**Press Release**

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Attn: News Editor/Chief Reporter/Assignment Editor/Business Page-in-Charge:

 **Assembling of Industrial Robots in Bangladesh for Creating New Employment**

The fourth Meeting of the 4IR&ICT Working Committee chaired by Mohammad Rezaul Karim, Managing Director of BHTPA, was held on 24 July 2023 at Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA). The meeting discussed the potential of Assembling Industrial robots in Bangladesh to create new job opportunities.

 The Managing Director of BHTPA thanked BUILD for coming up with an essential issue of Assembling Industrial Robots, which has got potential in the country and said that with the progression of technology, the business has been increasing, however in some sectors, employment has been reducing, so we will have to create a situation so that we can create new jobs. In that respect, educational institutions have a significant role in upscaling and re-skilling. He added that the Ministry of Industries (MoI) should also develop technology policies suitable to the present need. He said that BHTPA can take the initiative to take specific projects in this respect.

Regarding discussions of the 3rd meeting of the committee on the Data Privacy Guidelines and demand of the telcos for the 5G network after ensuring all the necessary infrastructure, MD said, in this regard, we need to ensure smooth coverage of the 4G network first before going to 5G coverage.

Digital inclusion is the most critical component of this journey, and we need powerful access to reliable and affordable connectivity is essential to our aspiration towards Vision 2041. We need more research, he added.

We must ensure competitiveness and capacity for innovative solutions for embracing hi-tech issues and modern technologies.

BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum presented a keynote titled “Potential of Assembling of Industrial Robots for Different Industrial Sectors of Bangladesh”, highlighting the potential of social and economic impacts of robot assembling, including job displacement, skills development and ethical considerations showing some comparative scenarios of other countries.

While delivering strategies and recommendations for policymakers and industry stakeholders to harness the opportunities of 4IR for industrialisation responsibly and inclusively, she went on to show the benefits and challenges of using robots for different industries in Bangladesh.

China and Turkey already use robots in their industrial units, where employment was reduced initially but gradually recovered. Bangladeshi businesses are already stepping into robotics.

The rise of global value chains (GVCs) and the fragmentation of production processes present opportunities for intra-industry trade and regional economic integration, and entrepreneurs in Bangladesh can exploit GVCs by becoming an ‘assembling’ hub. She also emphasised the implementation of Industrial Policy (IP) 2022, which has given the importance of assembling robots and implementing agencies are MoI, BIDA, BHTPA, BSCIC and Trade and Industry organisations.

The policy paper recommended a survey for demand analysis on the type of robots needed by the factories in the country, updating the robotics strategies, education and skill development programs, use of robots initially in risky areas, university-academia collaboration etc.

Dr Mehedi Anwar, Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Connecticut, US, joined virtually and said that if we want to use intelligent and advanced technology, we must go for 5G.

Mr Syed Tamjidur Rahman, Vice President of Bangladesh Centre for 4th Industrial Revolution, was also present virtually, emphasised collaborative activities in the technology field, and recommended strategic collaboration for knowledge sharing. He also recommended STEM education initially in the selective sectors; in that respect, BURT can extend support.

Dr Shamim Ahmed Dewan, Associate Professor, Department of Robotics, University of Dhaka, said that we could go for assembling robotics to align our demand. Still, we must focus on a skilled workforce and programming with high-end technology. Further, he urged the concerned individuals to work with all training facilities to get a more skilled workforce. We need to develop skills in our universities and educational institutions to get a skilled workforce.

BIDA Director Golam Mohammed Bhuiyan appreciating the presentation, said that robotics is a potential investment sector. The Deputy Director (Research) of BHTPA noted that we must prepare an execution plan and initiate small and practical projects to promote a Made in Bangladesh brand gradually.

Mr Nayeem Ashraf of A2i informed that different organisations with proper documentation have already prepared six specific strategies; those can be collected to help design a detailed road map for the sector.

Mr Enamul Hafiz Latifee, Research Fellow of BASIS, informed the audience that the demand for Robots has been increasing, especially in the RMG and Textile sectors; we need to gather some information about the demand of the export sectors and then explore the possibility of assembling those locally. In response to the tax incentives, he requested corporate tax exemption facilities beyond 2024, which will help the sector to move further from the present stage.

Mr Masum Billah, System Manager, ICT Ministry, GoB referring to a decision of the committee’s last meeting on spending CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funding on academic research, endorsed the proposal and proposed that a request can be made in that respect.

A number of officials from BHTPA, and MCCI, among others, were present, and they spoke on the occasion.

Sincerely yours,



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