

Technical Education

The need for education in general, and for technical education in particular, is felt in all countries. This is so also in Bangladesh. This country is striving hard to make a breakthrough in economic development. For this there is need for skilled manpower and technically qualified personnel in various sectors. Without properly planning the educational system the availability of such manpower cannot be ensured. The prevailing educational system has preponderance of general education. As a result large numbers of liberal arts graduates are coming out of the universities and colleges. Their qualifications do not guarantee jobs for them. On the other hand many job opportunities go vacant due to non-availability of duly qualified and skilled manpower. This state of affairs is untenable for a developing country like Bangladesh.

In the backdrop of such an imbalance the urgency of educational reforms is felt also in the policy making circle in the country. Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman has stated in the biennial conference of the College Teachers' Association that "old colonial system of education is of no use now". He also asserted that "the government wants to encourage science and technical education because demand for the persons with science and technical education exists all over". Apparently, the official agencies are aware of the changes that are needed. Their awareness need be translated into action programmes for the advancement of science and technical education. In this area, our country may benefit from experiences of

developed countries as well as of other developing countries. And the conference offered, those in educational field, the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences and to build up information and knowledge for the change over.

Knowledgeable persons, including the Secretary General of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession who attended the conference of the College Teachers' Association, are right when they say that the government has a vital role in policy making, recruiting and educational administration. If the government puts higher priority to education, as in other developing countries, the entire gamut of activities may be set on sound footing. The government will naturally decide about the quantum of GNP to be spent for education, type of educational institutions to be built up, and, above all, the balance between general and technical education facilities in the country. Details for technical education will encompass exercises for vocational classification, skill-specification, teaching materials and teaching aids, the level of general preparation needed for entry into vocational and technical institutions, the duration of courses of study and practical exercises. Even the location of institutions and the pre-entry guidance and post-qualification placement have to be worked out for the desired results. The possibility of non-formal education should also be explored for putting technical education on sound footing and thereby ensuring economic development of the country.