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| **BD keen to import LNG from Algeria, boost bilateral trade**  Bangladesh expressed its keen interest in buying LNG from Algeria and to enhance efforts to boost cooperation for boosting bilateral trade and investment.  Bangladesh and Algeria also underscored the need to enhance efforts to boost cooperation for boosting bilateral trade and investment.  The consensus came when Minister of Finance and Head of Algerian delegation to BRICS Outreach Forum, Laaziz Faid, had a courtesy meeting with Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen on Wednesday in Johannesburg, South Africa.  Both the countries stressed the need for expanding cooperation in new and emerging areas through a time-bound and target-oriented roadmap and expediting pending agreements, memorandum of understandings (MoU), and new areas of collaboration, according a message issued from the Bangladesh Foreign Ministry in Dhaka on Thursday.  Algeria agreed to conclude those agreements as soon as possible, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday.  While reflecting on the current energy crisis, given the growing demand in Bangladesh due to the expansion of the economy, Bangladesh Foreign Minister stated that Bangladesh needs support from Algeria to meet its energy needs. He expressed Bangladesh's keen interest in buying LNG from Algeria.  The foreign minister and the Algerian finance minister exchanged views on various bilateral issues of mutual interests.  The foreign minister informed the long historical relations between both countries, which was pioneered by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.  He expressed satisfaction at the state of excellent bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Algeria, which is growing in various fields including political, economic, business, trade, and investment.  Momen informed him about Bangladesh's earnest interest in joining BRICS.  The Algerian finance minister referred to the NAM Summit of 1973 and defined BRICS as a fruit of NAM. Both parties agreed that despite excellent relations there are still huge untapped prospects between the countries.  Dr Momen requested the Algerian Finance Minister to expedite the process of completing the agreement on 'Reciprocal bilateral promotion and protection of investment' and 'Avoidance of double taxation'.  He also informed the Algerian Finance Minister about the socio-economic development and economic prospects.  UNB adds: Highlighting that Bangladeshi pharmaceuticals export to more than 100 countries, the Foreign Minister suggested that Algeria can import the best quality pharmaceutical products from Bangladesh at a reasonably low price.  Both countries may also start a joint venture on pharmaceuticals.  He also proposed cooperation in IT and ICT sectors, defence, construction sectors, edible oil, and agriculture. Both countries also agreed to hold high-level visits in the next year.  During the meeting, the Algerian Finance Minister said he would take up the issue with the concerned stakeholders.  Bangladesh Ambassador to Algeria and Foreign Ministry officials were also present during the meeting. |