

Staff Reporter The government on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Malaysia to set up 1320 (2 x660) MW coal-based power plant under joint venture between Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and a Consortium of Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) and Powertek Berhad (PB), Malaysia at Maheshkhali in Cox's Bazar. State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid and Special Envoy (Ministerial Rank) for Infrastructure to India and South Asia, Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Utama S Samy Vellu signed the MoU at a simple ceremony at Sonargaon Hotel in the evening. Finance minister AMA Muhith was present. Besides, BPDB Chairman Md Abduhu Ruhullah and Vice President of TNB Mohd Nazri Shahrudin and CEO of PB Ir Ong Peng Su signed another MoU on behalf of their respective sides. Finance Minister AMA Muhith spoke as the chief guest at the signing ceremony, chaired by Power Division Secretary Monwar Islam. PM's Adviser on Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Special Envoy (Ministerial Rank) for Infrastructure to India and South Asia, Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Utama S Samy Vellu, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid and Malaysian High Commissioner in Dhaka Norlin Othman spoke at the function. PDB chairman Abduhu Ruhullah gave the address of welcome. BPDB along with Malaysian consortium of TNB-PB will implement the project, '1320 (2x660) MW coal based thermal power plant' as a joint venture company. According to the Power Division, the project cost will be assessed during feasibility study where the debt would be 70-80 percent while equity 30-20 percent. The project will be implemented on Build, Own and Operate (BOO) basis by 2019 or later. Under the project, two 660 MW ultra super critical coal-based power plants will be built on 550 acres of land at Hetalia and Amabassaya Khali Union:Haonok under Maheshkhali upazila in Cox's Bazar. Imported coal with low sulphur, low moisture content and high calorific value will be used as fuel in the project, with 11,000 tons of coal needed per day. The potential coal sourcing countries for the project could be Indonesia, South Africa, Australia and Mozambique. Speaking as the chief guest, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the project would be implemented roughly by 2019 within a period of the next five years. Noting that extraction of coal resources is still a serious problem in the country, he hoped that the country would find a suitable technology in course of time for extraction of coal resources. Special Envoy (Ministerial Rank) for Infrastructure to India and South Asia, Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia Dato' Seri Utama S Samy Vellu said that he believed that after signing of the MoU, the Malaysian TNB-PB would move forward with more determination as this project will be implemented on government to government understanding. He said the Malaysian companies under the project would adhere strictly with the requirements set by the government of Bangladesh. "I would also like to ensure full support of the government of Malaysia in this noble endeavor."