



## **Tapan finds PPR an obstacle to expeditious decision making**

### FE Report

Energy and Power Adviser Tapan Chowdhury Monday saw the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR) as a stumbling block to expeditious decision making by the government.

The immediate past BNP-led alliance government adopted the PPR at the insistence of the multilateral lenders, including the World Bank (WB). These lenders wanted introduction of the PPR for the sake of transparency and accountability in public procurement.

"There is no alternative to waiting for the decisions, no matter how fast you are," he said while explaining the reasons for the delays involved in government procedures. Tapan was speaking as the chief guest at a roundtable discussion in the city.

He said: "Despite our sincere efforts we may not be able to launch the offshore bidding round for hydrocarbon exploration in the Bay of Bengal this year."

Bangladesh Enterprises Institute (BEI) organised the roundtable discussion on "Energy and Power Crisis," at its conference room at Gulshan in the city.

The energy adviser said the country's coal resource is the best possible option to ensure country's energy security in the coming years.

"The proven reserve of coal is about 2,350 million tonnes with another 1,108 million tonnes of probable reserve in the country's five coalmines - Barapukuria, Khalashpir, Phulbari, Jamalgonj and Dighipara - discovered so far," he said.

Considering estimated requirement of 36 million tonnes per year, the country's proven and probable reserve of coal is assumed to be sufficient for as long as 96 years, Tapan Chowdhury said.

"We are now working to finalise the national coal policy," he said adding, "after that negotiations with the interested parties will start."

Speaking on the occasion Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue expected that the hydroelectricity and nuclear power could pave a new window of opportunity to mitigate Bangladesh's energy crisis.

Regional cooperation in the region and partnership and negotiation with the neighbouring India will be necessary to explore the hydroelectricity potentials that lies to the north of Bangladesh, he pointed out.

Regarding nuclear power the issues of safety measures and nuclear wastes should also be handled carefully, he suggested.

Immediate past secretary of the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) AMM Nasir Uddin also emphasised the need for a time-bound action plan to undertake the necessary works in proper time.

He suggested utilisation of underground coal and renewable energy to ensure energy security.

The country should not be solely dependent on energy, he said, adding the country's petroleum refining capacity need to be enhanced in the wake of soaring oil prices to ensure country's energy security, he said.

Summit Group director Faruq Khan underscored the need to explore the alternative sources of energy apart from the conventional energy sources to meet the country's energy requirement in future.

A former top official of the Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd (DESCO) Mofizur Rahman stressed on managing the distribution system of electricity properly to ensure smooth electricity supply despite having power scarcity.

Chairman of the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) Nazrul Islam Khan said the electricity demand in the capital is growing by 15 per cent a year though the growth of the same is 10 per cent in the country.

Moderating the roundtable discussion the BEI president Farooq Sobhan said the country's future depends on how Bangladesh faces the challenges of the energy sector.