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Manpower to be turned into viable wealth: PM

By A Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman said on Tuesday that the interim education policy to be announced soon would be technical education oriented.

He said that the government intended to impart vocational and technical education to a larger number of people so that they could be gainfully employed both in the country and abroad.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating a 6 day South and Central Asia regional seminar, jointly sponsored by the UNESCO regional office, New Delhi

and the Association of Engineering Education in South and Central Asia (AESCA) at a local hotel.

Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Secretary, Ministry of Education and Secretary General Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO, Prof. Wahiduddin Ahmed, Vice Chancellor, Engineering University and Chairman, Steering Committee of the seminar, Dr Aung Gyi, Secretary General UNESCO New Delhi regional office and Mr. Obaidur Rahman, Chairman of the Seminar Organising Committee also addressed the inaugural function.

VIABLE WEALTH

The Prime Minister said that Bangladesh was one of the least developed countries. But it had a vast manpower which could be turned into viable wealth to expedite the country's development. He said that the government wanted to channelise the manpower to productive activities.

He said that the government had been planning to set up vocational and technical institutes in all that as to train people.

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Manpower

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ple in agriculture and other vocations.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

He said that the Islamic university now being established in the country would be a modern university imparting largely technical education with a religious bias to produce better citizens. He said that general education had gradually been losing importance in an age of science and technology.

The Prime Minister said the 19-point programme of the President Zia provided for self-reliance and the Government put emphasis on meeting the country's food deficit as early as possible. He said that with this end in view the massive canal digging programme on the basis of self-help and voluntary labour would be launched on December 1.

He urged the UNICEF to play a role in removing world conflicts and tensions so that the massive amount of money now spent for weapons could be diverted for promotion of technical education in the least developed countries.

The Prime Minister welcomed the delegates from the countries of the region and hoped that the seminar would produce some useful decisions which would be of help in modernising technical education in the country.

Kazi Fazlur Rahman said that the countries in the region made considerable efforts to improve technical education but the achievements so far could not be termed as satisfactory.

LACK OF SCOPES

He said that technical education in Bangladesh suffered due to lack of technical teachers and other facilities. He said that the relevance of the course contents of the technical insti-

tutes in the country was also not beyond question.

He hoped that the seminar would be able to make some suggestions which would benefit our efforts at ensuring quality technical education in the country.

Prof. Wahiduddin Ahmed said that the technician education and training system in the country should be planned in such a way that output from the system matched the country's need in terms of quantity and quality.

He said that such education and training programmes must be designed and conducted jointly by those who teach technicians as students and those who employ them.

HISTORICAL ACCIDENTS

The Vice-Chancellor of Engineering University said the technical institutes in the country developed more like historical accidents rather than by deliberate planning. He said that involvement of industries, agriculture of commerce sectors were minimal although those were established to educate and train manpower for employment in these very sectors. The products of these institutions thus remained unfamiliar to the real-life needs and activities of those sectors, he added.

Dr Aung Gyi in his brief speech hoped that the seminar would be of use in development of closer cooperation between the countries of the region for development of technical education.