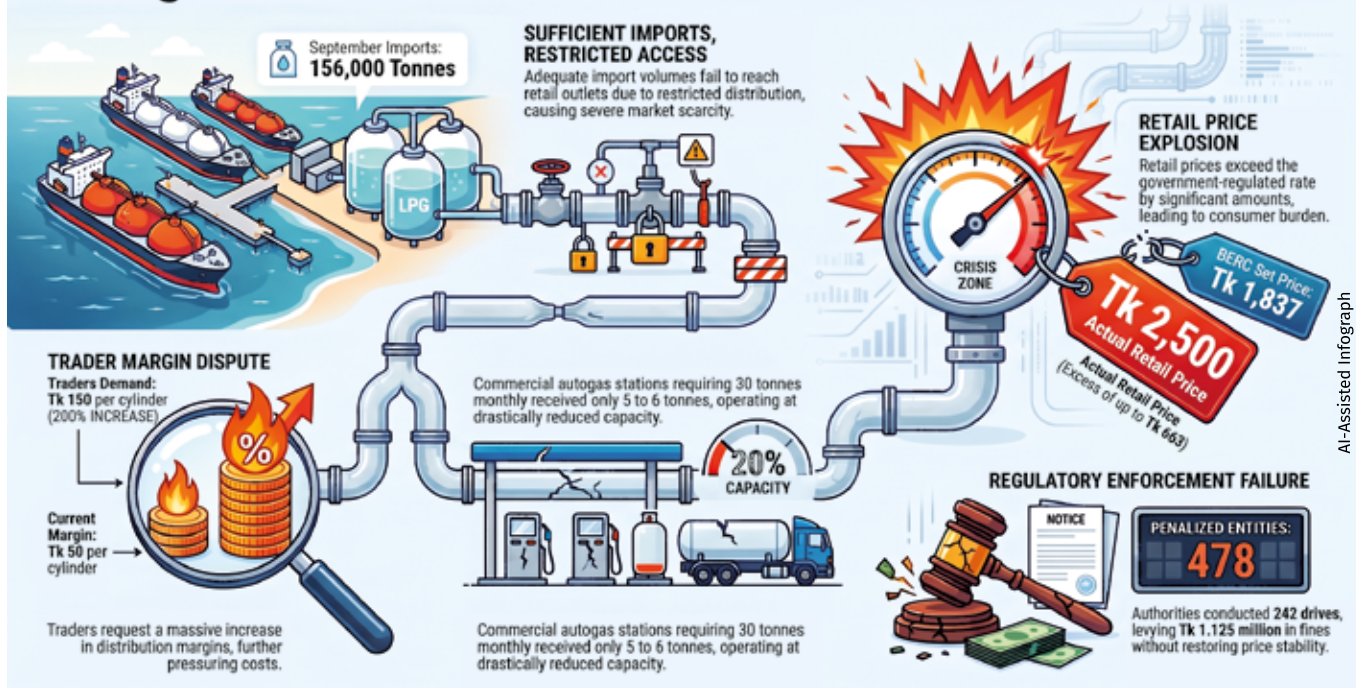
But the real measure of success will come in Antalya.

If COP31 can turn the Taku Pakasoa call for "deep, rapid and sustained" emissions reductions into stronger implementation, make climate finance faster and easier to access, expand support for locally led adaptation, strengthen ocean action and give vulnerable countries a greater role in decision-making, the Fiji Pre-COP will have served as more than a preparatory meeting.

It will have demonstrated the central proposition of Pacific climate diplomacy: those facing the greatest climate risks are not merely asking the world to save them—they are asking to help shape how the world responds.

For COP31, that may be the most important message to carry from Fiji to Antalya. ■

Bangladesh LPG Crisis: Price Escalation & Market Disconnect



EP Report

LPG CRISIS

Who Is To Blame?

Bangladesh is facing its second major liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supply crisis this year, with consumers reportedly paying Tk 500–700 more than the regulated price for a 12kg cylinder. The shortage has persisted despite the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission's (BERC) latest price adjustment on 4 October, exposing persistent problems in supply distribution, pricing and market oversight.

BERC raised the maximum retail price of a 12kg LPG cylinder by Tk 252 to Tk 1,837 for October, up from Tk 1,585 in September. However, cylinders have continued to sell for Tk 2,000–2,500 in several markets. At these prices, consumers are paying as much as Tk 663 above the newly fixed rate, raising questions about the effectiveness of the regulatory framework and government enforcement.

Supply shortage despite adequate imports

The central question is why the market remains short of LPG when

industry representatives maintain that national imports are sufficient to meet demand.

The LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB) said the country imported approximately 156,000 tonnes of LPG in September, compared with 158,000 tonnes in August. The association considers these volumes adequate and has rejected claims of a nationwide supply shortage. It has urged operators, distributors, dealers and retailers to sell LPG at BERC-prescribed prices, warning that overcharging and unauthorized stockpiling violate existing laws.

However, distributors and retailers report a different situation on the ground. They say several companies reduced supplies from around 20 September, leaving many outlets without sufficient cylinders. According to distributors quoted by Prothom Alo, only six companies were supplying the market regularly, and even their deliveries were

insufficient to meet demand. Some other companies reportedly supplied limited quantities at prices above the regulated rate.

The gap between reported imports and actual market availability suggests that the problem may not be explained by import volumes alone. The movement of LPG from import terminals and storage facilities through bottling plants, distributors and retailers requires closer scrutiny.

On 1 October, a group of LOAB members called for a government investigation into allegations that some importers were withholding cargo from the market. They sought importer-wise audits of inventories, cargo arrivals and releases to determine whether delayed supplies had contributed to the price surge. These are allegations requiring independent verification, not established findings of wrongdoing.

Operators cite costs; traders question regulated margins

Another source of tension is the gap between the regulated price and the costs claimed by businesses operating at different stages of the supply chain.

LPG operators have previously argued that higher international procurement costs, shipping charges and market premiums can create a gap between replacement costs and the price calculated under BERC's monthly pricing mechanism. Industry representatives have said that some operators reduced supplies while waiting for the higher costs to be reflected in the next adjustment.

Distributors have also complained that their regulated commission has not kept pace with operating expenses. The LPG Gas Traders Welfare Association told BERC that transportation, loading and unloading, warehouse rent, employee salaries, electricity and license fees require a substantially higher margin. It estimated that distribution costs and a reasonable profit would require Tk 150 per cylinder, compared with the existing Tk 50 commission. The association said this gap made it difficult to sell at the prescribed price.

BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed has said

the commission cannot revise cost components without following the required public-hearing process. He indicated that the traders' proposals would be considered, while discussions would continue to encourage compliance with the existing prices.

These competing claims point to a structural problem: regulated prices may not be translating into reliable supply at the consumer level. However, higher operating costs alone do not justify arbitrary overcharging, and any proposed revision to distribution margins should be supported by verifiable cost data and transparent regulatory procedures.

Price adjustment fails to restore normal supply

The 4 October price revision was expected to bring the regulated rate closer to prevailing international costs. BERC set the price at Tk 153.06 per kilogram, taking the price of a 12kg cylinder to Tk 1,837. Yet the market remained under pressure after the new rate came into effect.

The persistence of high retail prices suggests that adjusting the official rate cannot, by itself, resolve a shortage caused by restricted distribution, inadequate deliveries or possible stock withholding. Even when import volumes remain broadly stable, consumers may face scarcity if supplies are not reaching retailers in sufficient quantities.

The crisis also affects the autogas sector. Hasin Parvez, secretary general of the LPG Filling Station Owners Association, told Prothom Alo that a station requiring 30 tonnes of LPG a month was receiving only five to six tonnes. Such shortages leave stations unable to serve customers and threaten their business operations.

Government enforcement under scrutiny

Consumer-rights advocates view the continuing overpricing as evidence of shortcomings in regulatory enforcement and government market supervision. The problem is not simply whether BERC announces a monthly price, but whether consumers can actually purchase LPG at that price.

The government has acknowledged the

complaints. On 30 September, Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood directed deputy commissioners to investigate reports of artificial shortages and sales above the regulated rate. He said strict action would be taken against those found responsible and asked district administrations to submit evidence-based reports.

The Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection has also conducted enforcement drives. According to its director, Atia Sultana, the agency carried out 242 drives between 2 September and 6 October, penalizing 478 distributors and retailers and imposing fines totaling Tk 1.125 million. Nevertheless, persistent overpricing indicates that enforcement has yet to restore normal market conditions.

A coordinated response is needed

Bangladesh's LPG crisis requires action beyond periodic price adjustments and occasional mobile-court operations. Authorities need to reconcile import data with actual deliveries, verify operator-wise stocks and monitor how much LPG moves from terminals to bottling plants, distributors and retailers.

BERC should also examine documented operating costs and distribution margins through a transparent process, while ensuring that any changes do not become a pretext for excessive retail pricing. The government must establish clear accountability for supply disruptions and publish the findings of its investigation.

With millions of households relying on LPG for cooking, prolonged shortages and inflated prices impose a direct burden on family budgets. Restoring normal supply will require coordinated action by BERC, the Energy Division, the Ministry of Commerce, consumer-protection authorities and the LPG industry.

Until the supply chain becomes more transparent and regulated prices are effectively enforced, monthly price revisions alone are unlikely to protect consumers from recurring shortages and excessive charges. ■



UN Climate Change Completes First 100 Paris Agreement Transparency Reviews

EP DESK



UN Climate Change has completed 100 technical expert reviews of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) submitted under the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), marking a milestone in the first review cycle launched in 2024.

The milestone was reached recently, when in-country reviews of the first BTRs submitted by Romania and Mongolia were completed. The reviews have covered countries across all regions, including least developed countries and small island developing states.

According to UN Climate Change, the reviews have helped countries strengthen national reporting systems, improve data quality and identify areas for improvement through technical dialogue and exchanges with international experts.

"BTR reviews are more than a technical exercise," said Xuehong Wang, Director of Transparency at UN Climate Change. She noted that the process helps countries assess their progress, identify opportunities for improvement and build a stronger evidence base for climate policymaking.

Lessons from the first 100 reviews are being used to improve review planning, technical guidance, expert training and efficiency while maintaining quality standards.

The process has relied on cooperation among national experts, international review teams, partner organizations and donors.

Attention is now turning to the next reporting cycle, with countries due to submit their second BTRs by December 31, 2026. 

UN Carbon Market Opens New Pathway for Clean Cooking Projects

Cleaner cooking projects can now seek carbon credits under the Paris Agreement's carbon market after the Article 6.4 Supervisory Body adopted two new methodologies, according to UN Climate Change.

The new methodologies cover more efficient wood- and charcoal-burning cookstoves and the transition to cleaner, lower-emission household cooking technologies. They establish rules for project eligibility, emissions calculation, monitoring and verification to ensure that carbon credits represent real and credible emission reductions.

Around 2.1 billion people worldwide still rely on open fires or inefficient stoves using polluting fuels. Cleaner cooking solutions can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, limit pressure on forests and improve household air quality.

Mkhuthazi Steleki, Chair of the Supervisory Body, said the decision creates a new pathway for clean cooking initiatives under the UN carbon market while establishing safeguards to maintain the credibility of carbon credits.

COP31 Host Country Agreement Takes Effect Ahead of Antalya Summit



The Host Country Agreement (HCA) between the government of Türkiye and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has entered into force, establishing the legal framework for hosting COP31 in Antalya in November.

According to UN Climate Change, the agreement introduces measures to improve conference efficiency, strengthen human rights protections and ensure more inclusive participation. It also aims to improve cost management and provide greater clarity for delegates and other participants.

The agreement consolidates existing improvements and introduces new provisions, including stronger commitments to gender equality, the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

To support participation by countries with limited financial resources, accommodation costs for delegates funded through the Trust Fund for Participation will be capped at 50% of the daily subsistence allowance. Additional measures require early engagement with the hospitality

According to UN Climate Change, the agreement introduces measures to improve conference efficiency, strengthen human rights protections and ensure more inclusive participation.

sector and better information for participants about their rights under Turkish consumer law.

The agreement also strengthens oversight by requiring Türkiye to keep the COP Bureau informed of organizational challenges and report on the conference's achievements and implementation of the agreement after COP31. [\[1\]](#)

The body also adopted an initial tool to assess the risk of emissions being reversed in clean cooking projects and other activities that reduce the use of non-renewable biomass. The tool aims to prevent carbon credits from being counted when the underlying emission reductions are subsequently undone.

The Supervisory Body is expected to present its annual report at COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, in November, where countries may provide further guidance on the mechanism's future development and carbon market rules. [\[2\]](#)

UN Experts Step Up Transparency Support for Developing Countries

The Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is strengthening technical support for developing countries to improve climate reporting under the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).

At its 15th meeting in Bonn in September, the CGE reviewed progress and identified priorities for making assistance more practical and responsive to countries' needs as they move from the first to the second reporting cycle.

In 2026, the group published guidance based on countries' Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), covering indicators for tracking progress towards nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and the application of flexibility provisions. Its assessment also highlighted persistent challenges in greenhouse gas inventories, data systems, adaptation reporting and tracking climate commitments.

The CGE organized three regional training workshops involving 114 participants from 85 developing countries. The workshops covered BTR preparation, adaptation reporting, institutional arrangements, improvement planning and technical review processes. [\[3\]](#)

PM Pledges Support for Waste-to-Fuel Technology

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has assured researchers of government support for developing technology to produce fuel oil from human waste, sewage, kitchen waste and agricultural residues, potentially reducing Bangladesh's dependence on imported crude oil.

The prime minister gave the assurance after viewing a demonstration by Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET) Professor Dr Md Khalekuzzaman at his Tejgaon office recently.

KUET researchers have spent nearly a decade developing



the technology using Hydrothermal Liquefaction (HTL). Laboratory tests have produced biocrude at a yield of 50–55%, and the team has also developed diesel-rich biocrude.

The next step is to establish a pilot plant capable of processing one to three tonnes of waste daily. Estimated to cost Tk 100–120 crore, the facility will assess production efficiency, costs and commercial viability.

Diesel Tax Hits Tk 36 Per Liter, Adding to Inflationary Pressure

The government is collecting Tk 35.82 in duties and taxes on every liter of diesel sold at Tk 135, raising concerns that the fuel tax structure is adding to the cost burden on consumers and businesses amid persistent inflation.

The tax burden has risen significantly since June 2025, when the interim government replaced the fixed tariff-value system with a variable invoice-value mechanism. Under the previous system, total duties and taxes were capped at Tk 16.76 per liter, regardless of fluctuations in international oil prices.

Under the current system, a combined 25% in duties and taxes is applied to the import invoice value. This



comprises 6% customs duty, 15% value-added tax (VAT), 2% advance tax and 2% advance income tax.

Consequently, when international oil prices rise, the government's tax revenue per liter of imported diesel also increases.

At the current price, the government collects Tk 19.06 more per liter than it would have under the previous system.

Bangladesh Approves \$3.3b in Foreign Loans for Power, Fuel

The Bangladesh government has approved \$3.3 billion in non-concessional foreign loans to upgrade the rural power distribution network and finance imports of fuel oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG).



The approval was given at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Non-Concessional Loans, chaired by Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury at the Secretariat recently, according to Economic Relations Division (ERD) officials.

Of the total, \$200 million will be borrowed from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Power Distribution Network Enhancement Project, while \$3.1 billion in

short-term financing from the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) was approved retrospectively for fuel imports in fiscal year 2026–27.

The \$200 million project, to be implemented by the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board, aims to improve electricity reliability, reduce technical losses and strengthen climate resilience across 13 rural electricity cooperative areas surrounding Dhaka.

Bangladesh Offers 26 Offshore Blocks to Global Energy Investors

Bangladesh has invited international oil and gas companies to participate in its Offshore Bidding Round 2026, offering 26 blocks in the Bay of Bengal, including 11 shallow-water and 15 deep-water blocks.



The investment opportunity was highlighted at a ministerial session on the Strategic Stage of the World Energies Summit in London recently.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Anindya Islam Amit said rising energy demand amid economic growth had made increased domestic exploration and production a priority.

Invest Bangladesh Chairman Ashik Chowdhury outlined the country's economic outlook, investment facilitation measures and offshore resource potential.

He also highlighted the availability of modern seismic data and the commercial terms offered under the Offshore Model Production Sharing Contract (PSC) 2026.

Qatar Extends LNG Supply Force Majeure for Bangladesh, Asian Buyers

QatarEnergy has extended force majeure notices on liquefied natural gas (LNG) deliveries to several Asian buyers, including Bangladesh and Pakistan, until November, as disruptions linked to the Iran conflict and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz continue to affect exports.

According to trading sources cited by Reuters on 28 September, the extension will further constrain LNG supplies to Asian markets. Italian utility Edison, a major QatarEnergy customer, said it would not receive LNG cargoes until early December.

Qatar's LNG exports have been severely disrupted. Reuters calculated that exports had fallen by 96%



by the end of August.

Data from intelligence firm ICIS showed that Qatar shipped only 18 LNG cargoes during the first eight months of 2026, compared with 509 in the same period last year.

For Bangladesh, the extended force majeure adds uncertainty to LNG procurement and could increase pressure on gas supplies, particularly if alternative cargoes become more expensive amid tighter global market conditions.

G7 to Release 100m Barrels of Oil to Stabilize Markets

G7 leaders have agreed to coordinate the release of 100 million barrels of oil through the International Energy Agency (IEA) over four months to ease supply pressures, curb price volatility and strengthen global energy security.

In a joint statement following a virtual meeting, the leaders said the release would begin immediately, with a substantial volume of diesel to be supplied within the first 20 days by G7 members and partners.

They will also discuss further diesel releases if market conditions require.

The G7 called for coordinated refinery maintenance schedules



to avoid simultaneous shutdowns and encouraged countries with significant refining capacity to increase production, particularly of diesel.

The IEA has been asked to monitor implementation of the measures and assess their impact on energy security and market stability.

Bangladesh Seeks Australian Support for Energy Security

Bangladesh President Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has sought greater Australian cooperation in energy security, LNG imports, renewable energy, investment and skilled workforce development. The President made the request during a courtesy meeting with Australian High Commissioner Susan Ryle at Bangabhaban recently, according to the President's Press Secretary Md. Sarwar Alam.

He called for Australia's support in diversifying Bangladesh's energy sources, exploring opportunities for LNG imports from Australia and attracting investment in renewable energy, energy exploration, infrastructure and manufacturing.



The President expressed hope that the Senior Officials' Meeting and Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) meeting scheduled for November in Canberra would help expand bilateral trade and investment. The High Commissioner expressed Australia's interest in strengthening bilateral cooperation and highlighted Bangladesh's banking reforms, tax reforms, judicial independence and regulatory environment as important considerations for Australian investment.

Adani Power, Bhutan's DGPC Sign Deal for 770MW Hydropower Project

Adani Power has signed a shareholders' agreement with Bhutan's state-owned Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) to develop the 770MW Chamkharchhu-I Hydroelectric Project in central Bhutan.



The project will be built on the Chamkharchhu River in Zhemgang district, with construction expected to begin in the first half of 2027 and commissioning targeted within six years. The peaking run-of-river project will be developed through a 49:51 joint venture, with Adani Power holding 49% equity and DGPC retaining 51%.

Under the Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT)

model, the project will have a 30-year concession period from commercial operation. It is expected to help meet Bhutan's peak electricity demand during winter, with surplus power exported to India during summer.

The agreement marks the second major hydropower partnership between the two companies, following their agreement on the 570MW Wangchhu Hydroelectric Project in September 2025.

Vietnam's \$136.3b Energy Investment Wave Creates Equipment Market Opportunities

Vietnam's planned investment of \$136.3 billion in power generation and transmission through 2030 is creating significant opportunities for global energy technology, equipment and engineering companies, as the country accelerates efforts to strengthen energy security and expand electricity infrastructure.



The plan also targets total installed generation capacity of 183,291–236,363 MW and commercial electricity output of 500.4–557.8 billion kWh.

Rising electricity demand is driving the investment. According to Vietnam Electricity (EVN), power generation and imports reached 171.54 billion kWh in the first half of 2026, up 9.85% year-on-year, while peak system load hit a record 57,537 MW.

Under its revised National Power Development Plan VIII, Vietnam expects to invest approximately \$118.2 billion in power generation and \$18.1 billion in transmission infrastructure by 2030.

Regional Energy Partnership Needed to Tackle Geopolitical Shocks: Experts

Experts and business leaders have called for stronger regional cooperation among Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan, particularly in energy trade, to help South Asia withstand supply disruptions and price volatility caused by geopolitical tensions.



them to procure energy at increasingly high prices. Greater cooperation in energy, trade and investment could help the region manage these external shocks, he added.

Speaking at a recent roundtable on "Rewiring Global Trade" on the sidelines of the Bay of Bengal Conversation 2026, former Nepali parliamentarian Dibya Mani Rajbhandari proposed establishing a regional power hub involving the four countries.

He said wars, trade tensions and disruptions in global supply chains have pushed South Asian countries into an energy crisis, forcing

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association President Showkat Aziz Russell called for reviving the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to strengthen regional trade, investment and energy cooperation, stressing that regional trade should benefit all member countries.

Bangladesh, Türkiye Discuss Affordable Energy and Power Cooperation

Bangladesh and Türkiye have discussed expanding bilateral cooperation in the power and energy sector, with a focus on affordable and efficient solutions to strengthen Bangladesh's energy security. Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramis Şen met Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood at the Bangladesh Secretariat recently. The meeting also focused on opportunities to deepen broader bilateral economic and energy ties.



The discussions covered potential cooperation in securing lower-cost power and fuel solutions, including floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs), liquefied natural gas (LNG) and heavy fuel oil (HFO).

The minister stressed the need to explore affordable and sustainable energy options that could help bring Bangladesh's idle power generation capacity back into operation and improve overall energy security.

The Turkish delegation included Bilal Belyurt, Commercial Counsellor at the Turkish Embassy in Dhaka, and representatives of Karpowership—Jad El Sebaaly, Asli Kilic and Emma Wahlberg.

Parliamentary Caucus Holds First Meeting on Climate Change and Displacement

The Parliamentary Caucus on Climate Change and Displacement, comprising members of the 13th Jatiya Sangsad, held its first meeting at the Parliament Complex recently to discuss its proposed work plan and future activities.



Caucus Chairman Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury chaired the meeting, which discussed ways to strengthen parliamentary engagement on climate change and displacement.

Members recommended inviting representatives of key ministries and government agencies to the next meeting to improve coordination.

Representatives from the

Ministries of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives; Water Resources; Disaster Management and Relief; Foreign Affairs; and the Internal Resources Division were proposed for invitation.

The meeting also proposed forming an inter-ministerial coordination committee to address climate change and displacement issues more effectively.



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Bangladesh Approves 442MW Solar Plant with Eight-Hour Battery Storage

Bangladesh has approved a 442 MW grid-connected solar power project with eight hours of battery energy storage, marking a major step in the country's efforts to expand renewable energy and improve electricity supply.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, approved the project recently. The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) will implement the project at an estimated cost of Tk25 billion (about US\$200 million).

The solar plant will be built in Bagerhat district in southwestern Bangladesh, adjacent to the 1.32 GW Rampal coal-fired power plant.



About 371.7 hectares of land originally earmarked for a second unit of the coal-fired facility will instead be used for the solar project.

The project is scheduled to be implemented between September 2026 and March 2029 and is expected to become Bangladesh's largest solar power installation.

Solar Panel on PM's Gulshan Residence Supplies 1200 Unit Power to National Grid

State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam recently said, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has set up a solar panel on the rooftop of his Gulshan residence from which 1,200 units of electricity is being supplied to the national grid.

The Prime Minister is using 1,000 units of electricity from the solar panel on the rooftop of his Gulshan residence and supplying 1,200 units of electricity to the national grid, Shahe Alam said.

He said the Prime Minister has set an example by producing and using solar power. Arrangements will be made to use the rooftops of all government buildings to set up solar panel to



meet their own electricity demand and supply surplus units in the neighborhood.

The state minister also said that the electricity generation process should be viewed as a business.

ADB Weighs Hundreds of Millions of Dollars for Bangladesh's Solar Push

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is considering providing several hundred million dollars in policy-based lending to support Bangladesh's ambitious rooftop solar program and broader renewable energy reforms, officials said.



An ADB team led by Sujata Gupta, Director of the bank's South Asia Energy Team, discussed the proposed support with officials from the Finance Division, Power Division, Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) during a recent three-day visit.

The Power Division had earlier sought ADB financing to accelerate renewable energy development, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, ease power-sector subsidies and improve financial sustainability.

AkijBashir Becomes First Bangladeshi Company to Join RE100

AkijBashir Group has become the first Bangladeshi company to join RE100, a global corporate initiative bringing together businesses committed to powering their operations with 100% renewable electricity.



Led by the international non-profit Climate Group, RE100 has more than 400 corporate members worldwide.

Members commit to sourcing 100% renewable electricity by 2050 at the latest and report their progress annually against the initiative's technical criteria.

For AkijBashir Group, joining RE100 provides a global framework to make its renewable-energy transition more

structured, measurable and transparent. The commitment builds on the Group's existing investments in solar power, energy efficiency, waste-heat recovery and resource conservation across its manufacturing operations.

The Group has developed around 90MW of solar generation capacity across its particle board, ceramics, glass and other facilities and plans to expand its renewable-energy portfolio further.

Experts Urge Stronger Pollution Monitoring to Boost RE

Experts have called for stricter pollution monitoring, reduced dependence on fossil fuels and faster adoption of renewable energy, warning that air pollution is undermining Bangladesh's clean energy transition.

The call came at a discussion titled "Renewables Now: Renewable Energy to Combat Air Pollution," held at the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium recently. The event was jointly organized by Dhoritri Rokhaya Amra (DHORA), Stamford University Bangladesh and 35 other civic and social organizations.

Presenting the keynote paper, Professor Ahmad Kamruzzaman Majumder of Stamford University Bangladesh said a joint study by Stamford University and Bangladesh University of Professionals found that dust accumulation could reduce solar panel performance by 12-15%. Cleaning the panels increased power output by an average of 12%, highlighting the importance of regular maintenance.



Majumder urged the government to accelerate the 3,000MW industrial rooftop solar program, withdraw import duties on solar equipment, introduce automated panel-cleaning systems and ensure real-time monitoring of emissions from industrial zones and coal-fired power plants.

Stamford University Vice-Chancellor Professor Sharif Nafees As-Saber stressed the need to identify pollution sources, raise public awareness and priorities domestic technologies while drawing on international expertise.



PKSF Plans Tk 7,245Cr Financing for Microenterprises, Rooftop Solar

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) has planned financing of Tk 7,245 crore to promote entrepreneurship in cottage and microenterprise sectors and expand renewable energy use, including rooftop solar power generation.

At a meeting of its Board of Directors at PKSF Bhaban-1, chaired by PKSF Chairman Zakir Ahmed Khan, the board approved Tk 5,000 crore in Bangladesh Bank-financed loans to support new entrepreneurs in cottage and microenterprises.



The funding will cover technology-driven agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, services and grassroots value-chain activities to generate employment and strengthen low-income communities.

PKSF has also launched a specialized rooftop solar financing program backed by a Tk 500 crore government allocation. The board approved a lending policy titled Shouro Shokti, under which loans will be provided to customers through partner organizations at an interest rate of 6%.

In addition, the board approved nearly Tk 2,000 crore in loans for PKSF's partner organizations to support cluster-based microenterprises, general services, ultra-poor communities, agriculture and other sectors.

PKSF Managing Director Md Fazlul Kader and other board members attended the meeting.

Off-Grid Solar in Sub-Saharan Africa Set for 450% Growth by 2035

Sub-Saharan Africa's off-grid solar market is projected to expand by 450% by 2035, driven by rising diesel costs, falling solar module prices and growing private investment, according to Wood Mackenzie.



The consultancy describes off-grid solar as a key driver of electrification across the region, with growth expected to vary significantly between markets. Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Kenya are forecast to lead the expansion.

Nigeria is expected to account for nearly 35% of projected off-grid solar installations. Much of the growth will come from commercial, industrial and mining customers seeking to reduce dependence on expensive diesel generation.

In the DRC, growth will combine mining-related demand with rural electrification, while Kenya's market is expected to increasingly focus on reducing energy costs for existing electricity users. Zambia, Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania are also identified as important growth markets.

However, access to finance remains the biggest obstacle to achieving the forecast.

FUSA Begins Production of Novel Solar Core Extraction Power Systems



FUSA has announced the start of production of its first commercial, CE-marked Solar Core Transducer units, with initial Asian installations targeted for commissioning by the end of November.

The company said its initial manufacturing program is designed to support up to 50 GW of installed capacity, with further production planned through 2027.

FUSA describes Solar Core Extraction as a technology fundamentally different from conventional solar power, saying it does not use solar

panels or collect sunlight.

Instead, the company claims its system uses an advanced version of Quantum Energy Teleportation (QET) to extract usable energy associated with fusion processes in the Sun's core and convert it into electricity at the receiving site.

According to FUSA, no fuel or physical energy beam is transported from the Sun. The company says its system uses quantum measurement information and local transducer units to generate electricity directly at the customer site.



Wärtsilä and RCT Solutions Launch 20 GWh Energy Storage Venture



Finnish technology group Wärtsilä and German engineering company RCT Solutions have launched Valo, a 50/50 joint venture combining Wärtsilä's global energy storage business with RCT's engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

Launched on October 1, Valo will operate as a utility-scale battery energy storage system (BESS) integrator with more than 20 GWh of projects across over 130 installations worldwide. Peter Fath, former CEO of RCT Solutions, is serving as Valo's CEO, while Luke Witmer has been appointed chief technology officer.

Wärtsilä expects the new company to remain loss-making through 2026 because of weak recent order intake and restructuring costs, including a write-down of capitalized research and development expenses.

The impact on Wärtsilä's 2026 operating result is estimated at €40–50 million, depending on the timing of the transaction. The company expects the joint venture to become profitable toward the end of 2027.

Wärtsilä said its energy storage business had about 480 employees and generated €694 million in net sales in 2025, with an operating margin of 3.3%. Its year-end order book stood at €719 million.

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Bangladesh, IFAD Invest \$324m in Climate-Resilient Rural Development

Bangladesh and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have launched two projects worth a combined US\$324 million to strengthen climate resilience, improve rural livelihoods and build sustainable food systems, targeting an estimated 2.5 million rural people.

The investments comprise the US\$112 million Climate Resilience and Livelihood Enhancement Project (CRALEP), launched with support from the Government of Denmark, and the US\$212 million Growth for Climate Resilient and Environmental Entrepreneurship and Nutrition (GREEN) project.

CRALEP, implemented by



the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), will benefit around 1.45 million people across 33 upazilas in the flood-prone Haor and drought-prone High Barind regions over six years.

Activities include improving rural roads, markets and boat landing facilities, strengthening climate early-warning systems, developing shelters and erosion protection, and expanding vocational training and employment opportunities for vulnerable communities.

Bangladesh Plants 35.7m Saplings Under 250m Tree Target

Bangladesh has planted around 35.7 million saplings between 17 February and 15 September 2026 under the government's five-year programme to plant 250 million trees, achieving 69.36% of the current year's target.



The progress was reviewed at the fifth meeting of the Tree Plantation Cell, chaired by Prime Minister's Political Adviser and Cell Chairman Nazrul Islam Khan. The meeting also discussed post-plantation care, monitoring of sapling survival and opportunities for green employment.

Environment Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo called for stronger public participation and said plantation plans must account

for natural sapling mortality. He also stressed expanding nursery capacity and selecting tree species based on local conditions and economic value.

State Minister Sheikh Faridul Islam said the government plans to plant 20 million keora mangrove saplings in coastal areas during December-January, while Prime Minister's Special Assistant Dr. Md. Saimum Parvez called for systematic monitoring, protection and replacement of planted saplings.

Bangladesh, UNDP Seek Stronger Climate, Environmental Cooperation

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo met UNDP Bangladesh Resident Representative Stephen Rodrigues recently to discuss



strengthening cooperation on climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, climate finance and carbon markets.

The meeting, held at the Bangladesh Secretariat, reviewed ongoing cooperation between the government and the United Nations Development Program and explored new areas of partnership. State Minister Sheikh Faridul Islam was also present.

The discussions focused on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation financing under the BIOFIN initiative, the National Cooling Plan, climate adaptation, pollution control, plastic waste management and strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities.

Minister Mintoo said Bangladesh needs more effective, locally relevant and results-oriented adaptation measures as climate risks continue to intensify.

Nepal Rethinks Hydropower Strategy as Climate Risks Intensify



Nepal's hydropower-driven energy strategy is facing renewed scrutiny after a devastating August disaster damaged power infrastructure, disrupted electricity generation and exposed the vulnerability of projects to growing climate and geological risks.

The disaster, triggered by a glacial mountain collapse on the China-Nepal border, killed more than 1,400 people and left thousands missing. It also knocked 410 megawatts (MW), or about 10% of Nepal's

power generation capacity, out of service.

Hydropower supplies more than 90% of Nepal's electricity. Over the past decade, the country has increased its hydropower capacity more than fourfold to around 4,120 MW, connecting nearly all of its 30 million people to the national grid.

Nepal had also begun exporting surplus electricity to India and Bangladesh, but authorities suspended exports following the disaster.

UN Launches Global Grids Accelerator for Africa, Southeast Asia

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has launched the Global Grids Accelerator to mobilise investment in electricity infrastructure across Africa and Southeast Asia, helping countries turn energy priorities into viable projects.

Announced ahead of the UN Climate Summit 2026, the initiative will bring together policy expertise, project preparation, financing and implementation support to accelerate priority grid investments and regional electricity interconnections.

“Renewables are booming, but the grids that carry clean power are not keeping pace,” Guterres said, stressing that modern electricity



networks are essential for expanding energy access, strengthening energy security and supporting economic growth.

More than 2,500 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy projects are reportedly waiting for grid connections worldwide. Global annual investment in electricity grids, currently around US\$450 billion, needs to rise by approximately 50% by 2030 to keep pace with growing demand and renewable energy deployment.

Pacific Declaration Calls for Stronger Action to Keep 1.5°C Goal Alive

Pacific leaders, climate advocates and representatives of vulnerable communities have issued the Taku Pakasoa Declaration, calling for stronger global action to limit warming to 1.5°C, scale up climate finance and protect the rights, livelihoods and cultures of small island states.



Pacific island countries for their leadership in global climate diplomacy and calls on all Paris Agreement parties to accelerate deep, rapid and sustained emissions reductions to limit the magnitude and duration of any temperature overshoot.

It urges countries that have not yet submitted their 2035 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to do so urgently and calls for climate decisions to be guided by the best available science from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Issued in Tuvalu on October 6, the declaration—Taku Pakasoa, meaning “strength found in unity” in Tuvaluan—warns that rising temperatures, sea-level rise, ocean warming and other climate impacts pose an existential threat to Pacific communities and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The declaration commends

Bangladesh Urged to Turn Climate Plans into Investment and Action

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo has called for Bangladesh's climate policies and plans to be translated into coordinated programmes, investment-ready projects, appropriate financing and measurable outcomes.



Speaking at the opening of the two-day Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP) Knowledge Conference 2026 in Dhaka recently, Mintoo said development decisions made today would shape the country's climate risks for decades.

Major investments, he said, must therefore take local climate conditions into account.

The Minister also launched the BCDP Web Portal, a digital platform designed to provide real-time monitoring of climate-related projects and investments, improve transparency and strengthen the development of domestic and international climate finance pipelines.

State Minister Sheikh Faridul Islam highlighted rising coastal salinity, declining agricultural productivity and growing threats to livelihoods.

Pacific Leaders Move Toward Regional Roadmap to End Fossil Fuel Dependence

Pacific island ministers and regional representatives have discussed developing a regional roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels and achieve a 100% renewable energy future.



small island economies.

The discussion took place at a high-level event during Pre-COP31 in Fiji, organized in partnership with the Beyond Oil & Gas Alliance (BOGA).

The proposed roadmap is intended to translate the Pacific's strong climate ambition into coordinated action while addressing the scale, financing and energy-security challenges facing

The initiative builds on the decision by Pacific Islands Forum leaders in August to establish a Pacific Renewable Energy Commissioner, tasked with strengthening regional coordination on the transition to renewable energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Pacific countries have been at the forefront of calls for a global fossil fuel phase-out.

Rooppur NPP: Safety, Grid Readiness And Strong Governance Must Come First

Bangladesh's nuclear power journey has reached a historic milestone: the first unit of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) achieved initial criticality on 11 October 2026. This marks the beginning of a crucial phase of reactor commissioning, testing and preparation for commercial operation.

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INTERVIEW



Dr Mohammad Shawkat Akbar, Former Chairman of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), made these observations in an interview with Energy & Power Editor Mollah Amzad Hossain.

After nearly six decades of planning and preparation, Bangladesh has reached the initial criticality milestone at Rooppur Unit-1. As a nuclear scientist and former Project Director, how do you feel about this achievement and Bangladesh's entry into the nuclear power generation community?

Power Unit-1 of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant achieved its first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, reaching initial criticality at 3:34 pm on 11 October 2026. This historic milestone for Bangladesh's nuclear power program is a significant step toward establishing nuclear energy as a reliable source of low-carbon electricity.

When I began my career as a scientist at BAEC in 1993, nuclear power in Bangladesh was still a vision. In 2002, when I took charge of BAEC's Nuclear Power and Energy Division, pre-project activities for Rooppur were just beginning.

Having devoted more than a quarter-century to developing the country's nuclear infrastructure and leading the project from its foundational stages, I find this achievement deeply satisfying. It represents the fulfilment of a long-cherished national aspiration.

This achievement belongs to the people of Bangladesh and reflects the contributions of policymakers, scientists, engineers, project personnel, regulators and international partners. I am grateful to my former colleagues at Rooppur and BAEC, the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA), the

Ministry of Science and Technology, the Government of Bangladesh, ROSATOM, JSC Atomstroyexport and its subcontractors, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Bangladesh's entry into the nuclear power-producing community is an important step towards energy security, economic resilience, industrial development and a lower-carbon energy system.

What does initial criticality actually mean, and what are the major technical milestones that must be achieved before Rooppur Unit-1 can supply electricity commercially?

Initial criticality means that a reactor has achieved a self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction under controlled conditions. It is a major scientific and engineering milestone, but it does not mean the unit is ready for commercial operation.

Upon achieving criticality, the reactor is operated at a very low power level. During this Substage (B2), operators and engineers test control rods, monitor neutron flux, and verify that all core parameters align with computer models and safety designs. After that the power unit enters Stage C (Power Start-up) under a separate permission or license from BAERA. During Stage C, the reactor's thermal power is incrementally increased (about roughly 1%, 5%, 10%, 20%, 30%) to generate thermal energy, supplying steam at progressively higher pressures to the secondary circuit to accelerate the turbine step-by-step until



Dr Mohammad Shawkat Akbar

The plant must complete the prescribed tests and demonstrate its ability to operate at full capacity continuously for at least 15 days. Commercial operation can begin only after all commissioning tests, contractual requirements and regulatory conditions have been fulfilled and the necessary commercial operation license obtained. The transition from initial criticality to commercial operation requires close coordination among the project organization, operator, regulator, grid operator and technology supplier. My advice is straightforward: technical discipline, quality assurance and nuclear safety must never be compromised to meet a schedule.

it reaches its normal operational speed of 3,000 RPM. Once the reactor safely stabilizes at 30% to 35% power, the turbine generator is formally synchronized and connected to the electrical grid. At this initial connection level, the unit delivers its first block of experimental electricity, typically around 240 MW to 360 MW of its 1,200 MW nominal electrical capacity.

Grid synchronization is not the beginning of commercial production or continuous electricity supply. It initiates further testing of reactor systems, turbine-generator performance, safety controls and grid integration.

During trial operation (Stage D), output will increase progressively towards 100% capacity under a separate license from the BAERA. The plant must complete the prescribed tests and demonstrate its ability to operate at full capacity continuously for at least 15 days.

Commercial operation can begin only after all commissioning tests, contractual requirements and regulatory conditions have been fulfilled and the necessary Commercial Operation License obtained.

The transition from initial criticality to commercial operation requires close coordination among the project organization, operator, regulator, grid operator and technology supplier. My advice is straightforward: technical discipline, quality assurance and nuclear safety must never be compromised to meet a schedule.

What are the most significant challenges Bangladesh must address to bring both units into successful commercial operation?

Rooppur is a strategic infrastructure project with a planned capacity of 2,400 MW. Its successful operation requires coordinated progress across several technical and institutional areas.

First, nuclear safety and quality assurance must remain the highest priorities. Every inspection, test and system integration activity must comply with the approved commissioning program, plant design documentation, IAEA safety standards and BAERA requirements. Test results must be verified and documented before the project advances to the next stage. Any deviation must trigger investigation and corrective action, with appropriate review and approval by the contractor, operator and regulator.

Second, Regulatory oversight must be continuously strengthened. To achieve this, BAERA must develop its institutional capacity, technical competence and infrastructure to ensure effective,

independent oversight during the commissioning and trial operational stages, while introducing strict hold points and witness points.

Third, the Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh Limited (NPCBL) must establish its competence as a licensed, competent operating organization with qualified management, licensed personnel, clear responsibilities and effective systems for operation, maintenance and safety.

Fourth, grid readiness is essential. The national transmission system must be capable of receiving the plant's output while maintaining stability under normal and abnormal conditions.

Fifth, Bangladesh must ensure effective emergency preparedness, physical protection, cybersecurity and coordination among organizations responsible for nuclear safety and security.

Finally, strong project management and risk mitigation are essential amid macroeconomic uncertainty and global supply-chain challenges. Continuous coordination between BAEC/NPCBL, JSC Atomstroyexport and their subcontractors, alongside high-level cooperation between the governments of Bangladesh and Russia, will be critical. The agreed project schedule and approved commissioning program must guide implementation.

How can Bangladesh ensure that nuclear safety remains the overriding priority during the transition from commissioning to commercial operation?

Nuclear safety and governance must be embedded in the culture, leadership, and daily practices of every organization involved in a plant's operation. The operating organization must promote a strong nuclear safety culture built on psychological safety, a blameless culture, a questioning attitude, transparent reporting of problems, learning from errors, conservative decision-making, and ethical governance.

No production target, financial consideration or administrative pressure should take precedence over safety. Unexpected test results must be investigated and resolved before work proceeds.

Quality assurance must cover equipment inspection, equipment registration, documentation, maintenance, training and operating procedures. Operational mode declaration are equally important.

Reliable logistics are also essential. Previous delays involving faulty safety valves underline the importance of effective inventory management. Separate commissioning and reserve inventories should be maintained for critical components, strategic spares and operational consumables.

Operating personnel must receive continuous training and demonstrate competence before assuming safety-related responsibilities. Building a strong safety culture from the outset will be essential to public confidence and the long-term sustainability of Bangladesh's nuclear program.

What institutional and regulatory improvements are necessary to strengthen BAERA's capacity as Bangladesh enters the operational phase of nuclear power generation?

An effective nuclear regulatory system is fundamental to safe operation. BAERA must have sufficient institutional independence, technical expertise, resources and infrastructure to perform its responsibilities effectively

Its role must extend beyond licensing and construction-stage inspections to cover commissioning, operational safety, radiation protection and ongoing inspections throughout the plant's operational lifetime.

This requires qualified inspectors, specialist technical personnel, comprehensive regulations, clear guidelines and effective management systems. Adequate facilities and human resources are necessary both at its Dhaka headquarters and near the Rooppur site.

BAERA must independently evaluate safety documentation, inspect the plant, verify compliance with licensing conditions and enforce corrective measures when required.

Bangladesh should continue cooperating with the IAEA and benchmark its nuclear

infrastructure against international standards. Peer reviews, including Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) and Emergency Preparedness Review (EPREV) missions, as well as completion of the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) Phase 3 mission, can help strengthen national capabilities.

Regulatory capacity must develop alongside the nuclear program. It is a continuing national responsibility, not a one-time requirement.

NPCBL will be responsible for operating Rooppur NPP. What must the company do to establish itself as a competent and sustainable nuclear operator?

Nuclear power generation requires a different institutional culture from conventional power plants. The operator must understand reactor technology, safety systems, operating procedures, maintenance requirements and regulatory obligations in considerable depth.

NPCBL must establish a capable operating organization characterized by clear accountability, effective management, and qualified personnel. This requires a competent executive and corporate management framework, a robust on-site management system, core operations departments consisting plant operations, engineering, maintenance, safety & radiation protection, while fully integrating on-site nuclear security and emergency preparedness frameworks.

The Novovoronezh-II nuclear power plant provides a relevant reference for the VVER-1200 technology used at Rooppur. However, NPCBL must develop its own institutional competence and ensure that operating arrangements meet the plant's specific requirements and applicable international standards.

NPCBL also needs a long-term human resource development plan to maintain the plant safely and sustainably throughout its lifetime.

Grid stability is often identified as a major challenge for a country introducing nuclear power. How prepared is Bangladesh to integrate 2,400 MW of nuclear electricity into its national grid?

Grid integration is one of the most critical technical challenges facing Bangladesh. Nuclear power plants provide continuous baseload generation, but their safe operation depends on a stable and properly managed electrical grid.

Power Grid Bangladesh PLC (PGCB) must ensure that the transmission network can accommodate Rooppur's output while maintaining prescribed frequency and voltage limits. Severe grid disturbances can activate protective systems and cause a nuclear unit to disconnect automatically.

The associated 400 kV and 230 kV transmission infrastructure must be completed, tested and operated in accordance with approved designs and technical requirements. Grid studies must verify automatic frequency control, protective relaying, dynamic stability and redundancy.

Clear communication and operating procedures are needed between the Rooppur team and national grid operators to manage routine operations, generation changes, system disturbances and emergencies.

The grid must also satisfy the N-1 security criterion, enabling it to withstand the unexpected loss of its largest generating unit without system-wide failure. Bangladesh should additionally assess the consequences of an N-2 contingency involving the simultaneous loss of both 1,200 MW units. Such stress testing would help identify vulnerabilities and improve resilience.

How important is adequate spinning reserve capacity when Rooppur begins supplying electricity, particularly when both units eventually operate at full capacity?

Adequate operating reserves are essential to maintaining grid reliability. If a nuclear unit suddenly trips because of a technical fault or external disturbance, the power system must respond quickly enough to prevent wider instability.

Bangladesh must assess the implications of losing one 1,200 MW unit and, under more severe circumstances, both units simultaneously. Reserve arrangements should be based on detailed grid studies, operating requirements and applicable technical criteria.

Reserves need not come from a single source. Depending on system conditions, they may include available generation capacity, fast-response resources, interconnections, demand response and other flexible resources.

The key requirement is that sufficient capacity must be available and capable of responding within the necessary timeframe. As Rooppur's output increases, grid operators must regularly reassess reserve requirements, frequency response and contingency plans.

Integrating nuclear power is not simply a matter of adding generation capacity; the entire power system must be prepared to manage the associated technical risks.

Bangladesh's power sector faces fuel import costs, financial pressure and increasing demand. How could Rooppur contribute to long-term energy security and economic development?

Nuclear power can strengthen Bangladesh's energy security by diversifying the electricity generation mix and reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels. Nuclear fuel is highly energy-dense, requires relatively small quantities and can be stored on-site for extended periods. Fuel costs also represent a comparatively small share of total nuclear power operating expenses.

Once operating reliably, Rooppur can provide stable, low-carbon baseload electricity and help reduce exposure to international fossil fuel price volatility. Predictable electricity generation could support industrial expansion, information technology, transport electrification and broader economic development.

However, these benefits depend on safe operation, sound financial management and effective long-term arrangements for fuel supply, spent fuel and radioactive waste.

Developing a sustainable nuclear power program also requires continued international cooperation on nuclear safeguards, safety and security. Strong governance, nuclear diplomacy for supply chains, regulatory independence and technical competence will therefore be fundamental to ensuring that Rooppur delivers lasting benefits to Bangladesh. 



POWERTEK

MEGHNAGHAT POWER LIMITED (“MPL”)

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (“RFEOI”)

Meghnaghat Power Limited (“MPL”) is a private company incorporated in Bangladesh, which owns a 450 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant at Meghnaghat, Sonargaon, Narayanganj, Bangladesh. MPL is a wholly owned subsidiary of **PEL**, a joint venture between **Edra Power Holdings Sdn Bhd, Malaysia and Aljomaih Energy and Water Co., Saudi Arabia**, leading international independent power producers which own and operate a diversified portfolio of power generation assets in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

MPL wishes to invite prospective applicants to express their interest in participating in the tender (the **“Tender”**) as stated below:

TENDER NO.	TENDER DESCRIPTION
HO-MPL-2026-001 (BD)	Tender: tender for the purchase of a 450 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant in Bangladesh comprising 2 x Gas Turbine (Ansaldo Energia S.p.A, Model: V94.2) + 1 x Steam Turbine (Fuji Electric Co Ltd, Japan, Model: KN30-2*6.3) + 2 x HRSG (Hyundai, Model: HRSG-H-28.4-68.9) and all its auxiliaries, in the form of an asset sale.

Prospective applicants interested in participating in the Tender are required to send their Expression of Interest (**“EOI”**) on company letterhead stating their interest and providing the information stated below via email to **mpl.sales@edra-bd.energy** by **10th November 2026**.

Information to accompany the EOI:

- 1. Name of applicant (company name)**
- 2. Country of incorporation**
- 3. Authorized contact person with contact details**
- 4. Company Profile**

The EOI along with the information provided therein will be reviewed and evaluated to determine the Responsive Applicants. MPL will issue invitations via email to the Responsive Applicants to participate in the Tender. The complete information on the Tender and related documents shall be attached with the invitation email.

Any inquires related to the above RFEOI shall be directed to:

mpl.sales@edra-bd.energy

PROBLEMS ARE PLENTY, SOLUTIONS ARE SLIM

These days, Bangladeshis talk more about their worries and how their aspirations for a better Bangladesh have been smashed by those who promised to make the changes. Professor Muhammad Yunus had been a disaster as his 18-month interim administration had failed to deliver on the reforms. Instead of making any change for the better his administration had left the country in a mess. The country and its people are suffering. The economy is limping amid high cost of living, low investment – both in private and public sectors-high interest rates, low revenue collection and weak banking system and persistent energy crisis.

The forecasts from the world's three major international aid and financing

agencies are grim. Bangladesh economic growth is likely to decline 3.2% for the current 2026-27 fiscal, while the government in its annual budget for the year has set it at 6.5%. The IMF assessment is slightly lower than the World Bank prediction of 3.4%, while the Asian Development Bank predicts the GDP growth rate to 4%. The slow-down of the economy may continue until 2030 before it starts bouncing back provided right policies are adopted and sincere efforts are made to executive the policies, according to economists and experts. The sluggish growth of the economy is hardly surprising. Private sector investment has been in limbo for several years with post-July uprising closure of factories and loss of jobs had compounded the situation. High interest rates on money borrowed

Reverse Swing



Farid Hossain

of gas and electricity connections frequently appear in the media.

Bangladesh economy relies on two major pillars: export of ready-made garments and remittances earned from Bangladeshi migrants working abroad, most of them in the Gulf nations. The tidings from the Middle East have recently been alarming. Saudi Arabia, the largest employer of Bangladeshi migrants, is being pounded by Iran-backed Houthi missiles and drones. Missiles falling on Saudi Arabia's King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh have already claimed more than a dozen lives, including the death of a Saudi pilot. The attacks on Saudi airports leading to closure of King Khalid International Airport had sent a wave of shocks in Bangladesh as thousands of migrant workers and new job seekers got stranded at Dhaka's Hazrat Shah Jalal International Airport. Fearing expiry of visas before they could return to jobs in Saudi Arabia many are trying to take alternate routes. But the mess has already made their life miserable. It seems Bangladeshis, mostly those living in the lower tiers of the society with low income, are being pounded one problem after another. If the high inflation rate, nearing 9%, is not enough the eviction of hawkers from the footpaths to keep those clean is adding to the difficulties of the poor. Many see the move ill-advised at a time when joblessness is rising at an alarming rate. Consider what the IMF says about the rate of unemployment in Bangladesh. Nearly 29% of the country's educated people are jobless, says the international lender. Are enough efforts being made to resolve the issue? Have the policy makers been serious enough to deal with the problem? They claim that the July uprising had been largely about getting government jobs without being left behind. Better the government keeps it in mind. ■



It seems Bangladeshis, mostly those living in the lower tiers of the society with low income, are being pounded one problem after another.

from the bank have discouraged the businesses from making new investments. That's not all. Ask any businessperson you meet why is there no interest in importing machinery to set up factories. The answer you get is the cost of doing business in Bangladesh is high. Uncertainty about getting gas and electricity connections keeps the entrepreneurs miles away from even thinking about any new venture. Reports of about newly-completed factories lying idle for lack

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