

Vocational Institute

With the demand increasing, both at home and abroad for trained and skilled manpower any local move toward promotion of vocational training is welcome. And to raise technically equipped manpower we cannot depend merely on self-training or snap-training, where available, either through the existing academic programmes or in-service opportunities. A broad-based policy aimed at achieving this essential professional objective is a must to accelerate the pace of development inside the country, as well as to make our huge surplus manpower job-worthy in the local and overseas sense.

That the administration is fully aware of such pragmatic needs as have appeared in the employment and development sector is evident from the announced technical bias to be given to education. The step reportedly being taken by the administration to set up vocational institutes, one in each upazila, is in line with the technical leverage necessary for a boost to development activity. This was disclosed by Minister for Labour and Manpower Air Vice-Marshal (Retd.) K. M. Aminul Islam at the foundation-laying ceremony of the Narayanganj Vocational Training Institute at Hajiganj.

Apart from the Institute be-

ing a positive contribution to creation of new opportunities for technical training, the institute will be constructed on a seven and a half acres of land donated by Narayanganj Municipality and a local philanthropist, with the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) providing training equipment worth about Taka 60 lakh. While we acknowledge both gratefully, we also note that such facilities could be multiplied, despite our resource constraints, if both local and international support of this kind were available on a larger scale. We stress in particular local and private initiative such as the donation of land made by a philanthropist for the Narayanganj Institute. By the same token, in other upazilas similar institutes might be enabled to come up with the government assistance reinforced by generous support from the town authority and philanthropically disposed individuals.

It need hardly be said that vocational training institutes located at the upazila level will benefit chiefly the rural unemployed by offering them opportunities for training and an earning career. And the institutes spread over the upazilas as proposed by the Minister, will constitute one of the most active steps forward in rural uplift.