

Smart Bangladesh: A Success Story

Ziaul Islam

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said, "Our goal is self-reliance. There is no doubt that international cooperation, sharing of resources and technology will reduce human suffering and facilitate our activities. The New World is a miracle. We have to believe in our own strength." In the past era, Bangladesh has also achieved great success in the technology sector, competing with developed countries. As the life of the people of Bangladesh has become easier due to the massive development in information technology, economically we have risen from a developing country to a middle income country.

Today's world is controlled by technology. The more technologically advanced a country is or is doing, the more advanced it is in global competition. Technology is changing the strategy of war. Nine of the top ten countries in global competition are China, Germany, USA, UK, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Israel and Singapore respectively. And in terms of per capita contribution, the top ICT services exporter is Ireland. Then Luxembourg, Singapore, Cyprus, Israel, Sweden, Finland, Bermuda, Belgium and the Netherlands respectively. The overall environment of Bangladesh is quite favorable for advancement in the ICT sector. The education rate of Bangladesh has gradually increased in the last decade.

Bangladesh today is a 'development wonder' in the whole world. Today we will know this story of changing Bangladesh. Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has elevated the country to a wonderful height by implementing the modern form of 'Digital Bangladesh', the dream of the greatest Bengali, the father of the Bengali nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. 'Skilled human resource development' in the IT sector, 'Ensuring internet connectivity for all at an affordable price', 'Delivering government digital services to the doorsteps of the people at low cost and in a short time' and 'Development of the IT industry' - basically these four were the main foundations for the implementation of Digital Bangladesh.

In the last 14 years, 2 million youths have been employed in the IT sector. Where only 1 megabyte of internet cost 78 thousand taka, today it is available for only two hundred taka. This facility is extended not only to Dhaka city but also to the union of low cost high speed internet. More than two thousand services have been digitized so that common people can get the services they need at convenient time, place and medium. As a result of creating an environment conducive to the development of the IT industry, the export earnings in this sector stood at 1.5 billion US dollars. Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has once again dreamed to continue the development and progress of Bangladesh. This year's dream is to build a high income developed, innovative smart Bangladesh by 2041. According to the Smart Bangladesh 2041 concept, the dream Smart Bangladesh will stand on four pillars: Smart Citizen, Smart Economy, Smart Government and Smart Social System.

Smart Citizen: Every citizen of Smart Bangladesh will be intelligent, skilled, innovative, creative, progressive, patriotic with a non-sectarian spirit and problem solving mindset. There will be blended learning and digital curriculum to develop citizens' skills. Citizens capable of using smart devices will have a universal ID to access all types of services. Citizens will participate responsibly in the creation of all types of services and policy-making processes at the national level through e-participation.

Smart Economy: Smart Bangladesh economy will be cashless, knowledge based, innovation oriented, inclusive and of course 100% secure. Centers of excellence will be developed for innovation and research in artificial intelligence/machine learning, cyber security, robotics, semi-conductors, electric vehicles, etc. By 2041, the average per capita income of the citizens will stand at 12 thousand 500 US dollars and the poverty rate will fall to zero.

Smart Government: The basic concept of smart government system will be “Government where it is needed”. The government cannot be seen but the government will always be with the citizen with all its services. The characteristics of a smart government system will be citizen-centric, transparent, accountable, paperless, data-driven, integrated and automated. Through the use of frontier technology, essential sectors including agriculture, health, education, land management, transportation will become completely smart and certainly citizen-friendly.

Smart Society: Smart society will be culturally rich, knowledge-based, technology-based, tolerant and collaborative. An inclusive society will ensure equal participation in all kinds of opportunities for every citizen irrespective of caste, religion, age, occupation, social status, physical ability. Digitally skilled and connected citizens will collectively build a developed, happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

The astonishing advancement of technology in the country is now fully visible. Most government services are now at doorsteps. Smart society is no longer a dream. The developed Bangladesh of 2041 will be the golden Bangladesh of the father of the nation's dream of poverty-stricken and globalized. The current government is working towards this goal.

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