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Focus more on cross-border power trade

South Asian nations can save \$9b through electricity trade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

South Asian countries should engage more in cross-border electricity trade by exploring the largely untapped resources, which will not only lighten the whole region but also improve people's standard of living, say experts.

Regional electricity trade can help countries save over \$9 billion annually, while regional carbon emissions would go down by 8 percent, Syed Munir Khasru, chairman of the Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance (IPAG), said at a programme in the capital.

"Energy drives development which translates into poverty reduction. If we can't reduce power poverty [lack of access to electricity], we will not be able to reduce poverty," he added.

He was speaking at the opening ceremony of a programme titled, "Power & Energy in South Asia: Connectivity through Cooperation", at the Radisson Blu hotel.

The IPAG, a think-tank based in Dhaka, organised the two-day training programme in association with the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) and United Power.

Electricity coverage in South Asia ranges from a low of 40 percent to a high of 90 percent with most countries relying on one predominant form of energy while leaving other resources untapped.

The dependence on a single source limits solutions to meeting energy demands and poses a significant risk to energy security. Furthermore, the region's economic growth is hindered and the supply-demand gap for electricity is exacerbated, according to the ADBI.

Mashiur Rahman, economic affairs adviser to the prime minister, said there was mismatch between geographical

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Navy divers run a security check in a lake yesterday close to the stage, inset, built for the two-day 20th national council of the Awami League beginning at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital today.

Libya frees 5 including Bangladeshi from IS

REUTERS, Sirt

Libyan pro-government forces have freed five foreign nationals, including a Bangladeshi, held by Islamic State in Sirt after heavy fighting in their battle to capture the final district of the city, a local official said on Thursday.

Islamic State took over Sirt more than a year ago, profiting from chaos caused by infighting among rival brigades of Libyan forces who once battled together to oust Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, but steadily turned against each other.

Two of the freed foreigners were from Turkey, two from India and one from Bangladesh, said Rida Issa, a spokesman for the Bonyan Marsous forces

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

IS launches counter attacks as Iraq forces push on Mosul

REUTERS, Baghdad

Islamic State launched a major counter-attack on the city of Kirkuk yesterday as Iraqi and Kurdish forces pursued operations to seize territory around Mosul in preparation for an offensive on the jihadists' last major stronghold in Iraq.

Islamic State's assault on Kirkuk, which lies in an oil-producing region, killed 18 members of the security forces and workers at a power station outside the city, including two Iraqis, a hospital source said.

Crude oil production facilities were not targeted and the power supply continued uninterrupted in the city. Kirkuk is located east of Hawija, a pocket still under control of Islamic State that lies between Baghdad and Mosul.

With air and ground support from the US-led coalition, Iraqi government forces captured eight villages south and south-east of Mosul. Kurdish forces attacking from the north and east also captured

several villages, according to statements from their respective military commands overnight.

The offensive that started on Monday to capture Mosul is expected to become the biggest battle fought in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003.

The United Nations says Mosul could require the biggest humanitarian relief operation in the world, with worst-case scenario forecasts of up to a million people being uprooted.

About 1.5 million residents are still believed to be inside Mosul. Islamic State has taken 550 families from villages around Mosul and is holding them close to IS locations in the city, probably as human shields, a spokeswoman for the UN human rights office said in Geneva.

The fighting has forced 5,640 people to flee their homes so far from the vicinity of the city, the International Organization for Migration said late on Thursday.

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India's interest in Saarc intact

Says ministry spokesperson

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India has said its interest in Saarc remains intact and the country's priority is to promote closer cooperation and economic integration in the region.

"We remain committed to Saarc and its principles and our intention is not to throw the baby out with the bath water, our intention is only to clean up the bath water," said Vikas Swarup, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs of India, during the weekly briefing on Thursday in New Delhi.

Replying to a query, he said, "It is government's priority to promote closer cooperation and economic integration in our region."

"Our interest in Saarc remains intact, but our

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Hitler's secret base found



MAIL ONLINE

A secret Nazi base in the Arctic abandoned after scientists said infected polar bear meat has been unearthed.

The mysterious site, named 'Schatzgraber' or 'Treasure Hunter' by Hitler's underlings, was constructed in 1942 - a year after the Third Reich invaded Russia.

Russian researchers have now rediscovered the military base, which the former garrison evacuated by U-boat after eating infected polar bear meat.

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Bangabandhu satellite to be ready by next year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around half of the country's first satellite, Bangabandhu-1, has been completed and its manufacture will be finished in November next year, says State Minister for Posts and Telecommunications Tarana Halim.

"We will be able to launch the satellite within the deadline of December 16, 2017 as its manufacture process is going on smoothly according to the plan," she said at a press conference at Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd (BTCL) office yesterday.

Thales Alenia Space, a French aerospace manufacturer, is manufacturing the satellite, meant for communication and broadcast

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CHEATING IN TEST 13 university admission seekers jailed

DU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday sentenced 13 admission seekers to two years' imprisonment each for using electronic devices illegally during the admission test for 'Ka' unit of Dhaka University (DU) at different test centres in the capital.

Lax screening at the entryways yesterday allowed many examinees

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People leave their homes in Targella village, east of Mosul, during an operation against Islamic State militants in the Iraqi city yesterday. Inset, Iraqis who fled violence in Mosul gather as they reach Syria, near the Iraqi border, in Hasaka Governorate on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Trump booed in NY, assailed by Obama

AFF, New York

Donald Trump endured boos at a charity event in New York and a biting attack by President Barack Obama on Thursday as the Republican nominee's threat not to concede if he loses next month's elections roiled the race for the White House.

Trump cast the United States into uncharted political waters by suggesting he may not recognize the result of the November 8 presidential election and could launch a legal challenge if Hillary Clinton wins.

"I will totally accept the results of this great and historic presidential election... if I win," the Republican nominee told cheering supporters in Delaware, Ohio.

"Of course I will accept a clear election result, but I will also reserve my right to contest and file a legal challenge in the case of a questionable result," he said dangling his concession.

Trump later was booed at a white-tie fundraiser for Catholic charities in New York where he and Clinton, fresh off their bruising final debate in Las Vegas, took part in what was supposed to be a friendly roast.

But the bitterness of the campaign was soon on display, with Trump calling Clinton "corrupt" and jabbing her for disclosures from her campaign's hacked emails.

"Here she is in public, pretending not to hate Catholics," he said, as Cardinal Timothy Doland of New York looked on.

"I don't know who they're angry at, Hillary, you or I," Trump said in an attempt to brush off the ensuing flurry of boos from New York's elite.

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PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 22

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

RAZAN 4-50 12-45 4-00 5-36 7-15

JAMAAT 5-25 1-15 4-15 5-41 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION