

Employment Bank

In the background of a growing population in Bangladesh the problem of employment for both skilled and unskilled people has assumed quite sizable proportions over the years. It has long engaged the attention of the government and, as recently disclosed, new measures are afoot to effectively deal with the problem. Locally, among these measures is the reported plan to set up employment banks at district headquarters. This is expected to be an active step forward toward solving the problem. It will, among other things, provide a source of information for job-seekers at home or abroad. Besides being an improvement on what has so far been performed by centralised employment bureaus the proposed step will serve a very useful purpose hitherto most inadequately met, by making job information available to those in the far-flung rural areas.

Its specific contribution will be made in the field of jobs outside of Bangladesh, where, encouragingly, a growing demand exists for Bangladesh's skilled and unskilled labour. The Bangladesh Government is keen on taking full advantage of such new opportunities arising for employment abroad for Bangladeshis. In the Middle East, for instance, an expanding demand in this regard requires us to do

our best to avail ourselves of such employment avenues. An estimated one thousand crore taka in foreign exchange can be earned annually from this alien source.

What, however, is needed in this particular context is the simplification of official procedure governing such employment of Bangladeshi personnel as well as, of course, integrity, efficiency and discipline on the part of those who would be so employed. Employment banks to be set up at the district headquarters could indeed be an effective functionary in ensuring such conditions.

It may also be said in this connection that in rural areas in particular a huge amount of agricultural surplus labour awaits employment at home or abroad. Nationally speaking, ruralisation of some branches of industry suiting rural conditions, as is also the policy of the government, would surely help absorb a good proportion of now unemployed or ill-employed rural labour. And the new-found job opportunities now being available abroad would be a welcome supplement to local facilities. In view of the urgency of the problem it is necessary that the proposed employment banks be established soon and start functioning with expedition and efficiency.