

Smart Bangladesh: Vision Towards 2041

“We will build Bangladesh as a developed and prosperous country by 2041. That Bangladesh will be a Smart Bangladesh. We will transform into Smart Bangladesh from the digital one.”-Prime minister Sheikh Hasina

The successful implementation of the ‘Digital Bangladesh’ encouraged the government to set the new target of building an innovative and knowledge-based ‘SMART Bangladesh’ coinciding with the ‘Vision-2041’ meant to turn Bangladesh into a developed country. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said **“Smart Bangladesh to be built by 2041:”**

Smart Bangladesh:

“Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041 is about more than a futuristic Bangladesh, more than 5G internet, more than 100% smartphone penetration, more than 100% high-speed internet penetration, more than going cashless.”-a2i.gov.bd

“Smart Bangladesh” is a term that refers to the use of technology and innovative approaches to improve the lives of people and the overall development of the country. In this context, “smart” refers to the use of advanced technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and data analytics, to improve various aspects of society, such as healthcare, education, transportation, and governance.

Smart Bangladesh is a vision and policy of the Government of Bangladesh to build a digitally enabled, smarter country including more sustainable development.

Pillars of Smart Bangladesh:



The "Smart Bangladesh" ecosystem will stand on four key pillars – "Smart Citizen", "Smart Government", "Smart Society" and "Smart Economy". Smart Bangladesh is the next major step towards realizing Bangabandhu's dream of **“Shonar Bangladesh”**. The idea of ‘Smart Bangladesh’ is premised upon four pillars i.e.

1. Making smart citizens,
2. Ensuring a smart government,
3. Running a smart economy,
4. And creating a smart society.

SMART BANGLADESH-2041

Smart Bangladesh aims at integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into every sector of life including transportation, agriculture, etc.



These pillars aim to create a comprehensive digital ecosystem that leverages technology to improve the quality of life for citizens and drive economic growth. The pillars include:

1. Smart Citizens:

Smart Citizens are individuals who leverage technology and innovation to enhance their lives and the lives of those around them. They are proactive in using digital technologies, such as mobile devices and the internet, to access information, engage with their communities, and improve their quality of life. Smart citizens are also active participants in the digital economy, using technology to access services, connect with businesses, and make informed decisions. They use online platforms and mobile apps to shop, manage their finances, and participate in the sharing economy.

2. Smart Government:

Smart Government is an approach to public administration that leverages technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government services. It aims to create a more connected and transparent government, by using data and technology to streamline processes, enhance service delivery, and engage citizens in the decision-making process. By leveraging technology, Smart Government can provide citizens with easy access to information and services, enhancing their engagement with the government and making it easier for them to participate in the decision-making process.

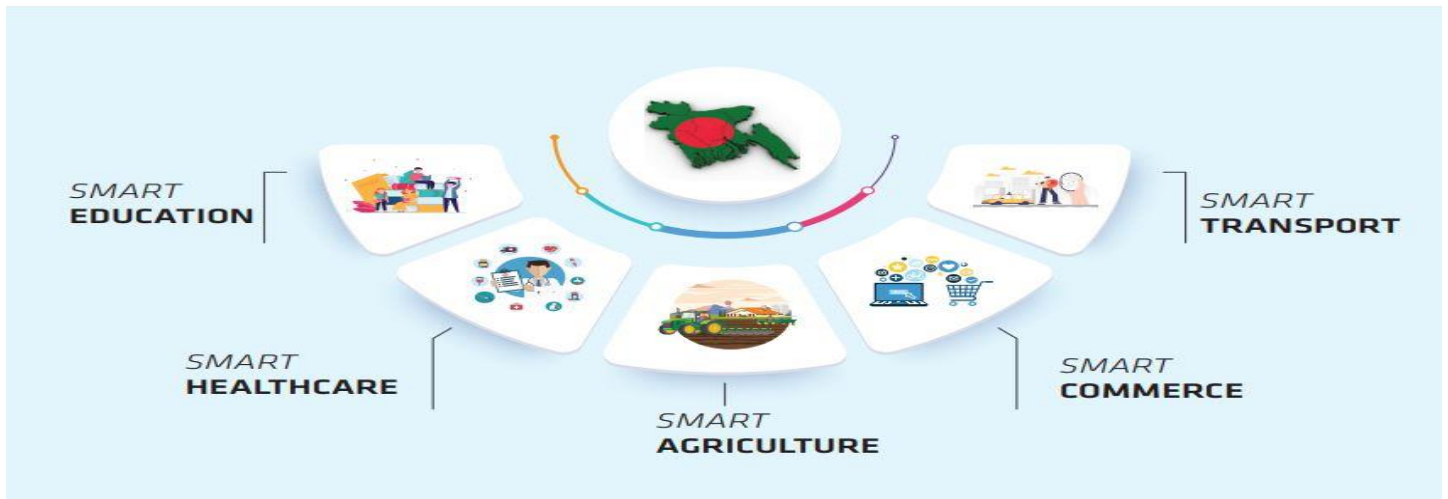
3. Smart Economy:

Smart Economy is an economic system that leverages technology and innovation to drive economic growth and development. It is characterized by a focus on digital transformation, data-driven decision making, and a shift towards a more knowledge-based and sustainable economy.

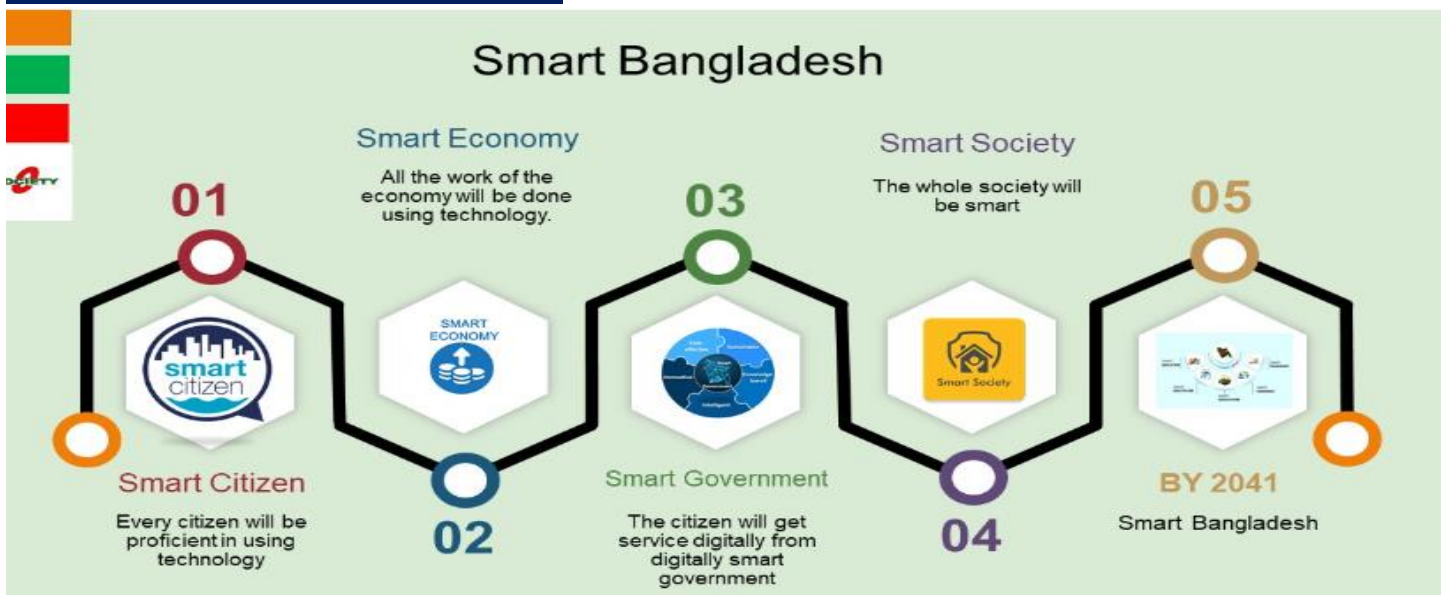
Smart Economy emphasizes the use of digital technologies, such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of economic processes. By leveraging technology, businesses can automate manual processes, reduce operational costs, and increase their competitiveness.

4. Smart Society:

Smart Society is a concept that describes a society that leverages technology and innovation to improve the quality of life for its citizens. It aims to create a more connected, inclusive, and sustainable society, where technology and data are used to address social and environmental challenges. By leveraging technology, Smart Society can improve access to services, reduce costs, and increase transparency and accountability.



Action Plans for Smart Bangladesh-2041



“**Inclusive Digital Transformation to Build a Developed and Prosperous Country by 2041**” with this farsighted visionary slogan Bangladesh is moving forward to vision 2041. “**Vision 2041**” is a strategic plan to transform Bangladesh into a developed country by 2041, which marks the 70th anniversary of Bangladesh’s independence. To achieve this goal, the government of Bangladesh has developed the “**Action Plans for Smart Bangladesh-2041,**” which outlines several key initiatives and strategies that will enable the country to become a developed and prosperous nation. Here are some of the key action plans that are part of the “**Action Plans for Smart Bangladesh-2041**”:

1. Setting up Bangladesh as a knowledge-based economy and innovative nation.
2. Self-employment-based training activities to build an inclusive digital society.
3. Setting up Digital Leadership Academy to build a smart government.
4. Setting up Interactive School for Start-up Educators.
5. Preparing enterprise-based businesses as investment-friendly start-ups so that SME sector contributes more on GDP.
6. Launching Bangladesh Knowledge Development Park.
7. Founding Center for Learning Innovation and Creation of Knowledge (CLICK).
8. Founding Agency for Knowledge on Aeronautical and Space Horizon.
9. Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship Development (SED) Platforms.

10. Generating government service and infrastructure-based entrepreneurs in the Service Aggregator Training (SAT) model.
11. Bringing all digital services to a centrally integrated cloud.
12. Initiating Data Security Act, Innovation Design and Entrepreneurship Academy (IDEA) Act.
13. Digital Service Act, Agency for Knowledge on Aeronautical and Space Horizon Law, and Digital Leader initiative.

Initiatives taken by the Government of Bangladesh:

“Digital connectivity will be the key tool to build Smart Bangladesh”-HPM Sheikh Hasina

There are a number of initiatives and projects underway in Bangladesh that the government has implemented or plans to implement to develop digital connectivity as well as to achieve the goals of Smart Bangladesh.

- **Making Smart Citizens:** With a view to creating smart citizens Bangladesh is committed to ensuring one hundred percent internet connectivity. At a conservative estimate, about 50 million social media users and 165 million mobile subscribers have made the country the fifth largest mobile market in Asia and Pacific and the ninth largest in the world. It is exciting to know that Bangladesh is on the verge of linking up with the third submarine cable by which we will be able to use 12 terabytes of internet bandwidth and turn ourselves into smart citizens.
- **Ensuring a smart government:** Bangladesh has also achieved a significant breakthrough in E-governance which has been recognised by World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). MyGov is a platform that offers a variety of solutions, accelerating the digitization of government services. The website for the Bangladesh National Portal, which houses more than 51,528 government offices under one roof. National Helpline 333 is a special helpline that anyone can use to get information and request services. The practice of e-governance can be further improved by effective application of communication and information technology. It will help to make a smart government.
- **Building a Smart Economy:** Bangladesh has taken numerous initiatives to build a smart economy by creating skilled and digital-ready workforce and technology-supported trade and commerce. Currently, more than 120 companies in Bangladesh are exporting ICT products worth nearly \$1.3 billion to 35 countries and it is expected to rise to \$5 billion by 2025. The government is committed to offering large-scale ICT-based employment (3 million), ensuring a hundred percent of online services, establishing 300 more Schools of Future, 190,000 Wi-Fi connections, and 25,000 digital labs. The sustained growth of the ICT Industry will make a substantial contribution to Bangladesh's transformation into a smart economy by 2041.
- Creation of a smart society
- Expanding access to affordable and reliable broadband internet.
- Promoting digital literacy and skills development.
- Encouraging the use of ICT in various sectors.
- Building smart cities and smart villages.
- Developing a digital infrastructure.
- Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship.

By implementing these initiatives and programs, the government hopes to create a more connected, efficient, and sustainable society in Bangladesh, and drive economic growth and development in the country.

Challenges towards building a "Smart Bangladesh":

The main obstacles are:

- The main challenges towards building a "Smart Bangladesh" are formulating proper policies and integrating government and academic entities and service providers.

- When robotics takes over the operations of industries and other service sectors, the reskilling of people employed there to take up other jobs is very important, since many will lose jobs due to automation.
- We need smart homes, smart rural and urban management, smart villages. A lot of things need to be done to get these things implemented.
- The posts and telecommunications and ICT divisions are different entities. It is not possible to move forward to Smart Bangladesh without collaboration between them.
- Ensuring digital security will be a big challenge for Smart Bangladesh.
- Lack of IoT-supportive internet connectivity.
- Lack of IoT-skilled human resources.
- Lack of availability of smart home assistant appliances and compatible services.
- Lack of power resources.
- Lack of financial support.
- Bureaucratic complexity.
- Overpopulation problem in our country.
- Poor communication system.
- Inadequacy of modern education system.

Necessary steps for implementing Smart Bangladesh: (Recommendations)

- In order to implement 'Smart Bangladesh', short, medium and long-term planning should be adopted and necessary measures should be taken to implement it, legislation and technical infrastructure should be created and steps and directions should be taken forward with transparency for its implementation at all levels.
- It is important to create human resources who are science-minded, technology-friendly, used to using technology and skilled in innovating new technologies. That population must be humane and creative.
- It will be possible to achieve success if we connect hardware, software and human ware to build smart city, smart village and above all smart Bangladesh. Otherwise, even with all the technology, its proper use will not be possible.
- Digital connectivity should be the highway to build a smart Bangladesh. The entire country should be covered by technology through digital connectivity.
- Development of health services, agriculture and education in the construction of smart cities and smart villages, if the connectivity facilities (5G) can be used, the goal of building a smart Bangladesh will be easier. Developing smart city connectivity apps for all in cities and villages separately, through which all citizens can easily access civic services. Must be able to control and manage this app by mobile phone.
- Implementation of Smart Cities and Smart Villages –smart transportation, smart hospitals, independent city administration, public safety, agricultural internet, digital connectivity and disaster management need to be ensured.
- One of the components of Smart Village is Smart Agriculture. Using nanotechnology and AI for smart agriculture, it will be possible to determine how much fertilizer and medicine is needed on a given plot of land. So that production can be doubled at low cost. Achieving food self-sufficiency will not be possible without modern agricultural systems and there is no alternative to smart agriculture.

**"Digital Bangladesh is now a reality. Our next target is to build Smart Bangladesh and Smart Nation."-
PM Sheikh Hasina.**

In a rapidly developing world, Bangladesh is working to establish itself as a leader in the global economy to compete on the international stage. To do this, Bangladesh is investing in new technologies and infrastructure, improving education and training, and promoting entrepreneurship. By investing in its people and infrastructure, Bangladesh can become a leading nation in South Asia and a major player in the global market within the shortest possible time.