

PM seeks more energy from Qatar

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Online Desk: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday sought increased energy particularly Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Qatar to meet the energy demand amid the Ukraine war. She made the request during a meeting with the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, held on the sidelines of the United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC5) in Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) in Doha, reports UNB.

Now Bangladesh is importing some 40 containers of energy that means 1.8-2.5 MTA, said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen while briefing reporters after the meeting. “We want your help. Bangladesh faces energy problems due to the Ukraine war. I want more.... I will renew the contract. I want more LNG,” the PM was quoted.

In response, the Emir of Qatar asked how much Bangladesh wants. Then he was told that Bangladesh wants another MTA that means 16-17 containers. He said his energy minister would meet the Bangladesh PM to discuss it before she leaves Qatar. “I want to help you. Qatar will always come to help Bangladesh,” he was quoted as saying. Hasina invited the Emir of Qatar to visit Bangladesh and then Sheikh Tamim said he would visit Bangladesh this year.

The premier said Bangladesh is setting up 100 economic zones and different countries are making investment there. Qatar can also invest in those economic zones, she added. About the Bangladeshi workers in Qatar, Sheikh Hasina told the Qatar Emir to take care of them as some workers are losing their jobs here now. In response, Sheikh Tamim said he always wants the welfare of Bangladesh and Bengali people.

In a separate meeting with UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner at the Bilateral Meeting Room of the QNCC, the prime minister asked the UNDP to take lead so that the countries who are graduating from LDCs would not lose all international benefits entitled for LDCs at a time. She said those who are graduating from the LDCs are being punished by withdrawing all types of facilities and benefits. UNDP should do some processing so that the country will not lose all benefits at a time. “We should be rewarded for our good performance, but you are giving punishment. UNDP should take a lead,” the PM was quoted as telling him.

The UNDP administrator praised Bangladesh for its development, particularly the development of its rural economy and ensuring the urban facilities in the rural areas as well as its digitalisation. He said the way Sheikh Hasina is building digital and smart Bangladesh is becoming a new model. In a meeting with Secretary General of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Doreen Bogdan-Martin at the QNCC, PM Hasina sought technical assistance to ensure cyber security. Besides, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Rebeca Grynspan met the Bangladesh Prime Minister separately in the QNCC.

In the meeting, the PM sought support of the UNCTAD to expand and diversify the trade of Bangladesh, and raise the production capacity of the country. The PM also attended the LDC5 High-level Luncheon on Investment and partnership at the Exhibition Hall of QNCC.