



**A comprehensive way forward involves a combination of public involvement, strengthened planning units, a shift in mindset towards sustainability, and a focus on long-span bridges for water crossings.**

The decision to opt for a river-crossing tunnel over a bridge presents inherent challenges.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Karnaphuli Tunnel and Padma Bridge construction

**Sustainable development necessitates an enhanced contribution of local expertise, supported by a home-grown research and development-driven knowledge base.**

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3. Infrastructure development aligned with sustainable goals: Emphasise resource-conserving, sustainable, and smart integrated development. This necessitates a shift in the mindset of the planning commission towards adopting quality infrastructures that are appropriate and sustainable for local conditions. The planning commission should transform into a planning-compliant department, boasting a pool of reputable foreign and local land-use, and transport planners. This shift is crucial for guiding integrated, balanced, multi-modal planning, ensuring resource efficiency, and future-proofing infrastructure development with a higher economic return multiplier.

4. Investment in human capital and research: Recognise

the need to invest in human capital and research to address the challenges associated with LDC graduation and achieve 4th industrial development. Improving transport infrastructures and logistics is crucial to reducing transport costs and mitigating the LDC graduation shock. Furthermore, sustainable development necessitates an enhanced contribution of local expertise, supported by a home-grown research and development-driven knowledge base.

5. Long span bridges for water crossings: Acknowledge the unique challenges presented by rivers in Bangladesh, including sediment load and perennial siltation problems. When implementing waterways-based freight transportation systems, contemplate the use of long-span bridges featuring substantial navigational



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The Karnaphuli Tunnel, featuring a shorter diameter and 4.9m headroom instead of the standard 5.5m, comes with a cost that is approximately 1.5 times that of the high-standard double-decker Padma Multipurpose Bridge (PMB).

clearance, like renowned structures such as Australia's Sydney Harbor Bridge, Hong Kong's Stonecutter Bridge, the USA's Brooklyn Bridge, and Vietnam's Dragon Bridge. The good news is that recently RHD

and BBA have proposed bridges at Kewatkhali, Mymensingh, and Matlab, Chandpur, each with a span of 350m to 400m, respectively. Shunning false pride in tunnel building, we must go a long way to catch



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

The Karnaphuli Tunnel, an ambitious project, seeks to enhance connectivity in the southeastern part of Bangladesh, bridging the gap between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

up with our neighbouring countries, embracing more appropriate longer span bridge development.

In conclusion, a comprehensive way forward involves a combination of public involvement, strengthened

planning units, a shift in mindset towards sustainability, and a focus on long-span bridges for water crossings. These measures collectively contribute to the vision of building a sustainable, smart, and developed Bangladesh by 2041.

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