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# Choked by Coal:

## The Carbon Catastrophe in Bangladesh

- Bangladesh has big plans to expand its power generation in the coming decades. One might expect the country's vulnerability to climate change impacts would mean power generation capacity is planned with low-carbon renewable energy - it is not. Bangladesh plans a massive increase of coal-fired power, the most greenhouse gas intensive form of fossil fuel electricity generation. This analysis explores these plans, the proponents behind the projects, necessary associated infrastructure and the potential impacts on community and climate.
- Bangladesh has at least 29 coal-fired power projects with a total capacity of 33,200 MW under construction and pre-construction. If all the proposed projects are built, the country's coal power capacity would increase by 63 times.
- It would cost Bangladesh an estimated US\$2 billion annually to import large volumes of coal to power the proposed coal plants. Unless exports increase significantly, this would add billions to a negative balance of trade, and lock in Bangladesh to costly coal imports for decades.
- Bangladesh has jumped to 6th place (from 12th) in the last three years in the global ranking of coal power capacity in 'active development', which includes coal plants in pre-construction and construction stages.
- All of Bangladesh's proposed coal projects are inconsistent with the Paris Agreement's climate goals of limiting global warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C. No room exists to build new coal power anywhere in the world.
- Annual emissions from the proposed coal plants would be 115 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>) by 2031, higher than the upper emissions estimate for the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline (110 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>-e per year).
- 4,600 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> would be emitted through the operating lifetime of Bangladesh's proposed coal plants. This is 20% greater than the lifetime emissions from all of the currently operating coal plants in Japan.
- Foreign countries are investing heavily in Bangladesh's coal power expansion. Entities domiciled in China represent the majority of the proposed coal power capacity - 18,000 MW across 15 projects. UK- and Japan-based companies are involved in three proposed coal projects each, with coal power capacity totalling 4,700 MW and 3,600 MW respectively.
- China and Japan have concentrated their investments in the ports and planned 'power hubs' at Payra and Matarbari. There is a heavy concentration of China-backed coal power and coal import infrastructure projects proposed at Payra. Meanwhile, Japan-backed pipeline coal plants and related infrastructure projects are prominent at Matarbari.
- Only 10% of the proposed coal plants have progressed to the construction phase. One such project, the 1,320 MW Rampal power plant continues to face mass public protest demanding a halt to its development as it threatens the World Heritage listed Sundarbans mangrove forest.
- A clean, sustainable energy future is possible for Bangladesh. Renewable energy can replace planned coal power projects as a lower cost alternative for electricity generation.