

## Science and technology education

It was reported recently that the government is seriously considering the setting up of science and technology oriented universities in each of the former district headquarters. We welcome this decision.

Different studies clearly established that science and technology education remained rather stagnant during the last two decades with the result that technically skilled manpower needed for various entrepreneurial activities in the country, were found to be in short supply. The countries in East Asia that attained remarkable economic growth during the last two decades, were able to count on a steady supply of technically competent persons at various levels. From areas of higher technologies to intermediate and basic technologies, the education and training systems in those countries actively aided the creation of such manpower. No wonder, therefore, that the economies in these countries experienced much higher growth rates because one of the basic conditions for economic growth and development—skilled manpower—could be met.

We should have taken lessons from the experiences of the economically successful Asian countries and streamlined our educational systems so that the same could be adequately oriented to the creation of technical manpower. From the government's plans of setting up of science and technology universities in the former district headquarters, it seems that finally appropriate official attention is finally being paid to this vital area. But although this step is well received and appears to be just what the country needs every caution should be taken not to rush mindlessly into the creation of these new universities. It would be prudent to take some time and establish these universities with sufficient up-to-date facilities and talented and experienced teachers so that these new centres of learning can impart quality technical education to their students.

We hope, that the government is aware that establishment of these universities, with vital inadequacies, will hardly serve any useful purpose. The investments in such a case would be judged a poor one. So, it would be extremely important on the part of the authorities to ensure that the new universities are adequately equipped—manpower and equipment wise—to provide the country with properly educated technical personnel. We further hope that implementation of this plan will not be delayed unnecessarily.