

Bangladesh

1. Industrial strategy (including objectives/goals)

State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) play an important role in Bangladesh's economic development.

Bangladesh is experiencing industrial growth, which has contributed to the increase in its GDP and economic development. The Bangladesh Industrial Policy 2016 has been the guiding framework to enhance the country's industrial sector. The Policy promotes inclusivity, sustainability, and modernization.

Bangladesh has also initiated the National Industrial Policy 2021, which focuses on the Fourth Industrial Revolution by integrating digital technologies into industries to increase productivity and efficiency. It focuses on sector-wise productivity. The policy aims at benefitting from technological advances to enhance the quality of manufactured materials. The contribution of the industrial sector to the GDP has increased from 36.92 percent in the fiscal year 2021-22 to 37.56 percent in 2022-23. The policy aims to increase the contribution of the industrial sector to the GDP to 40% by 2027.¹

Key components of the policy include:

- Integration of digital technologies to industries to maximize better quality goods, enhance productivity and efficiency.
- Expansion of export oriented and labour intensive industries.
- Diversification of the industrial base with an emphasis on shifting from a dominant reliance on the garment sector to other manufacturing sectors.
- Infrastructure development through investment in physical infrastructure, particularly in power, transport, and logistics, to facilitate industrial growth. The Padma Bridge project is a major infrastructure development project aimed at enhancing connectivity.²
- Attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through various incentives to attract FDI in priority sectors, including tax holidays and exemptions from customs duties.

¹ Bangladesh Ministry of Industry, 'Policies' (2023) <https://moind.gov.bd/site/view/policies/Policies> accessed 16 October 2024.

² 'PADMA MULTIPURPOSE BRIDGE PROJECT' <<http://www.padmabridge.gov.bd/>> accessed 16 October 2024.

- Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through special initiatives. Aim is to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs by improving their access to finance and technology.³

Bangladesh's industrial policy has the following key objectives:

- Growth of the industrial sector (both products and services).
- Focus on expanding exports.
- Removing infrastructural barriers and investing in infrastructural development.
- Building a social security system.
- Development of human resources.
- Enhanced production capacity and quality of industrialized products.
- Economic diversification by reducing dependence on the ready-made garment sector.
- Creation of jobs and entrepreneurs through the expansion of industrialization.
- Sustainable industrial growth through environmentally sustainable practices aligned with climate commitments, such as the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100.
- Addressing regional imbalances by promoting industrial growth in underdeveloped areas through special economic zones (SEZs) and export processing zones (EPZs).
- Participation of the private sector in economic development.
- Developing green industry⁴

2. Digital (Development) Strategy

The Digital Bangladesh Vision 2021 aims to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy through digital technologies.⁵ The Digital Bangladesh initiative was introduced in 2009 with the objective of transforming Bangladesh into a digital economy by 2021 and a knowledge-based economy by 2041. Many initiatives to establish a digital Bangladesh by 2021 have already been put into action. The primary aim of this program is to digitize government services.

The four key pillars of Digital Bangladesh are:

- Human Resource Development

³ Ibid; See also 'Finance Division, Ministry of Finance' <<https://mof.portal.gov.bd/site/page/28ba57f5-59ff-4426-970a-bf014242179e/http%3A%2F%2Fmof.portal.gov.bd%2Fsite%2Fpage%2F28ba57f5-59ff-4426-970a-bf014242179e%2FBangladesh-Economic-Review-2024>> accessed 17 October 2024.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Anupam Mazumdar and Husam Helmi Alharahsheh, 'Digital Bangladesh – Vision 2021: What Is the Digital Bangladesh Concept?' (2020) 02 South Asian Research Journal of Engineering and Technology 6 <https://sarpublishation.com/media/articles/SARJET_21_6-9.pdf> accessed 20 October 2024.

- Connecting Citizens
- Digital Government
- Promotion of the ICT Industry

The 'Vision 2041' framework has been established as a continuation of 'Vision 2021' to drive the nation's development aspirations. Key digital services include e-commerce, e-banking, e-education, e-books, e-voting, e-health services, e-filing, e-mutation, and e-paper, among others. The Perspective Plan 2021-2041 has been developed to transform the policies and programs outlined in Vision 2041 into actionable development strategies.⁶

3. Main Constitutional Provisions

The constitution of Bangladesh guarantees its citizens' the right to work and the freedom of enterprise, committing the state to promote social justice and economic development (preamble and Article 10). It includes provisions aimed at protecting labor rights (Articles 11, 20 and 34) and ensuring fair trade practices.⁷

4. Main Regulatory Provisions and Policy Developments

Key legal frameworks that regulate industrial activities in Bangladesh include:

- Cyber Security Act 2023 (Repealed the National Digital Security Laws Act 2018)
- The Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006. Amended in 2008 and 2013
- Telecommunications Act 2001
- One Stop Service Act 2018
- National Skills Development Authority Act 2018
- The Companies Bangladesh Act 1994
- The Bangladesh Industrial Relations Act 2010
- The Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority Act 1980⁸

⁶ 'Vision 2021 and Vision 2041 – Bangladesh High-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA)' <<https://new.bhtpa.gov.bd/vision-2021-and-vision-2041-2/>> accessed 20 October 2024.

⁷ 'The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh' <<http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-367.html>> accessed 20 October 2024.

⁸ Bangladesh Ministry of Industry, 'Laws and Regulations' (2023) <https://moind.gov.bd/site/page/bd61e6f6-1c07-44ef-ae73-cd46e4c55b41/Laws-&-Regulations> accessed 16 October 2024; see Bangladesh Ministry of Commerce, 'Laws and Regulations' (2023) <https://mincom.gov.bd/site/view/law/Law-and-Regulations> accessed 16 October 2024; see also About Ministry of Commerce, 'Law, Rules and Policies' (*Bangladesh Trade Portal*) <<https://www.bangladeshtradeportal.gov.bd/index.php?r=site/display&id=1086>> accessed 20 October 2024.

Policy developments that regulate industrial activities:

- National Blockchain Strategy: Bangladesh 2020
- National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence Bangladesh 2020
- National Internet of Things Strategy Bangladesh 2020
- Strategy to Promote Microprocessor Design Capacity in Bangladesh
- Data Center Guide 2020 (Bangla)
- National Digital Commerce Policy 2020
- One Stop Service (Bangladesh Investment Development Authority) Rules 2020
- National Industrial Policy 2021
- National Skills Development Policy 2020
- Import Policy Order 2021-2024 (Bangla)
- Export Policy 2021-2024 (Bangla)⁹

5. (Regional) Economic Treaties to Which the State is a Signatory

Bangladesh is a signatory to several regional economic treaties, including the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA). It has also signed bilateral investment treaties (BITs) with multiple countries.¹⁰

6. Plurilaterals

Bangladesh participates in plurilateral agreements that focus on enhancing trade cooperation such as BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).¹¹

7. Proceedings Initiated Against the State, or by It, Before International Forums

N/A

Amna Zaman (Last Updated 13 December 2024)

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ 'WTO | Regional Trade Agreements' <<http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicMaintainRTAHome.aspx>> accessed 20 October 2024.

¹¹ *ibid.*