**Bangladesh: From Bottomless Basket To South Asian Economic Miracle**

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Bangladesh has achieved enviable success in various fields, including poverty alleviation, expansion of education, development of women, reduction of child and maternal mortality rate. Bangladesh is moving forward along the highway of development. The UN has recognised Bangladesh as a developing country. Initiatives have been taken for the construction of the Bangabandhu Tunnel; the construction of a deep seaport at Maheshkhali; the establishment of 100 economic zones across the country, including Bangabandhu Industrial City at Mirsarai.

Electricity has now reached every house in the country. There has been a wonderful success in the production of paddy, fruits, and fish. Bangladesh has become one of the ideal countries in the world for the success of child immunization programs.

Digital Bangladesh has set an example to the world by making the dream a reality.

Unprecedented success in the agricultural sector has been repeatedly discussed in the world court. Bangladesh has already become a model for the rest of the world in the areas of intensive integrated management of natural disasters, utilisation of micro-credit, and success in poverty alleviation, afforestation, positive changes in social and economic indicators. According to the 2020 index, Bangladesh is now the 41st largest economy in the world. Bangladesh will be the 25th largest economy in the world by 2035, according to a report released by the Center for

Economic and Business Research in the World League Table 2021. According to the report, if the current trend of development continues, in the next 15 years, Bangladesh will be ranked 25th among 198 countries in the world.

That Bangladesh was once neglected, impoverished; the Bangladesh that was ridiculed by the western world as a “bottomless basket.”

As a result of the visionary, efficient, creative, and courageous leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh is a wonder of the world today and a role model of development. Bangladesh, which once suffered from identity problems, is now known all over the world because of tremendous economic success.

The dream of “Golden Bengal” is being realised today by transforming the country into a digital Bangladesh.

Bangladesh, which started its journey empty-handed, now sends satellites into space, building the Padma Bridge with its own money. The country that started its journey by holding hand standing on the rubble, after going through many ups and downs, Bangladesh is now a wonder in the eyes of the world. The dream of “Golden Bengal” is being realised today by transforming the country into a digital Bangladesh, from a least developed to a developing country, and turning a food-deficient country into a food-surplus country.

Bangladesh is now one of the top five fast-developing countries. A hundred-year-old plan called the “Bangladesh Delta Plan” has been adopted to achieve the desired development by tackling the adverse effects of climate change. Bangladesh is moving forward at a relentless pace on the path of implementation of Vision-2021 and 2041. The establishment of Bangladesh’s sovereignty over the sea has opened the door to the potential of a blue economy. About 131098 square kilometres of sea area have been added to the border of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has entered the era of space science by launching Bangabandhu Satellite-1. Despite hundreds of conspiracies, most of the work on the Padma Bridge has been completed with its own funds. The construction of a 2,400-megawatt nuclear power plant at Rooppur in Pabna is progressing fast.

Landscaping development is being achieved through the construction of four-lane, six-lane, and eight-lane national highways, flyovers, metro rails, elevated expressways, marine drives, various important bridges, Bangabandhu Tunnel. Initiatives have been taken to set up electric- powered bullet trains on Dhaka-Khulna, Dhaka-Rajshahi, Dhaka-Chittagong-Cox’s Bazar routes.

Chittagong port has been modernised. Economic activities have increased in Patuakhali with the commencement of Pigeon Seaport. With more than 90 million Internet users, 4G mobile technology, machine-readable passports, online test results publication and admission process, the introduction of e-tenders, the introduction of digital service centres at the union level, e-commerce, etc., Digital Bangladesh is no longer a dream, but a reality.

Bangladesh now ranks second in the world in garment exports, third in freshwater fish production, third in vegetable production, fourth in rice production, seventh in potato production, ninth in mango production, and 10th in food grain production. The standard of living of marginalized people has been ensured through old age allowance, widow allowance, shelter scheme, one house one farm, distress allowance, and social security.

100 special economic zones have been established to attract industrialisation and foreign investment. The closed jute mills and textile mills have been reopened. The government is adamant in its zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and militancy. The international community has lauded Bangladesh’s efforts to curb terrorism and militancy. Bangladesh ranks 50th out of 153 countries in the Gender Gap Index and seventh in women’s political empowerment. Work is underway to build 100 special economic zones, more than two dozen high-tech parks, and IT villages across the country.

Bangladesh has a strong diplomatic position in South Asia. Other countries are following Bangladesh in tackling the impact of climate change. Bangladesh could not be kept under control even in the global epidemic of coronavirus.  Bangladesh is first in South Asia and 20th in the world in its ability to corona. Disaster management, climate change mitigation, women’s empowerment, social security provisions, highly effective Covid-19 control, and the provision of vaccines to the people, leaving many developed countries behind, are exemplary for the world.

Today, the benefits of Digital Bangladesh in the development journey of Bangladesh have spread from cities to villages. Broadband facilities are being extended to remote villages. Bangladesh has made four steps forward in the Economist Intelligence Unit’s (EIU) Democracy Index-2020. With a score of 5.99, Bangladesh ranks 76th among 165 countries and two regions in the index. Bhutan is ranked 84th, Nepal 92nd, and Pakistan 105th. The progress and position of today’s Bangladesh in various indicators, including socio-economic-infrastructural development is a role model for different countries of the world.

Bangladesh was upgraded from a low-income to a low-middle income country on July 1, 2015, according to the World Bank. Bangladesh comes in this list due to continuous improvement in per capita income growth.

Nobel laureate Indian economist Amartya Sen wrote in his book “India: Development and Deprivation” that no one thought that Bangladesh would move faster on the path of social development. After the independence of the country, many said then, the future of Bangladesh is dark. Some have called it a “basket case” and put it on the spending list, saying the country should not be given any economic aid. Because that population will not be able to produce food on par with the explosion. He further said that Bangladesh is not only doing much better than

India in many well-established standards of living, it has also come a long way. Bangladesh has surpassed India in many social indicators, such as average life expectancy, infant mortality rate, vaccination rate, traditional fertility rate, and even some measures of schooling. The whole world is now considering Bangladesh as a “role model” of development. Development researchers consider today’s Bangladesh as a “role model for development” in South Asia.

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