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**Business**

## **Power projects need quick implementation**

Say development partners  
Star Business Report

Development partners have pushed the government for quick project implementation, energy audit, and public-private partnership initiative for power projects.

In the energy and power session of Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting yesterday, the government presented an investment requirement of \$9.5 billion for the sector and the donors made the suggestions.

According to the officials who were present at the session, the development partners said the biggest obstacle in the power sector was implementation. The tender process takes much time and the donors urged the government to expedite the process.

Power Division Secretary Abul Kalam Azad presented a detailed plan on strategy, priorities and next steps for the energy and power sector. On behalf of the development partners, ADB Director General Sultan Hafiz Rahman and German representative Christiane Hieronymus spoke at the session.

The Prime Minister's Energy Adviser Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury and State Minister for Power and Energy Brig Gen (retd) Md Enamul Huq replied to different queries from the development partners.

They told the development partners that the government would require \$9.5 billion for generating around 7,000 megawatt power, and transmission and distribution in the next six years.

The government also presented detailed plans on financing the projects, and focused on the plan for cross-border cooperation in the power sector.

The development partners were told that the government initiated move to address the power crisis by importing electricity from the neighbouring countries. Recently, India and Bangladesh have reached understanding on power trade. It is expected that power trade with India in the range of 250 MW to 500 MW will be possible in the next 24 months.

Chris Austin, country director of UK Department for International Development (DFID) and co-chair of Local Consultative Group, told journalists that various institutions are working for development of power and energy sector.

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission should be strengthened, he said.

Austin hailed the government move to produce power through public-private partnership. Grid connectivity with Nepal, Bhutan and India is a welcome move, he added.

He also said the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and Japan would invest in the PPP initiative for power projects. The government plans to form an energy and power fund for investment in the sector.

The development partners suggested the government conduct a detailed audit to detect the huge wastage of power, energy and gas. The gas used by Power Development Board for electricity generation is almost double than the requirement.