

Council For Science And Technology

The present-day world is one of expanding know-how and technology. Improvements on existing set of things, as well as innovations, take place in various fields. Agencies that are concerned with future developments often invest heavily on research and development (R & D) in order to keep pace with development in matters of prototype of products as well as in respect of effects of exogenous and indigenous elements on such products. Many of the large corporations and the developed countries invest huge amount of money for gaining insight into prospects of various resources. They utilize given elements for the purpose of in-depth analysis with a view to assessing their gross impact and economic repercussions.

Though a new country, Bangladesh has devoted some of its resources to research activities. Organizations like the Agricultural Research Council, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Atomic Energy Commission have done their bit in the field of research. Facilities have been extended and personnel with devotion have been inducted into these agencies for doing fruitful research work. And in certain cases like that on 'jute', 'Soya-protein' and varieties of rice these agencies have done a good job. Some of these prototypes have yet to be commercially exploited. Yet a tone is set for augmenting research activities in various fields. The increasing approval of scientific and technological research projects speaks of the awareness on the part of the authorities vis-a-vis research and development.

The press announcement on the National Council for Science and Technology appears to be a

reflection of the concern of the government in these fields. The need for coordination of the work of various agencies has been highlighted along with the present emphasis on investigating into areas that were hitherto unexplored. Put under the overall guidance of the President, the Council is expected to get both policy support as well as financial commitment. The emphasis on linking industrial enterprises with R & D activities is a timely one. This is more so in view of the fact that our traditional products like jute and hides are faced with tremendous competition from comparable synthetic products. Even in case new products the need for R & D can never be overemphasized.

In this connection we may point out that effective R & D activities are dependent on the availability of financial resources, physical and laboratory facilities and, above all, dependable manpower. In these areas there is room for improvement. With the prospect of getting finance from industrial corporations plus increasing government allocations, R & D activities may be put on sound financial footings. In matters of facilities, the authorities have to do a lot before getting the appropriate type of equipment for our research activities. They have to keep in mind, that time-lag in matters of machinery may have inadvertent effect on our R & D activities. And, in the context of present-day brain drain, the manning schedule of our institutions should be planned effectively. On the top of all, these resources should be engaged in developing new processes and prototypes and not only in adjusting those already developed for getting more efficient use of otherwise scarce resources.