

What's all this about

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progress by how much change it is making; how new policies and approaches are being introduced to make investment easier, execution of law smoother, judiciary stronger, innovation superior. While making those policies are a good starting point, the real test is how they are executed and how real changes are made through them. I was very impressed with the approach of the Indonesian government upon hearing the story of how their Prime Minister is trying to re-define the role of senior officials in the bureaucracy. He feels that the job of senior officials is not to get just get work done following an existing procedure or law—any junior staff can do this much. Their real job is to change the process to deliver better results and make it easier for people to pursue their goals. When these type of approaches begin to bring tangible results, people will talk about them and share those stories. Thus, the story of authentic transformation begins to shape the new narrative of a nation.

The second and more powerful aspect of nation branding involves is how it affects a nation's own people. Maintaining the image of a service like airlines is much more complex as it is not the new aircraft or the meal but the experience of the entire travel which helps shape the brand image. And it is people, every single individual of the airline service, and how they manage every single aspect of the journey that makes the key difference. Now imagine how many dimensions actually shape the experience created by a country—almost too many to manage. But there is one common thread in that rich complex tapestry—the people. They are the protagonists of the story. And in our case, we have a tough job ahead.



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Bangladesh is passing through its most critical time in its history—simply because of the tremendous potential that lies ahead of us. But we, the people, feel energized by the many challenges. For a nation that has many miles to go in its journey towards, its path will be studded with negative stories and experiences. A recent study by positive psychology expert Shawn Achor reveals that positivity begets good results, while negativity slows us down, makes us lethargic and adversely affects the pursuit of our goals. Within such a context, we feel less enthusiastic about our future, about our country

and more importantly, about what we can do to convert that potential into reality. As human beings, we are all about our beliefs, our passion and our positive energy. Our freedom fighters had the strong belief that they could win against a stronger opposition, and coupled with their passion and positive energy, they gave us the most precious gift—our freedom. It is our job to give the next generation their most precious gift—a prosperous nation whose people are highly positive and can face any challenges thrown at them, whose people are content with their lives and are there for others. We can give them

the Bangladesh we know it can be, so that they can stand tall in any part of the world.

In order to build that Bangladesh, whilst the government instills those values within us, we ourselves must play our very own roles. From our individual standpoint, we need to do our small bit right. We need to focus more on what we as individuals can do for our country. Our collective belief, action and positive energy will answer the negativity that exists; it will work as a strong influence for even the government to do the right thing—that will become the most powerful force to

change the narrative of Bangladesh. And in today's world of social media and interconnectivity, driving this change is easier than ever. As Professor Dipak Jain, Ex-Dean of Kellogg Business School and INSEAD Business School, said in one of our seminars: "Remember the force behind you is always stronger than the challenges ahead of you. If we care about Bangladesh and its image, if we believe it needs to be changed, then the responsibility lies with us."

The writer is the Founder of Bangladesh Brand Forum, and CEO of Brandzeal Consultancy Limited.

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