

## Environment-Friendly Method for Coal Mining: Tawfiq

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Prime minister's energy advisor Tawfiq-e-Elahi said on Sunday that the final draft of the national coal policy will be published by the end of the year after taking advice from specialists in the field.

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Whilst stating that various parallel steps are being taken to develop the energy sector, the advisor said, "The economy should not only depend on gas, we should look at alternative sources of energy."

Mentioning that the policy would be a modern one, he said, "There might be discussions in the parliamentary committee regarding this also."

Initiatives will be taken to extract coal through Coal Bed Methane (CBM) and Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) systems instead of the current open pit mining system, he added.

"Coal will be extracted by transforming it into gas in this process."

But open pit mining can be used in the northern part of the Barapukuria coal mine, said Elahi.

Stating that the underground water level is a big challenge for coal mining, he said that the Barapukuria mine was flooded and it took huge efforts to remove the water.

Taking that into consideration, CBM and UCG system will be used as a test project in Jamalganj coal mine in Joypuhat, he said.

Professor Badrul Imam of geology department at Dhaka University presented the key-note paper in the seminar.

He said that extracting coal is more complicated in Bangladesh in comparison to the other countries because of the soil structure and excess population.

"So, the environment will not be affected if coal is extracted by UCG system."

Mentioning that coal is being extracted commercially in Uzbekistan and South Africa in this process, he said that in UCG process, the coal is burnt into gas under the ground.

"The coal in Jamalganj is so deep underground that the burning will have no adverse effect on the surrounding area," said Imam.

Fuel and mine resources secretary Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Petrobangla chairman M Hossain Mansur and others also spoke at the seminar.

Source: bdnews24.com