

## **The Role of Bangladesh on the World Stage for the last 50 years : A Phoenix From the Ashes**

After decades of British and Pakistani colonial exploitation, Bangladesh inherited a poverty-stricken broken economy. From 'a basket case', it has risen like a robust Phoenix of Greek Mythology. The country has set astonishing examples for the world in moving forward overcoming endless hurdles. For the last 50 years, Bangladesh has managed to set commendable achievements in the world, in spite of beginning its journey amid severe catastrophe.

Bangladesh started its journey with a budget of only 786 crore whereas the current proposed budget is 6,036,810 million BDT, being 7680 times higher than the first one. Setting an overwhelming example for the world, Bangladesh has overcome the catastrophic challenge and earned the eligibility to upgrade from [Least Developed Country \(LDC\)](#) by 2026. The country has met all the three eligibility criteria for LDC graduation involving income per capita, human assets, and economic and environmental vulnerability.

When the whole world was facing economic downfall in 2020, Bangladesh managed a [5.24% growth](#). In FY'2021, its average per capita income stood at \$2,227, higher than India's \$1,947. Bangladesh has ranked 24th out of 53 economies in the world and the economic performance of the country amid the pandemic has been recognised by the [Bloomberg's COVID-19 resilience ranking](#). The government's [mass vaccination programme and success in vaccine diplomacy](#) have marked its headway. According to Bangladesh Health Minister Zahid Maleque, "So far, 9 crore vaccine doses have been administered and the government aims to administer 6 crore more doses by January next year". Moreover, homegrown vaccine of Bangladesh [Bangavax](#) has received permission to start human trials.

Bangladesh has set an outstanding example for the world by [utilizing](#) its large [manpower](#). Seven million [Bangladeshi expatriate labour force](#) is dispersed all over the world, particularly in different countries in the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia. Though the country was facing decline in remittance inflow at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has managed to overcome the hurdles with time. Making itself the [eighth largest remittance](#) earner in the year, Bangladesh ensured increment of 39% remittance inflow to \$20 billion in the July-April period of the fiscal year 2020-21 than the previous year.

According to the recent provisional data released by the Export Promotion Bureau, the [Readymade Garments Exports](#) from Bangladesh has increased by 11.48% than the previous fiscal year. The real marvel lies in the fact that with apparel export earnings of \$15.91 billion, Bangladesh [reclaimed](#) its second position as RMG products exporters [from Vietnam](#) during the January-June period of 2021. (TextileToday, 2021) The RMG sector of Bangladesh is in the good books of the international brands since it offers huge [manpower and labor with lower price](#) than other existing countries. Besides, the country is improving the working conditions and environment of the RMG

factories. [Seven industrial units](#) of Bangladesh have ranked among [the top 10 on a list of the world's 25 most environment-friendly factories](#) winning international applauds.

Moreover, Bangladesh has established a women centric workforce of [60-70%](#) women ensuring [women participation](#) in economic activities and empowerment. Global Forum of Development and UN Women have recognised the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, with the “[Agent of Change](#)” award and “[Planet 50-50 Champion](#)” honor for the exemplary contribution of Bangladesh in women empowerment.

Bangladesh has alleviated poverty and taken social protection initiatives through [good governance](#). The government has run successful Social [Safety Net Programs](#) itself and [GO-NGO collaboration](#). Bangladesh made economic and social breakthrough by coming up with concept of [microcredit](#). Nobel laureate Mohammad Yunus, nicknamed “[the banker to the poor](#)”, is the pioneer of microcredit and founded Grameen Bank (community development) in 1977 in order to facilitate access to capital among disadvantaged sections of Bangladesh's population. The fact that the poor can be given loan from a bank was [alien](#) to the world until Mohammad Yunus came up with his innovation. Bangladesh's microcredit framework has been [replicated](#) in numerous developing and underdeveloped countries.

Among the 8 targets of [MDG \(Millennium Development Goals\)](#), Bangladesh has successfully achieved [6 goals](#). Bangladesh received the UN award for its remarkable achievements in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) particularly in reducing [child mortality](#). With the success of MDG, the country has started its journey towards [Sustainable Development Goal](#) with 17 integrated targets with an aim to bring life-changing 'zeros', including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls.

Having deployed a total of 6,731 peacekeepers to the UN peacekeeping operations, Bangladesh is the top country in sending troops in the United Nations' peacekeeping missions. So far, [1,63,887 peacekeepers](#) from Bangladesh have participated in the 54 missions out of the total 69 UN peace missions in 40 different countries. In 2017, Bangladesh sent two female combat pilots to the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([MONUSCO](#)) – Flight Lieutenant Nayma Haque and Flight Lieutenant Tamanna-E-Lutfi. Moreover, MINUSTAH, an [all-female Bangladeshi Formed Police Unit](#) served with the UN mission from 2015 until October 2017 in Haiti. Recognising Bangladeshi peacekeeper, South Sudan has built ' [Bangladesh Road](#) ' in its capital Juba.

In an era when many rich nations have tried to stop the entry of Rohingya refugees, Bangladesh opened its border for 7 lakhs refugees in 2017. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina welcomed the [Rohingya refugees](#) remarking, " [We have the ability to feed 160 million people of Bangladesh and we have enough food security to feed the 700,000 refugees](#)" The Prime Minister has received two international awards, the [IPS International Achievement Award](#) and the [2018](#)

[Special Distinction Award for Leadership](#), for the humanitarian and responsible policy of Bangladesh in hosting the Rohingyas and taking active action in the international refugee crisis.

Bangladesh has achieved historic success by resolving the [longstanding border dispute with India](#), establishing successful geopolitics and diplomacy. By means of the [2015 Land Boundary Agreement \(LBA\)](#), the 51 Bangladeshi enclaves (*chitmahals*) in India and 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh stood physically transferred to the other country with effect from the midnight of 31 July 2015, bringing joy and [civil rights](#) to the people of the enclaves.

Bangladesh also achieved tremendous success when the longstanding [maritime dispute between Bangladesh and Myanmar](#) came to an end after the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea gave its final verdict on 14 March 2012. The tribunal also awarded Bangladesh a 12-mile territorial sea around [St. Martin's Island](#), overruling Myanmar's argument that it should be divided in half. The procedure began back in October 2009 when Bangladesh eventually brought the issue before the international tribunal, having exhausted attempts to reach a bilateral agreement, causing Bangladesh to emerge victorious. (EastAsiaForum, 2012)

Apart from geopolitics, the country is also commended worldwide for its role in innovation and technology. Bangladesh has won the world's most prestigious award "[World Summit on Information Society \(WSIS\) Prize-2018](#)" in ICT sector for fifth time in a row for two innovative projects of a2i. Moreover, the 'EkSheba' platform of a2i has won the Award of Merit at the 18th prestigious Asia Pacific ICT Alliance APICTA Award 2018, bringing glory for the country's commendable advancement.

While developed countries have spent millions of dollars in research to prevent the rampant use of polythene and plastic in order to protect the environment, Bangladeshi scientist Dr. Mubarak Ahmad Khan's innovation - [Sonali Bag](#) - has taken the world by storm. Bangladesh has facilitated the campaign against [climate change](#) to the next level with its invention of [100 percent biodegradable](#) and eco-friendly Sonali Bags as the [substitute for polythene bags](#).

The country has also overwhelmed the world since Bangladeshi scientist Maqsoodul Alam, a professor of the University of Hawaii, who earlier decoded the [genome of papaya](#) in the US and [rubber plant](#) in Malaysia, led from the forefront in [sequencing the jute genome](#). This gene sequencing helped the researchers to improve the fibre length and quality, including colours and strength; and to develop high yielding of jute.

Bangladesh has ensured exemplary achievements in creating a [gender inclusive nation](#). On the one hand, it has women gold medalists, [karateists Marzan Akter Priya and Humaira Akhter Antara](#), bringing immense glory for the country in the 13th South Asian Games in Kathmandu in 2019. On

the other, [Tashnuva Anan Shishir](#), first-ever transgender woman news presenter on a television channel in Bangladesh, is receiving worldwide recognitions.

The journey of Bangladesh for the past 50 years from its birth may seem like a great mythological story where the Phoenix rises from the ashes being stronger and greater. Bangladesh is the country which was born with the [annihilation of its greatest intellectual minds](#). The nation suffered immensely for the barbaric massacre of 14th December 1971 yet it managed to achieve prosperity and glory on the international stage. These achievements of Bangladesh depicts the tremendous potential and willpower of the nation, inspiring other countries of the world for upcoming development.

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