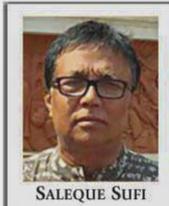


PM'S VISIT TO INDIA

# Taking Indo-Bangla energy sector ties to new heights



SALEQUE SUFI

It is anticipated that our PM's visit to India will result in some very important agreements, MOUs and protocols between the two SAARC neighbours. India is Bangladesh's next door neighbour encircling it from the entire west and north and about 80 percent of the east. The two countries also share extensive maritime boundaries in the Bay of Bengal. Energy sector collaboration through power and energy trading, allowing each other's territory to be used for constructing power and energy transmission infrastructure may feature in the agenda of discussions in the summit, among other important issues. The ensuing visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina may open new horizons for collaboration in the power and energy sector. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) can not only develop long term energy security for sustainable economic development but can also export power and energy to other countries if the huge potential of energy resources are jointly explored, exploited and shared under agreed frameworks of these four countries. Bangladesh and India have reached the final stages of concluding some agreements for energy and power trading and few are under discussion. Many projects are technically and commercially viable, high level political commitments are also there. Here are some of the major collaborations. **The USD 3.57 Billion Soft Term Loan**  
An agreement for India providing USD



PHOTO: STAR

3.57 billion soft term loan for the development of power sector of Bangladesh is among the priority agenda of the summit meeting of the two heads of the government. Out of this USD 940 million would be spent as Bangladesh equity for the Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant project for which the Russian Government has already pledged majority funding. Bangladesh may spend USD 177 million for constructing a power transmission line from Jharkhand, Bihar, India to Bogra, Bangladesh facilitating power trading. Bangladesh would utilise the remaining USD 157 million for implementing some solar power generation projects.

**Energy and Power Trading**  
It may be mentioned here that Bangladesh is already importing 600 MW (500+100) through two different power grid connectivity. India is not a power surplus country. Some of its states have huge power deficits. Still India as a gesture of goodwill stood by its Prime Ministers commitment for exporting power. Another 60 MW power import from Tripura is expected to start soon. **Indian Companies Participating in Energy and Power Generation**  
State owned Bangladesh and Indian companies BPDB and NTPC have already formed Bangladesh India

Friendship Coal Power Company (BIFCPC) for implementing a 1320 MW coal fired power plant at Rampal Bagerhat, 14KM away from the outer periphery of Sundarbans mangrove forest. Indian company BHEL will implement the project as EPC contractor. Indian EXIM Bank will provide the entire EPC cost of the project. The physical implementation of the work will start soon. BPDB, as single buyer, would purchase the power generated under a Power Purchase agreement where BIFCPL like any other IPP working in Bangladesh, would get fiscal incentives. Indian company Adani group has

proposed to export 1600 MW power to Bangladesh through setting up of a coal fired power plant in Jharkhand. This proposal is under discussion. Similarly another proposal of Indian Company Reliance Group for importing LNG through setting up FSRU at Matarbari and gas fired power plants in Chittagong and Meghnaghat is also under discussion. Indian Company ONGC is developing Kutubdia offshore gas field under PSC with Petrobangla. Meanwhile Indian company Petronet signed an MOU with Petrobangla for a land based LNG terminal at Kutubdia. The project for petroleum products export from an Indian refinery to Bangladesh through a pipeline is also at a mature stage. During the summit, the proposed power transit across Bangladesh with provision for Bangladesh accessing the open access nature of the transmission line, will also come under discussion. One Indian company is also negotiating RLNG export through pipeline from West Bengal to Khulna, Bangladesh. **BBIN Initiative**  
The matters related to joint investment for hydropower development in Bhutan, Nepal and power trading in the region through setting up regional grid will also come under discussion. Experts observe that the win-win energy and power sector collaboration will bring immense benefits to Bangladesh and India in ensuring long term sustainable energy security. It will also create infrastructure for utilising stranded resources in the region triggering major industrialisation, thus creating jobs and reducing poverty in the region.   
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The writer is an expert in energy sector infrastructure development, planning, construction management and operation in Central and South Asia and Australia. He has served as an adviser to the petroleum ministry of Afghanistan.

*The ensuing visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina may open new horizons for collaboration in the power and energy sector. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal can not only develop long term energy security for sustainable economic development but can also export power and energy to other countries.*

# Digital natives: The light bearers of the future



PETER B. FURBERG

THE last decade has seen a boom in innovation-driven digital technology. The meteoric rise in popularity of, and hence dependence on, digital platforms and instruments such as the internet and smartphones, have changed not only our way of living, but also how we perceive life experiences. We now live in a globalised, inter-connected era where what we imagine, can quickly transcend into reality through the technology available at our finger tips. An entire generation, especially those born between the mid-90s and the early 2000's, have grown up in the digital era. We call them "digital natives" because, while we, the "digital immigrants" had to adapt to the digital revolution that we initiated, they were born and raised up in it. There was no period of discovery of and learning the use of a new tool as it were, rather a natural order - in their minds, the way things have always been. Simple activities, like connecting to people far away, waiting in line to get movie tickets, waiting a week for the next new episode of one's favourite TV show, or having to travel to a shop to pick up a simple product, are all instant and accessible on smartphones or connected devices. The coming of age digital native has never felt the pain of not having to wait for any of the rudimentary tasks listed above. In reality the list of things they can now do on a smart device is endless. 'The stuff of dreams' is now very much a part of their reality. Thanks to game-changing innovators like Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, and Elon Musk, to name a few pioneers in their space, today's children perceive 'impossible' to be the next assignment to overcome. They play games on portable super-computers masquerading as smartphones, com-

municate instantly with friends or relatives thousands of miles away through social media, and even imagine private travel to space as a genuine possibility when they grow up. All this seems natural to them because they are growing up in an environment where innovation is at its pinnacle, and no problem seems unsolvable. Thanks to ever-advancing digital technology, there is always a better, and easier way of getting something done and there is suddenly one less problem to solve. Notably the pace of progress and innovation is so

ever they can imagine. As digital technology evolves further, the extent of what can be achieved through technology can only expand, and this digitally perceptive generation will use the new technology as an extension of themselves; we are already seeing evidence of this the world over. In line with the technological boom, there has been a surge in the number of tech startups; more so in the last decade. We have pleasantly observed that Bangladesh too has caught up with the bandwagon as the number of tech startups grow almost

entrepreneurs in the country is steadily on the rise. This is very encouraging news for Bangladesh, as we can truly aspire to become fully digitalised within the foreseeable future. The youth of today are not satisfied with just 'what is' but are constantly pondering over the 'what can be'. Not only are they imagining, but they are also actively engaging to transform their imagination into working prototypes that will one day be the real thing. They are making optimal use of digital platforms to collaborate, prototype and achieve their targets. The digital native as a natural instinct does not want to be bound by the limitations of any social construct, which frees them to significantly broaden their horizon of perceivable realities. They are the true agents of change, of building a whole new world, of truly going beyond. It is the responsibility of us, the digital immigrants, who have experienced the end of an era and the beginning of a new one, to adapt to the changes, understand the aspirations of our digital native successors, and guide them in a way that they may make optimum use of the resources at their disposal. It is our responsibility that they learn to harness technology in the most responsible way possible. The amalgamation of ideas of two generations, through understanding and collaboration, could make way for unfolding and attaining newer possibilities, towards building a better, brighter future together. Grameenphone is going to celebrate twenty years of partnership with the people of Bangladesh; in this period we have crossed many milestones driven a revolution in communication and digital technology. The infinite possibility that the digital natives present, not only for Bangladesh but also the world, encourages us to become a trusted partner in innovation and help break any barriers to new possibilities, not only in the next twenty years but for many more to come.   
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The writer is CEO of Grameenphone Limited.

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fast nowadays that it seems that something new and digital is happening every day. One might wonder, down the road, what these children who are growing up to see the impossible made possible as a regular phenomenon can actually achieve? Are they being crippled by not having to solve problems once associated with coming to age in the 'real world'? I would venture to say rather that the opposite will happen; that these digital natives are destined to achieve what

exponentially. This local growth has been enabled by accelerator programmes initiated by the government as well as private organisations such as Grameenphone. Thousands of youth have stepped up and come forward with incredibly innovative digital solutions to address the needs of everyday people - needs ranging from basic services like health and education, to addressing social needs like entertainment, social networking and other diverse areas. The number of successful young

**QUOTABLE Quote**

**NAPOLEON HILL**  
American self-help author.

*Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve.*

**CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Makes do
- 6 Congress coverer
- 11 Isolated
- 12 Butler's love
- 13 Copy for pasteup
- 14 Boxing ring border
- 15 French article
- 16 Satisfied
- 18 California's Big --
- 19 Youngster
- 20 Beam of light
- 21 Milky stone
- 23 Water lily
- 25 Descartes conclusion
- 27 Sparkler
- 28 Singer Adams
- 30 Rudiments
- 33 Catchy music
- 34 "Dig in!"
- 36 Mob pariah
- 37 Door opener's words
- 39 Apple taster
- 40 Spartacus, for one
- 41 "Dallas" mom
- 43 Fork features
- 44 Back biter
- 45 Put to use
- 46 Flies high

**DOWN**

- 1 Tenor great
- 2 "Let me in!"
- 3 Folded flier
- 4 Go wrong
- 5 Market buy
- 6 Batter-dipped item
- 7 Opportunity
- 8 Drink decoration
- 9 Game settings
- 10 Mean-spirited
- 17 Masseur's need
- 22 Put d own
- 24 Pot brew
- 26 "I'm No Angel" star
- 28 Bungle
- 29 Saigon setting
- 31 Fancy cracker topper
- 32 Takes the wheel
- 33 Art class staple
- 35 Swarms
- 38 Finished
- 42 Old card game

**BEETLE BAILEY** BY MORT WALKER

**BABY BLUES** BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

**YESTERDAY'S ANSWER**

C	R	A	G	S	W	I	N	E
H	I	V	E	S	T	O	L	E
I	C	O	N	P	A	R	K	E
C	O	N	E	C	E	L	L	
				T	O	N	E	D
R	E	S	I	S	T	D	R	E
E	L	E	C	T	V	O	I	C
A	M	A	F	I	F	T	H	S
L	O	N	E	W	O	L	F	
				B	O	N	E	H
A	S	S	O	R	T	A	R	L
F	I	E	N	D	S	N	I	T
T	R	A	Y	S		D	E	A