

Paving the Path for a Vibrant Economy: FBCCI's Strategic Push for a Business-Friendly Environment



From the Desk of the Administrator



Dear Members, Partners & Stakeholders,

It is my pleasure to present the April 2026 edition of our E-bulletin, a month that has been defined by high-level policy advocacy, strategic international partnerships, and a reinforced commitment to national resilience. As the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) continues to navigate a complex global economic landscape, our focus remains steadfast: ensuring a business-friendly environment that fosters inclusive and sustainable growth.

A primary highlight of this month was the 46th Consultative Committee Meeting of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), where we engaged in critical dialogues regarding the National Budget FY 2026–2027. We have been vocal about the need for systemic fiscal reforms, including modernizing the tax framework to improve the tax-to-GDP ratio. Our proposals—such as increasing the tax-free income limit, expanding

Tax Net, and reducing Advance Income Tax (AIT) gradually at the import stage — aiming to ease liquidity for our industries and provide much-needed relief to individual taxpayers.

In our recent meeting with the Governor of Bangladesh Bank, we emphasized the necessity of a stable exchange rate and accessible financing. By advocating for an expansion of the Export Development Fund (EDF) and a lowering of bank interest rates, we are working to ensure that our private sector remains competitive and capable of weathering out multifaceted challenges like the current energy and logistics crises.

April has also marked a significant leap in our safety and humanitarian mandates. Through the Bangladesh Preparedness Partnership (BPP), we are scaling up disaster risk reduction and occupational health and safety (OHS) initiatives across some of the most costal & vulnerable districts.

Furthermore, our high-level engagement with UN OCHA (the United Nation’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) and our inclusion in the Connecting Business Initiative (CBI) has placed FBCCI at the forefront of humanitarian action in Bangladesh. We are not just participants in the economy; we are vital partners in national emergency coordination and resilience building. As we move forward, I wish to reaffirm that your insights and challenges remain at the heart of our advocacy. Together, we will continue to build a resilient, transparent, and diversified economy that mirrors the potential of all our export sectors.

This bulletin further contains a distinguished article titled “Bridging the Skill Gap: The Strategic Role of TVET in Bangladesh’s Economic Transformation”, for your perusal. I hope you find this edition informative and inspiring.

Success is a collaborative journey. I am deeply grateful to our business leaders and stakeholders whose partnership empowers FBCCI to lead with purpose and impact.

Md. Abdur Rahim Khan
Administrator, FBCCI

The 46th Consultative Committee Meeting of the NBR



The 46th Consultative Committee Meeting of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) was successfully conducted on April 29, 2026 at hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka. The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and NBR jointly organized the meeting, focusing on key discussions for the National Budget FY 2026–2027.

Mr. Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Finance and Planning graced the event as the chief guest. As the special guest, Mr. Khandakar Abdul Muktedir, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Industries, and Textiles & Jute attended the meeting.

The meeting was presided over by the NBR Chairman Mr. Md. Abdur Rahman Khan FCMA and conducted by the Administrator of FBCCI Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan.

During the session, a firm commitment was expressed by the Honourable Minister for Finance, Mr. Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, to eliminate existing barriers to trade and streamline business operations across the country.

In a significant move toward sectoral diversification, it was announced by the finance minister that the policy advantages enjoyed by the RMG industry will be mirrored for other high-potential export sectors.

It was observed by the commerce minister Mr. Khandakar Abdul Muktedir that the private sector is currently contending with multifaceted challenges, including the energy crisis, high interest rates, logistics crisis etc— must be addressed decisively.

A call for systemic reform was issued by Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Administrator of FBCCI, during his welcome address. The modernization of the tax framework was identified as a vital prerequisite for improving the tax-to-GDP ratio, ensuring a more efficient and transparent fiscal environment.

On behalf of the private sector, FBCCI proposes Tk5 lakh tax-free income limit for individual taxpayers in the FY27 budget. They called for a gradual reduction of advance income tax (AIT) at the import stage, saying it raises upfront costs and strains liquidity for import-dependent industries. It also called for reducing the minimum tax from 1 percent to 0.25 percent on annual gross turnover, with a long-term plan to phase it out.

A diverse range of sectoral proposals were put forward by the leaders of various chambers and associations, each representing the specific interests and strategic needs of their respective sectors. The NBR Chairman reaffirmed that the insights and proposals shared by industry leaders would be given careful consideration during the strategic formulation of the national budget.

The meeting was attended by Former FBCCI President Mr. Mahbubur Rahman and Mr. Mir Nasir Hossain, Former Senior Vice Presidents of FBCCI, Former Vice Presidents of FBCCI, Former Directors of FBCCI, Secretary General of FBCCI Mr. Md. Alamgir, business leaders, and officials from the Ministry of Finance, National Board of Revenue (NBR).



Business delegation met Bangladesh Bank Governor



A business delegation from the FBCCI met the Governor of Bangladesh Bank Mr. Mostaqur Rahman on April 06, 2026 at Dhaka.

Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Administrator, FBCCI, led the delegation.

During the meeting, FBCCI recommended lowering the bank rate to ease business operations and stressed the



importance of maintaining a stable exchange rate. It also urged the Bangladesh Bank governor to expand the Export Development Fund (EDF) to \$5 billion gradually and raise the single borrower exposure limit to support businesses.

The delegation included DCCI President Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, BCI President Mr. Anwar-UI-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez), BKMEA President Mr. Mohammad Hatem, Former BGMEA President Mr. S M Fazlul Haque, BERVIDA President Mr. Abdul Haque, President of Women Entrepreneurs Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) Ms. Nasreen Fatema Awal, Vice President of BTMA Mr. Shafiqul Islam

Sarker, Former Director of FBCCI Giasuddin Chowdhury (Khokon), President of Chapai Nawabganj Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CNCCI) Mr. Abdul Wahed, President of Bangladesh Steel Manufacturers Association Mohammed Jahangir Alam, Director of BGMEA Mr. Majumdar Arifur Rahman, Secretary General of FBCCI Mr. Md. Alamgir, President of Bangladesh Jewellery Manufacturers and Exporters Association Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, President of Bangladesh Bread Biscuit & Confectionery Prastutkarta Samity Mr. Mohammad Jalal Uddin, President of Bangladesh CNG Machineries Importers Association Mr. Md. Zakir Hossain (Nayon), General Secretary of Bangladesh Supermarket Owners Association Mr. Md. Zakir Hossain.

NDC Delegation Visits FBCCI



Members from the Capstone Course 2026/1 of National Defence College (NDC) visits the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry- FBCCI, on 07 April 2026.

Lieutenant General Md Faizur Rahman BSP, SGP, ndc, afwc, psc, led the NDC delegation. Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Administrator, FBCCI warmly welcomed the delegation.

In a view-exchange session with the visiting delegation, Secretary General Md. Alamgir presented FBCCI's long-term vision and its commitment for trade facilitation and advocacy efforts with the government.

Distinguished attendees included Member of Parliament and Capstone Course participant Mir Ahmad Bin Quasem; Rear Admiral Khandakar Akhter Hossain, NBP, NUP, ndc, psc, PhD; and Brig. Gen. (Retd) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah, Adviser of the FBCCI Safety Council.

FBCCI Drives Disaster Resilience across Three Key Districts

Under the Bangladesh Preparedness Partnership (BPP) Phase 2 initiative of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the FBCCI Safety Council organized a series of virtual progress and learning sharing meetings with PERT members, Safety Cell representatives, and relevant stakeholders from three selected districts—Cox's Bazar, Mongla Export Processing Zone, and Kurigram—on 16, 19, and 21 April 2026 respectively.



The meetings provided a collaborative platform to review ongoing activities, assess progress, and share field-level experiences related to disaster preparedness, workplace safety, and business continuity. Participants from different districts actively engaged in discussions on local challenges, coordination mechanisms, and opportunities to strengthen safety initiatives at both community and industrial levels.

During the sessions, Brig. Gen (Retd.) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah, Advisor of the FBCCI Safety Council, highlighted the critical roles of PERT members and the business community in disaster management and resilience building. Md. Monjur Kader Khan, Program Coordinator, emphasized the importance of structured knowledge exchange and capacity development through dedicated initiatives.

Across all meetings, participants exchanged views and reached a consensus on organizing Progress, Learning and Sharing Programs for PERT members in the respective districts, including Cox's Bazar, Mongla EPZ, and Kurigram, while also reaffirming the importance of a broader, coordinated approach across the selected districts. The discussions underscored the need for continued engagement, strengthened local coordination, and sustained efforts to enhance disaster risk reduction (DRR) and occupational health and safety (OHS) practices.

These initiatives reflect the ongoing commitment of the FBCCI Safety Council to empower local stakeholders, promote learning, and build resilient business communities across Bangladesh.

BPP Phase 3 Co-Creation Workshop Held with Sectoral Leads in Dhaka



A co-creation workshop on the Bangladesh Preparedness Partnership (BPP) Phase 3 was held on 22 April 2026 at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) Country Office in Dhaka, bringing together key sectoral stakeholders to collaboratively design the next phase of the initiative.

The workshop began with opening remarks from Mr. Ahmed Kamrul Hasan, Deputy Secretary (DM-1) and Member Secretary of the BPP Mobilization Desk

under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), and Dr. Sisira Madurapperuma, Director of ADPC, Thailand. An overview of BPP Phases 1 and 2 was presented by Mr. Edwin M. Salonga and Dr. Ahsan Ullah from ADPC, highlighting key achievements and lessons learned.



Participants then engaged in interactive group work to identify gaps, propose key interventions, and define geographic priorities for BPP Phase 3, along with potential challenges and solutions. The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) emphasized expanding BPP initiatives to other vulnerable and business-concentrated districts and aligning activities with Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) roles for the private sector.

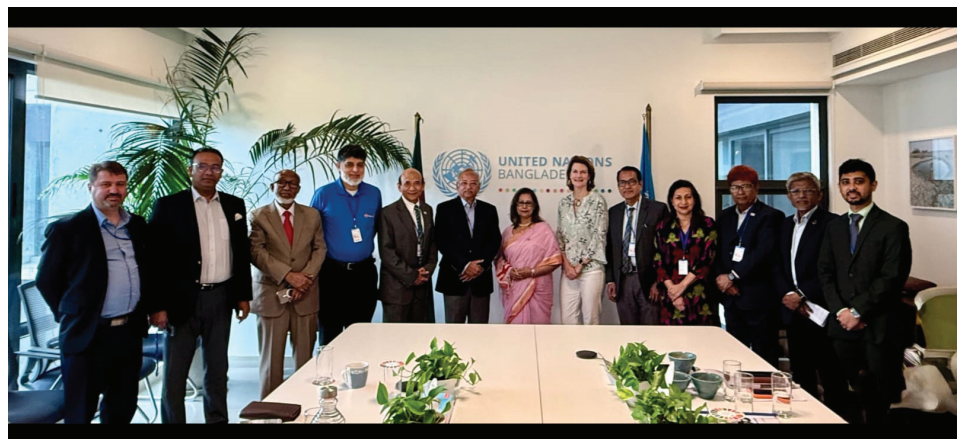
The workshop concluded with presentations, a “Way Forward” session, and closing remarks reaffirming commitment to strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration and disaster resilience.

Representatives from FBCCI, Brig. Gen (Retd.) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah, Advisor of the FBCCI Safety Council, along with Md. Monjur Kader Khan, Program Coordinator, and Md. Shakhawat Hossain, Capacity Building Specialist, attended the workshop.

The workshop marked a significant step towards developing an inclusive roadmap for BPP Phase 3 and advancing disaster risk reduction efforts in Bangladesh.

FBCCI & UN OCHA Partners to scale-up Private Sector Humanitarian Response

A high-level meeting was held on 26 April 2026 at the UN House Bangladesh between Ms. Lisa Doughten, Director of the Financing and Outreach Division (FOD) of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), focusing on strengthening collaboration to mobilize and coordinate



private sector contributions to humanitarian response in Bangladesh.

During the discussion, it was noted that Bangladesh and Myanmar remain priority countries for OCHA in Asia. OCHA continues to play a central role in managing key global humanitarian coordination mechanisms, including the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Country-Based Pooled Funds, and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), ensuring timely, needs-based, and principled humanitarian action.

Participants reviewed the ongoing contributions of FBCCI members in emergency response and resilience-building initiatives across Bangladesh, emphasizing the importance of stronger alignment between private sector capacities and national disaster management systems. Key strengths such as logistics, supply chains, financing, and technology were identified as critical enablers for a more coordinated and effective response.

The discussion further explored opportunities for structured collaboration between FBCCI and OCHA. These include capacity-building initiatives on humanitarian coordination—such as joint training on humanitarian architecture, coordination systems, and core principles; development of a joint pilot private sector emergency coordination model covering rapid response, resource mobilization, and business continuity; and integration of FBCCI Safety Council into national and global coordination platforms, including cluster systems and inter-agency mechanisms.

Both sides also recognized the importance of promoting gender-responsive and inclusive approaches, including support for dignity needs, women-led enterprise recovery, and MSME resilience. In addition, the meeting considered the potential to establish a dedicated private sector humanitarian coordination platform under the FBCCI Safety Council, supported by catalytic inputs for coordination, joint planning, and initial operational setup.

The OCHA delegation included Lisa Doughten, Director, Financing and Outreach Division; Ms. Sanjana Quazi, Chief of Section, Humanitarian Affairs at OCHA Headquarters (New York); Ms. Wendy Cue, Head of Office at the OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Mr. Daniel Gilman, Humanitarian Affairs Officer; and Ms. Nisha Manjooran, Humanitarian Affairs Officer at OCHA Geneva.

Private Sector was represented by former FBCCI director Mr. Abdul Haque, Ms. Nasreen Fatema Awal, MCCI President Kamran T. Rahman, Chairman of PRAN-RFL Group Mr. Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, President of Bangladesh CNG Machineries Importers Association Mr. Zakir Hossain Nayon, FBCCI Secretary General Md. Alamgir, Head of FBCCI International Affairs Wing Md. Zafar Iqbal ndc, Advisor to the FBCCI Safety Council Brig. Gen. (Retd.) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah, and others.

The meeting concluded with a shared recognition that these initiatives represent practical opportunities for structured collaboration, through which FBCCI—particularly its Safety Council—can complement OCHA’s coordination mandate. Both sides expressed commitment to advancing a scalable and inclusive model of private sector–humanitarian partnership in Bangladesh, with potential relevance at the global level.

FBCCI Administrator emphasized on Strategic Resilience at DCCI Energy Roundtable

The Administrator of FBCCI Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, as special guests, attended a roundtable discussion titled “Navigating the Global Energy Shock: Impact on Bangladesh and Way Forward” on April 9, 2026 at DCCI Auditorium, Dhaka. The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) hosted the event in collaboration with the Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association (BSREA) and Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), bringing together top



policymakers and industry leaders to address the escalating energy crisis. The session was headlined by Mr. Md. Obaidur Rahman, Secretary of the Ministry of Industries, who attended as the Chief Guest.

In his welcome address, DCCI President Mr. Taskeen Ahmed set the stage by emphasizing that the current energy volatility is no longer just a macro-economic issue—it is directly impacting the lives and livelihoods of every citizen.

Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Administrator of the FBCCI emphasized the private sector's role in overcoming energy volatility.

Mr. Zahidul Alam, Senior Vice President, Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association (BSREA); Mr. Mohammed Nurul Absar, Additional Chief Engineer, Commercial Operation, Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB); Senior Vice President of DCCI Mr. Razeev H Chowdhury, Vice President Mr. Md. Salem Sulaiman; DCCI Board of Directors; entrepreneurs; and representatives from public & private agencies also attended the discussion.

The event concluded with a collective call to action for the government and private sector to collaborate more closely.

Discussion on National Budget FY 2026-27 and Revenue Policy

FBCCI organized a consultative meeting on the National Budget 2026-2027 FY and revenue management approach of the NBR, on April 13, 2026, at FBCCI boardroom. The session served as a critical platform for private sector leaders to voice their recommendations for the nation's fiscal future. Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Administrator, FBCCI, chaired the meeting. He emphasized on the importance of a business-friendly budget to maintain economic momentum.



A keynote presentation was delivered by Mr. Md. Farid Uddin, a member of the FBCCI Budget Expert Committee and former Member (VAT Policy) of the National Revenue Board. His presentation detailed strategic pathways for increased revenue collection that help balance government needs with the growth of local industries.

Former directors of FBCCI, leaders from various chambers and trade associations, FBCCI Secretary General Mr. Md. Alamgir, General Body Members of FBCCI, and others attended the meeting.

Throughout the discussion, representatives from different industrial sectors shared valuable insights and recommendations, urging the government to prioritize streamlined tax administration and policy consistency. The meeting concluded with a commitment from FBCCI to consolidate these sectoral demands into a formal proposal for the government's consideration in the final budget drafting process.

Bridging the Skill Gap: The Strategic Role of TVET in Bangladesh's Economic Transformation

Bangladesh's economic path is at a pivotal turning point as the country prepares to graduate from the list of Least Developed Countries. A crucial part of maintaining this progress is transforming its large human resource pool into a skilled workforce that can meet the tough demands of a globalized economy. The current state of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bangladesh features a multi-layered system mainly managed by the Bangladesh Technical Education Board with the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) and the Ministry of Industries. Although enrollment in TVET programs has increased notably over the past decade, now reaching nearly 17 percent of all secondary and higher secondary students, the system still faces a major gap between what schools produce and what the private sector needs.

The existing TVET infrastructure is comprised of public polytechnic institutes, Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs), private training centers, and diverse short-term vocational initiatives. However, many of these institutions, including traditional VTIs and the Dhaka Technical Teachers' Training Institute (DTTTI), are contending with curricula that require urgent modernization to reflect the rapid technological shifts in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector, pharmaceuticals, and the expanding ICT industry. This alignment gap often creates a paradox: industries suffer from a dearth of skilled mid-level managers and specialized technicians, while graduates struggle to secure meaningful employment; institutes like the BIAM Foundation are increasingly vital here in addressing these specific managerial and administrative skill deficits. Furthermore, the entrenched societal perception of vocational training as a secondary academic track persists, despite the superior immediate employability and market relevance associated with technical expertise.

The dividends Bangladesh stands to reap from a robust, modernized, and industry-aligned TVET system are both profound and far-reaching. By emphasizing competency-based training, Bangladesh can effectively capitalize on its demographic dividend, converting its youth population into the primary engine of industrial productivity. For the private sector, an optimized TVET framework, supported by institutes like the Ahsanullah Institute of Technical & Vocational Education & Training (AITVET), mitigates internal training expenditures and diminishes dependency on foreign expatriates for high-tier technical roles. This transition is a prerequisite for improving the "Ease of Doing Business" and attracting significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), as global investors prioritize markets with a certified, ready-to-work labor force. Moreover, a TVET system that integrates Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies, such as automation, robotics, and data analytics will ensure that Bangladeshi industries remain competitive on the global stage.

Beyond industrial productivity, the expansion of TVET offers a pathway for inclusive economic growth. Organizations such as UCEP Bangladesh are instrumental in this regard, providing marginalized and rural communities with tangible skills that facilitate entrepreneurship or high-wage employment, thereby narrowing income inequality. As the FBCCI continues to uphold the interests of the business community, the promotion of a private-sector-led TVET model remains a top priority. This strategy includes the proliferation of Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) and comprehensive apprenticeship programs, ensuring that the private sector holds a direct stake in curriculum design and quality control. Ultimately, integrating technical education into the core of national development will determine Bangladesh's success in transitioning from a labor-intensive economy to a high-value, knowledge-based powerhouse.

The Pivotal Role of Industry Skills Councils and the Private Sector in TVET

Modernizing TVET hinges on a paradigm shift from a supply-driven model to a demand-led framework, where the private sector acts as the primary architect of skill standards. Currently, ISCs operate across 13 strategic sectors, including RMG, Pharmaceuticals, ICT, and Light Engineering, offering a collaborative platform for industry leaders to define workplace competencies. These councils are essential for monitoring industrial trends and identifying nascent skill gaps that traditional public institutions may inadvertently overlook. Private sector participation in these councils ensures the "National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework" (NTVQF) remains dynamic and agile in the face of global technological disruptions. Furthermore, the private sector must spearhead dual-training systems and formal apprenticeships, allowing students to bridge the gap between classroom theory and factory-floor reality, effectively reducing the learning curve for new entrants.

Strategic Policy Recommendations for Economic Resilience through TVET

For Bangladesh to fully benefit from TVET and achieve its objective of becoming a developed and prosperous nation by 2041, a comprehensive policy overhaul is necessary to integrate the private sector into the governance of technical education. This systemic transformation requires a shift toward a more collaborative framework where the FBCCI and other trade bodies play a central role in decision-making. By aligning national educational priorities with the long-term economic milestones of the country, the government can ensure that the workforce is prepared for the high-value industrial landscape of the future. The following strategic considerations focus on deepening this integration to ensure that technical training is no longer an isolated academic pursuit but a core component of national economic resilience and industrial growth-

- **Establishment of Sector-Specific Centers of Excellence:** The government and the private sector should collaborate to establish Centers of Excellence (CoEs) within major industrial clusters. These centers would serve as hubs for advanced technical training and research, focusing on 4IR technologies like robotics and AI, while being managed by industry experts to ensure the training remains cutting-edge and commercially relevant.
- **Fiscal Incentives for Private Sector Training:** To encourage businesses to invest in human capital, the government should introduce tax rebates or "training levies" that can be offset by companies providing certified apprenticeship programs. This would alleviate the financial burden on the state while incentivizing large-scale enterprises to upgrade the skills of their existing workforce and new recruits.
- **Decentralization of TVET Governance:** Moving beyond a centralized administrative structure, the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) should delegate more decision-making power to regional industry clusters. This will allow local business chambers to tailor vocational programs to the specific economic activities of their region, such as agro-processing in the north or shipbuilding in the coastal belts.
- **Integration of Soft Skills and Entrepreneurship:** Modern TVET must evolve beyond manual expertise to include "soft skills" such as communication, digital literacy, and problem-solving. Policies should also encourage the "TVET to Entrepreneurship" pipeline, providing vocational graduates with access to low-interest start-up capital and business mentorship to foster a culture of self-employment.

- **Implementation of Unified National Skills Data System:** A centralized digital platform should be developed to track labor market demand in real-time, allowing TVET institutions to adjust their enrollment quotas and curriculum focus based on actual job openings reported by the private sector. This would minimize the risk of over-training in saturated trades while addressing urgent shortages in high-growth sectors.

The successful recalibration of the TVET sector represents the most viable pathway for Bangladesh to transition from a labor-intensive economy to a high-value, knowledge-driven industrial powerhouse. By fostering a symbiotic partnership between the state and the private sector, specifically through the leadership of the FBCCI, the nation can ensure that its human capital is transformed from a demographic statistic into a strategic asset capable of sustaining long-term economic resilience. Ultimately, prioritizing industry-led vocational excellence will serve as the definitive engine for achieving the nation's 2041 development milestones, securing a competitive edge in the global market, and ensuring broad-based prosperity that reflects the true potential of the Bangladeshi workforce.

- Prepared by
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