

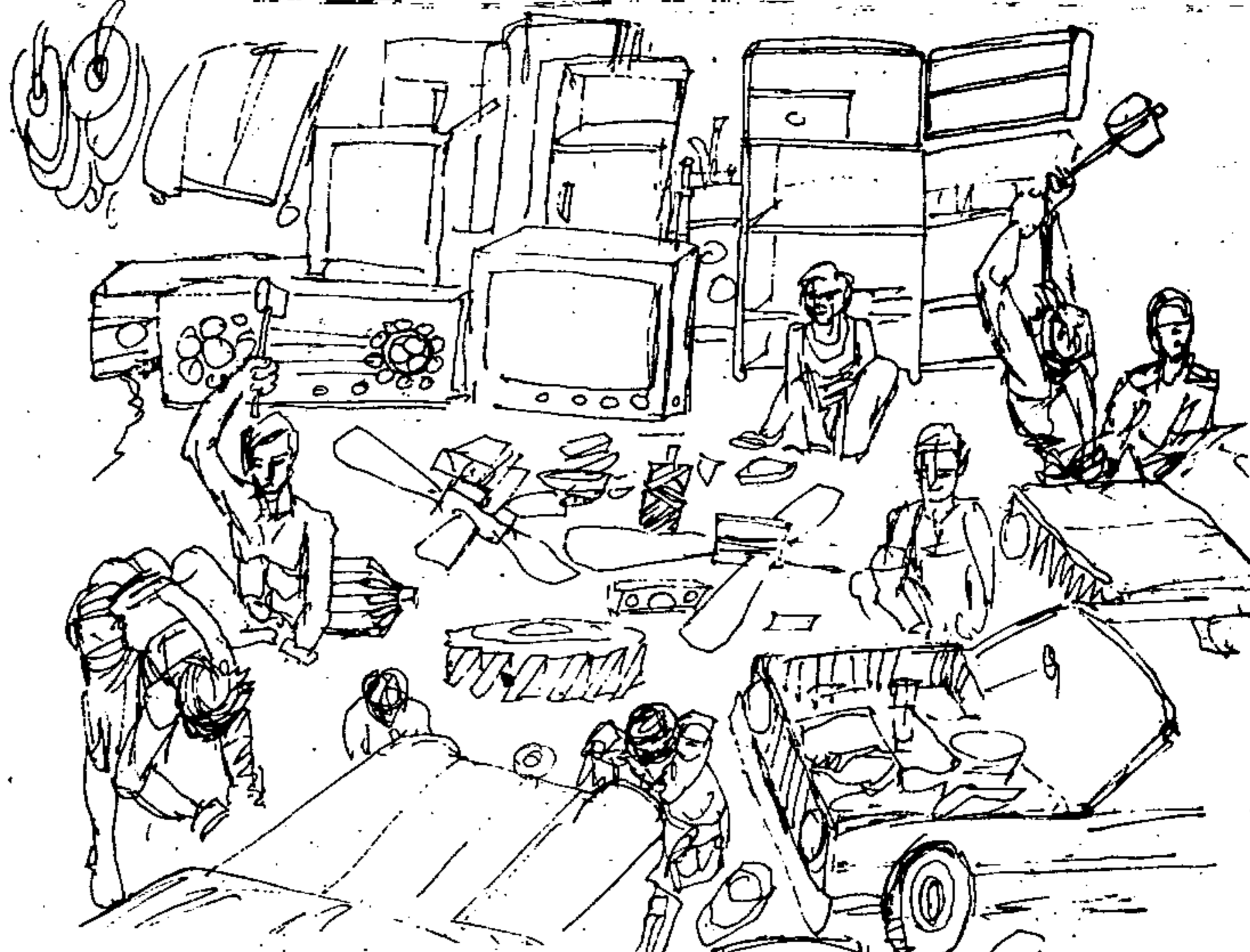
THERE is a positive correlation between education and per capita income. A large number of studies have shown that by far the major factors in economic growth depends on, among others, appropriate organizations, inventiveness and education. Better organizational and inventive skills are the direct result of education. Education is both an item of consumption and factor of production. It yields high level of profit, both direct and indirect, as it aims at modifying people rather than things.

The use of machines and technology in an economic order necessitates, that man should know more and more about the application of science and technology if he wishes to be a productive force. His education should necessarily be such that not only he should have scientific knowledge but he must be trained in some skills or vocation to use that knowledge and must develop a desirable attitude towards work. The vocational education does not mean simple acquaintance with facts of the profession, nor does it mean merely to acquire knowledge and skill to handle certain tools. It means cultivation of talent in a skill by which one can earn a decent living in a changing society.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Institutional arrangement for vocational training in Bangladesh, started with the establishment of 5 industrial schools at Barisal, Bogra, Pabna, Rangpur and Sylhet around 1890 under the department of industries. The School of Engineering established in Dhaka continued to offer both vocational and licentiate courses up to 1947. The Dhaka Polytechnic Institute was established in 1955 under the Department of Industries. In 1961 the Directorate of Technical Education was set up for the purpose of organizing and administering the technical and vocational education in the country. The five Technical Institutes along with the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute were transferred to the Directorate of Technical Education in 1961 that started with present pattern of administering technical and vocational education.

By 1970 as many as 17 Polytechnic Institutes and 22 Vocational Training Institutes (VTI) under the Ministry of Education and 5 Technical Training Centers (TTC) under the Ministry of Labour and Manpower were in operation. Vocational Training Programmes were also offered



State of our vocational education

HEDAYAT AHMED

red in 13 Polytechnic Institutes in the second shift evening session. Moreover, there were 51 private technical schools offering training in vocational courses in 1981. Non-formal vocational courses offered in 119 private schools at that time were getting grants-in-aid from the Government through the Directorate of Technical Education.

It is estimated that there should be 15 skilled workers and 5 technicians for each graduate engineer. In Bangladesh in 1981 this ratio was 2:3:1 which showed disproportionate level of skilled workers in the country. Obviously, the supply of manpower for development showed marked imbalance. From the middle of 1981 Technical Training Centres started offering six-month modular courses. Similar modular courses were also introduced in the Vocational Training Institutes and in the Polytechnic Institutes in evening sessions without disturbing the 2-year courses. The total annual capacity and enrollment in the Technical Training Centres and the Vocational Training Institutes with the introduction of 6-month modular courses in the year 1981 were 19,047 and 11,756 respectively.

In 1982 the Vocational Training Programme was transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Manpower from the Ministry of Education, which was reversed in 1984.

Enrollment at the trade level declined in 1985 due to closure of second shift trade courses in 13 Polytechnic Institutes and abolition of modular courses introduced during Second Five Year Plan. As a result the ratio of skill workers, technicians and engineers stood at 2:3:1 as against the target of 15:5:1. At present there are 51 Vocational Training Institutes under the Ministry of Education and 12 Technical Training Centres under the Ministry, of Labour and Manpower offering vocational courses of two-year duration divided into two independent parts in 15 different trade areas with a total enrollment capacity of 9,540.

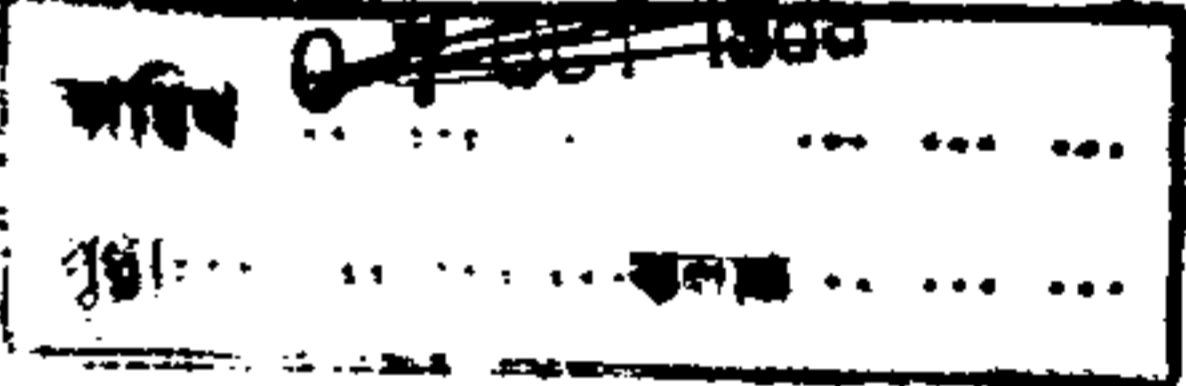
There are a large number of private schools offering both formal and non-formal trade courses of different duration. The number of non-government schools offering non-formal trade courses and receiving grants-in-aid from the Ministry of Education through the Directorate of Technical Education stood at 150 in 1988. There are

44 Trade Schools run by the Non-Profit Trade School Association which are also offering both formal and non-formal trade courses.

FORMAL VOCATIONAL: EXISTING SITUATION

Formal Vocational Training in Bangladesh is mainly administered and delivered by a few Government organizations and some privately run institutions including a few by Association of Non-profit Trade School Organizations. These institutions produce about 3300 certified skilled workers each year (88). To produce these graduates the Ministry of Education operates fiftyone Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) with a total capacity of full-time enrollment of 5040 in two years, having 2520 in each year. The Ministry of Labour and Manpower operates 12 Technical Training Centres (TTCs) with a total capacity of full-time enrollment 4500 in two years having 2250 in each year.

In addition, some private institutions run by the Association of Non-profit Trade School Organization have started offering formal vocational training in addition to their main objectives of non-formal training. The formal vocational training consists of a two-year programme



of instruction leading to National Skill Standard (NSS) G-III at the end of the first year and NSS G-II at the end of the second year.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING (NCSDT)

The NCSDT was founded in 1979 through a Government resolution authorized by the President. Under the provisions of the Government resolution, the NCSDT is primarily responsible for: a) Establishment of trade standards; b) Establishment of national level policies relating to VTE; c) Review of national skill development needs; d) Co-ordination of all formal and non-formal national skill development programmes; and e) Recommendation of related legislation.

Although NCSDT comprises high level representatives from 18 concerned Ministries, it has not met since 1984. When reactivated a national programme for human resources development could be organized

BANGLADESH TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD (BTEB)

The BTEB is a statutory organization established through the Technical Education Act of 1967. It operates under the administrative umbrella of the Ministry of Education, but is primarily a self-supporting organization, collecting its operating capital from institution accreditation and student examination fees and a few contracts and grants from Government agencies and enterprises. The BTEB has the designated responsibility to provide: a) Accreditation of VTE institutions; b) Testing and certification of VTE graduates; c) Development of standardized curricula; d) Testing and certification of VTE teacher training graduates; and e) Institutional standardization.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES AND TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTRES

The Ministry of Education operates fifty-one VTIs at various Zila and Upazila levels. Although four VTIs Barisal, Pabna, Rangpur and Sylhet are larger in size (typical enrolment of about 200 students) and are located in district towns, the remainder are generally located in rural areas, with low levels of industrialization. These VTIs are designed to enroll 80 students in two course areas.

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) under the aegis of the

Contd. from page 9

Ministry of Labour and Manpower administers 12 Technical Training Centres (TTCs). These centres are located in the larger cities and have full-time enrolments ranging from about 110 to 550. The curriculum areas are similar to those offered in VTIs.

Vocational Teachers Training Institute (VTI): Most of the teachers in the VTIs are trained in the VTI, located in Bogra. The Institute has excellent facilities and equipment. The VTI was established in 1982. Over the past decade, Swedish Aid has been used to provide facility improvements, equipment and technical assistance. The Institute has training facilities for 80 trainees. There are 26 instructors in addition to one Principal and one Vice-Principal assigned to the Institute; all have received at least one to two years of overseas training in England or Sweden.

The Institute offers one-year training programme focused upon the training of VTE teachers in pedagogy and emphasized on related trade skills. In addition, short-term in-service courses are offered to practicing teachers and administrators as-needed basis. For the past three years the VTI has trained about 60 teachers per year.

NON-FORMAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The non-formal domain of VTE in Bangladesh covers a wide variety of programmes operated or managed by Government agencies, NGOs and

private entrepreneurs. Although most programmes are designed for male participants, a somewhat larger proportion of training spaces are offered to females than in the formal programmes. The programmes also vary in the nature of the skills being imparted. Some programmes are intended to promote industrial productivity through training and as such, have many characteristics of the formal system, except that the training period often is of shorter duration. Other programmes are designed to teach or transfer skills to unskilled persons for use in established skill and trade areas.

Although no single agency is charged with the responsibility of compiling a census of all non-formal and informal VTE activities, contact with the most knowledgeable sources seems to indicate that the number of institutions perhaps exceeds 1,000. The number of trainees involved in a single programme ranges from less than 20 to over 1,000. The Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh (ADAB) which comprise at least half of all non-formal and informal VTE activities. This organization coordinates international, national and local NGOs. Coverage includes all districts and nearly all upazilas. A map prepared in 1987 shows that there are over 500 NGOs, about 200 international, 200 national and 100 local. The non-formal programmes may be described under three headings: a) Government non-formal programmes; b) Non-formal programmes of

Vocational

NGOs, and c) Private non-formal programmes. These categories are not entirely discrete. NGOs and private organizations often overlap. Some Government non-formal programmes are very similar to the formal systems.

ACTUAL TRADES AND POTENTIAL TRADES

The VTIs and TTCs offer both formal and non-formal courses in 15 actual trades and 3 potential trades. The formal courses are of 2 year's duration. After completion of first year, trade certificate equivalent to NSS-III and after second year equivalent to NSS-II are given. The non-formal or informal courses may be of varied nature in contents and time. Recently BTEB has introduced a system of allowing candidates to appear in NSS-III examination in case of non-formal and informal courses in some of the trades after 2 years of job experiences. Even a candidate having no training in non-formal or informal courses may also be permitted to appear in NSS-II provided he or she has requisite actual job experience and applies through respective organization.

Of the 15 trades that are in operation in the TTCs and VTIs as formal courses, three potential trades which at present are not being offered as formal courses but only as non-formal courses are shown below:

Actual Trades are: Automotive, Radio-TV, Refeair-condi-

education

tioning, Electrical, Turner, Machinist, General mechanics, Welding, Drafting (civil), Drafting (mechanical), Carpentry, Plumbing, Masonry, Rarm mechanics and Power pump maintenance. Potential trades, on the other hand, are Tin Blacksmith, Foundry and Pattern making.

MANPOWER NEEDS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING PLANNING

An ILO sponsored manpower study showed an annual need of 25,000 skilled workers in some 600 surveyed establishments in the trades offered by VTIs and TTCs, excluding the need for agricultural sector which employs 24,000 skilled men now and would require an additional 18,000 by 1990. This shows an effective demand for VTI/TTC graduates. Some survey reports indicate large unemployment among VTI/TTC graduates. It would therefore seem intriguing that although the need for skilled labour exists, the effective demand for VTI/TTC graduates does not show an encouraging sign. This necessitates a thorough review of the situation. The symposium will hopefully address this particular issue with an open mind and recommend ways and means to resolve this paradox.

TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The Training Need Assessment Report of UNDP/ILLO

(1985) showed that although actual number of posts in which VTI/TTC trained persons were eligible could be about 43,880, the actual number of such graduates employed were only 1286 or about 3 per cent of the total posts. Similarly, out of a total of about 600 non-VTI/TTC personnel, only about 14 per cent posts are held by trained workers, the remaining 84 per cent by untrained workers. The figures are for the 18 numbers of trades which are being offered either as formal or non-formal trades. The figure shows a remarkable preponderance of untrained workers over trained ones in the employment of labour market.

It has been observed that the employment of disproportionate number of unskilled workers by public and private enterprises results in low productivity, high wastage and accident rate and low quality products. It should therefore be possible by sustained efforts

and better liaison to convince the employers that the employment of trained workers are more economic in the long run. The reasons for the preponderance of untrained workers as reflected in the employment pattern revealed in the said survey deserve in-depth and serious examination.

NEXT WEEK:

Problems and prospects of vocational education.

The author is the Secretary of the Ministry of Education.