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Draft Speech

Agenda 4(i)

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BismillahirRahmanir Rahim

Chair of the Session, Excellencies , ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum and Good Afternoon

Excellences,

As a forum for regional collaboration, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is engaged in a number of activities on science, technology and innovation to support member States in the region with effective implementation. After the independence of 1971, Bangladesh became the member states of ESCAP on 17 April 1973.

Distinguished Delegates,

You know well that Bangladesh is a country in south Asia and we are very happy to inform you that Bangladesh is scheduled to graduate from LDC to developing status by 24 November, 2026. Our government is working with an aim to transform Bangladesh into a knowledge based developed and prosperous nation by 2041 that is smart Bangladesh vision-2041.

Distinguished Esteemed Audience,

Our country Bangladesh has started its digital journey in 2009 and become a role model and ICT destination to the world by implementing digital activities in a short period of time. ICT has been considered as the driving force for achieving smart Bangladesh Vision 2041'. Smart Bangladesh is about being inclusive, about the people, and the citizens of Bangladesh built on the 4 pillars of Smart Citizens, Smart Government, Smart Economy and Smart Society, it is about bridging the digital divide by innovating and scaling sustainable digital solutions that all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic background, all businesses, regardless of their size, can benefit from.

Smart Bangladesh is the next major step towards realizing Bangabandhu's dream of Shonar Bangladesh, a Golden Bangladesh. Apart from this, Ministry of Science and Technology is also contributing much. Based on our vision/mission, achievements, strengths, dream and potentiality lots of initiatives projects/programs have been taken by the government of Bangladesh for ensuring digital inclusion in every sector of the society. We have introduced d-Nothi (Digital Nothi) system for ensuring paperless office, we have established 8815 Digital centers to provide the digital services, we have One-stop web-based platform: BD Portal; we established 28000

km fibre optic cables broad-band internet connectivity to connect grass root level ; we have 17.78 Cr (177 Million) telephone user and 12.37 crore (134 Million) internet connectivity, e-learning platform ‘Mukthopat’. Bangladesh is also connected to SEA-ME-WE 4 and 5 consortiums.

Ladies and Gentleman,

To leverage 4IR and innovation economy the government of Bangladesh has declared ‘Vision 2041’: Smart Bangladesh with two principal visions such as: **a)** Bangladesh will be a knowledge and technology based developed country by 2041 and **b)** Poverty will become a thing of the past in Sonar Bangla. We have established 39 world Class Hi-tech Parks/IT parks and 64 IT training and incubation centers to attract FDI.

Bangladesh ranked 53rd out of 182 countries in Cyber Security Index, ranked 5th out of 121 countries in Covid-19 Recovery Index and Bangladesh ranked 109th out of 193 countries in SDGs Index. We have 2nd largest community of freelancer community in the world (Survey Report: Harvard University). Nearly 6.5 Lac freelancers are working at international outsourcing market places.

Under the SDG target # 02 Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) has been developed 07 scientific process for production of nutritious food and 03 methods for detecting hazardous substances in food. A qRT-PCR based

COVID detection kit has been developed and more than 1200 whole-genomes of SARS-CoV-2 strains has been sequenced by BCSIR. Massive research for development of improved solar cell is going on.

Ladies and Gentleman,

You will be very happy to inform you that from the very beginning we have followed the strategy of combining lives and livelihood to tackle the dire consequence of COVID-19. We have introduced the Covid-19 Vaccine Management System “Surokkha” where more than 120 million people have completed their vaccine registration. We left no stone unturned to collect necessary vaccines for our people and 75% of our people. We have formulated Post Covid-10 ICT Roadmap that is an action document with a ‘whole of the government’ and ‘whole of the society’ approach.

Excellences,

We believe that regional and international cooperation as the most viable option for shared prosperity. We are engaged in different regional and international initiatives. We know well that the today’s digital evolution requires collective action to address the gaps and unlock untapped potential and no alternative of enabling cross-border cooperation to accelerate digital journey of a country. Bangladesh is eager to strengthen the bonding among the ESCAP states to make a sustainable and

inclusive development in the Asia Pacific region through unity, brotherhood and cooperation. I strongly believe that this session of ESCAP will accelerate us to work together to a sustainable and inclusive world.

With these words I would like to conclude my speech here. I again express my gratitude and thanks to all and to have the opportunity to share our vision, mission and advancement in ICT sector.

Thank you all