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Only good governance can ensure long-term energy security



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required its coal and renewable resources to be exploited. Once the gas shortage started, the mindset of Petrobangla was to explore and exploit our untapped resources. Reviewing old presentations and reports of Petrobangla during 2007-09, it is clear that they understood the gravity of the gas shortage problem, and their projection of gas shortage and demand growth

international oil companies (IOC) and Petrobangla fields against a projected demand of 3,070 mmcf in 2014. Out of that total, 1,757 mmcf was supposed to come from Petrobangla fields. While IOCs ramped up their production, Petrobangla came up short. The idea of LNG import along with the previously stated gas field development plan was presented

decided to supply the gas deficit by importing LNG only. By 2032 it planned to import 4,000 mmcf of LNG.

The other two indigenous resources—coal and renewables did not get serious consideration in the early years of the fuel shortage. Before all the debate regarding coal, the National Energy Policy 1996 strongly suggested developing coal but

addressing the real issues. Even today, the objective is confusing. Whether the stated 40 percent target by 2041 is going to come from renewable or clean energy is not clear. On the other hand, there is a big difference between installed capacity and energy produced.

Various plans and agencies state different objectives. The Eighth Five-Year Plan states

Climate Prosperity Plan 2022-2041, which is the newest plan, states to achieve 30 percent renewable energy by 2030 and 40 percent by 2041. On the other hand, the Power System Master Plan (PSMP) 2016 and Perspective Plan 2021 did not have any scope for renewables by 2041 although they provided a 10 percent and 20 percent alternate renewable scenario. The new Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP) is cautiously optimistic on both onshore and offshore wind although their projection or plan for 2041 is not very favourable to solar power. As a result, researchers, investors, and policymakers get confused and pick up the numbers they like. Climate and environmental activists set lofty goals further puzzling the general people.

Energy security in every country is an integral part of national security. The USA, the Soviet Union, and Europe have fought several wars over energy to ensure national and regional energy security. For such a critical sector, proper governance is the single most key driving force. Political whims or lobbyists cannot dictate the policy. Only energy governance with clear policy transparency can ensure security for the people. Unfortunately, the political economy dominated this sector instead of technical leadership. For example, Petrobangla, the agency responsible for providing energy for the country, was never led by a petroleum geologist or a petroleum engineer.

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Bangladesh has been struggling with primary energy supply since 2007, a long 17 years. Unfortunately, the focus was never to solve this fundamental problem sustainably but to build more power plants that are visible and carry larger political mileage. The initial rush of building generation units was somewhat justified and was reasonably successful in providing electricity but the negligence of the primary energy problem has finally caught up. The import-heavy solution of providing primary energy was always risky, expensive, and unsustainable, without a strong economy. Even with a substantial generation capacity, the country is now facing a fuel shortage, as well as a very costly power scarcity. Achieving complete energy independence is unattainable, but for a developing country minimising import always ensures more security. And exploring and exhausting the full indigenous potential will make the country resilient.

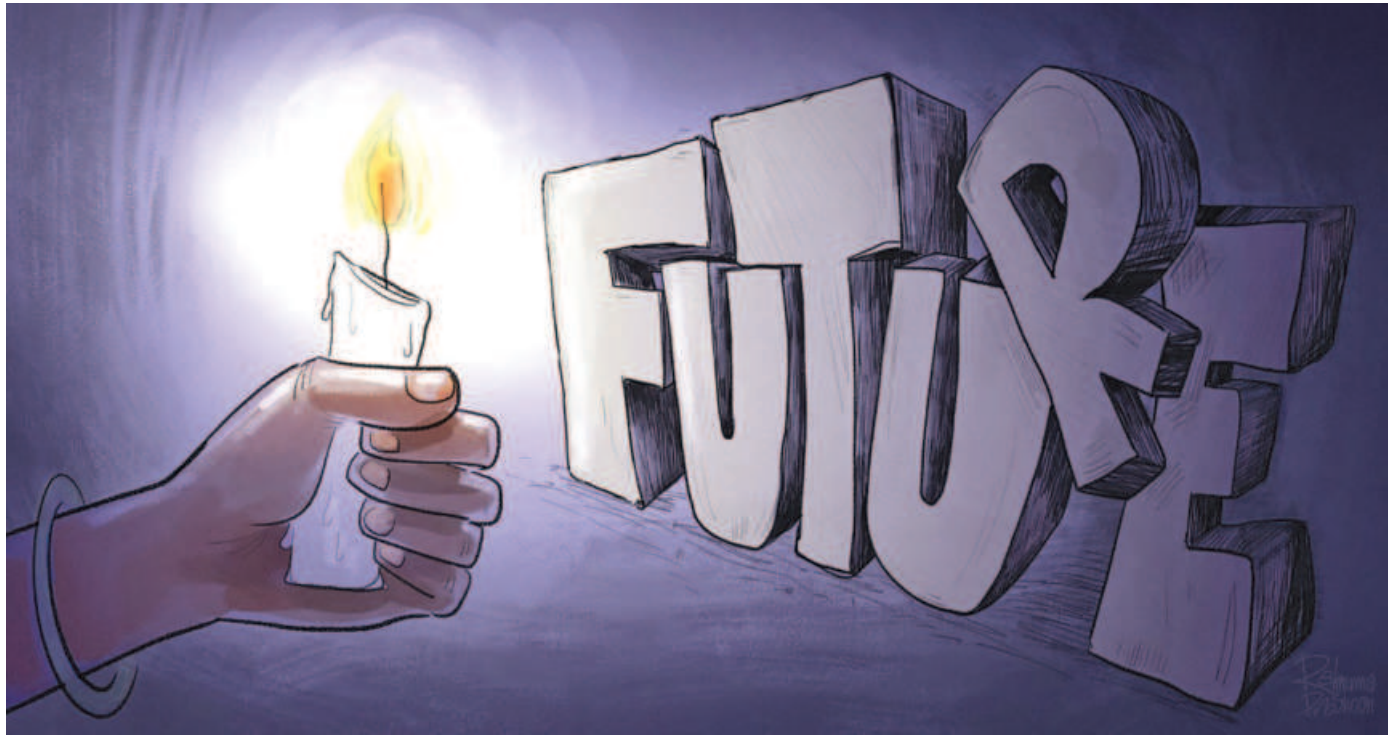
Bangladesh was once dependent on gas only. Energy security via fuel diversification

up to 2025 matched the current situation. In a presentation for the 2008 offshore PSC bidding, the agency projected a supply of 3,267 mmcf from existing

in the government document of Energy Scenario of Bangladesh 2010-2011. Gradually, the entire development plan was abandoned and Petrobangla

it has been kept in cold storage principally for political reasons. Renewable energy got lukewarm support completely depending on the private sector without

the addition of 3,700 MW of renewable energy by 2025, Delta Plan 2100 talks about a minimum of adding 30 percent renewables by 2041, Mujib



Energy security in every country is an integral part of national security.

ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON



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