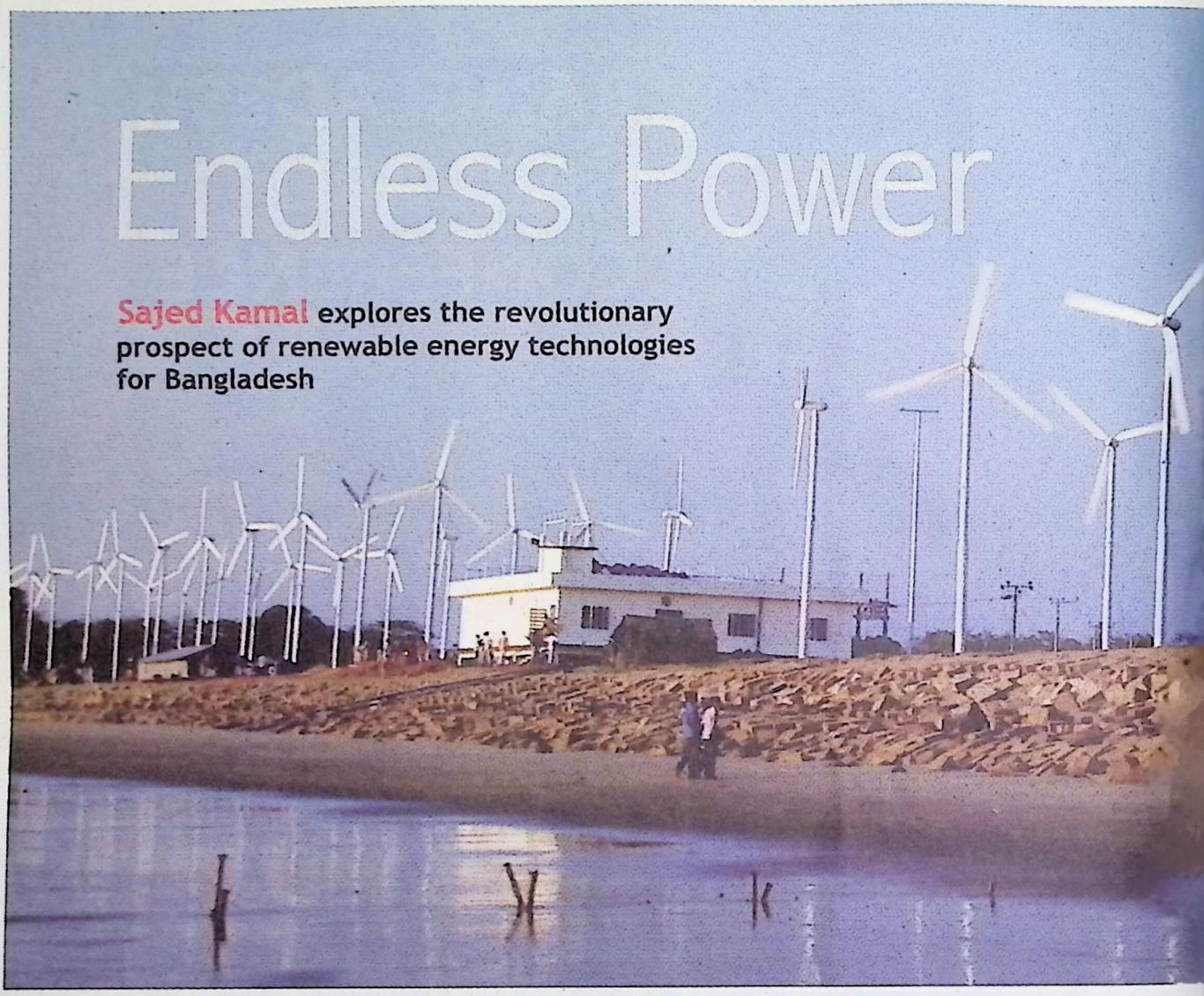
Endless Power

Sajed Kamal explores the revolutionary prospect of renewable energy technologies for Bangladesh



ENERGY is our basic means of survival, and globally we have been depending on oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear power to meet the need. However, the crisis this path has led to -- rapid depletion and sky-rocketing energy prices; environmental consequences like global warming, acid rain and nuclear contamination; and political consequences like threatened national security and energy wars -- demands an urgent transition to energy options that are clean, affordable, secure, sustainable, and peaceful. Bangladesh is one of the worst victims; it is also in one of the most advantageous positions to make the transition.

Bangladesh is richly endowed with renewable energy resources. Abundant sunlight and heat, ample wind in the coastal areas, hilly sections and islands, gravity driven water flows of varied forms and speed, and the lush vegetation providing ample photosynthesis and bio-mass for fuel for a variety of purposes.

Compared to Germany -- which has become an inspiring example of a country set on a full transition to renewable energy -- Bangladesh receives twice the amount of solar radiation. Bangladesh is an exceptional, naturally endowed and integrated, renewable energy mine.

Judiciously harnessed, this energy mine has an untapped capacity far beyond meeting the country's daily demand of 4,000 megawatts of electricity, while also generating other forms of usable energy such as heat and bio-gas.

Sunlight that falls on the Earth only for about one hour contains the same amount of energy we use