

## Science And Development

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That in the strategy of modern development in both developed and developing countries advancement of science and technology is the greatest single factor need hardly be emphasised. The awareness is certainly there all over the world, of inseparability of scientific knowledge from the process of progress of an individual country. The question that faces the developing countries like Bangladesh in this context is one, raising of sizable scientific manpower, two, full and productive application of their knowledge and expertise to the solution of problems in agriculture, industry, health, communications, education etc. In fact there is scarcely an area of national life where advanced scientific techniques and technological know-how is dispensable in today's world. As it is, we are still making do with styles in the various fields of development, which have long been outmoded, as a result the needed momentum in the development process is lacking.

The task has of course to be taken by a group of specialists and experts and they are the senior and junior groups comprising the country's scientists and technicians and technologists. And by far the most spacious area where their studies, experience and expertise are to be applied is agriculture and industry, the latter in the broadest and the most diversified sense. It is there that the mere routine type of academic activity chiefly based on theoretical study of science will be of little avail, unless original and fundamental research and its scope is expanded in a more purposive way, i.e. to solve the problems of poverty, and backwardness, both rural and urban. And the scope, potential as well as actual, is promised by the vast reserve of the country's natural resources of which only a tiny five per cent is being exploited—even that perhaps not as thoroughly and productively as is warranted by the urgency of needs of development, and, no less, by the easy feasibility in most cases.

President Ziaur Rahman on Sunday speaking to the third annual Bangladesh Science Con

ference at Chittagong pinpointed the role of science and scientists in accelerating the pace of national development and improving the standard of living of the common people. It is to be admitted though that our science institutions over the past years including those dealing with problems of crop—variation and diversification of the cultivation—schedule and mode have done good work. What is needed however is a wider vision, canvass, and larger initiative toward original research based on direct exploitation of local natural resources—much in the line of rice research. And in the conduct of more extensive research in all the fields covered by the sciences now being studied at the higher levels of education there has to be more financial support and a greater sense of purpose and achievement in a spirit of competition and cooperation with the scientifically advanced part of the world. It is necessary that while such liaison with the outside world has to be maintained and taken advantage of, locally the problem of coordination and cooperative activity between the different science institutions including the science faculties of the universities need to be brought under a central national command.

Rural development which tops our priorities in the development commitment has to be separated from its traditional base. Both agriculture and rural industries including cottage industries will have to be provided with the benefits and advantages of modern technology to achieve a full-scale and most productive realisation of the immense rural potential. Such minerals as gas, coal, lime-stone and oil or fishery, poultry etc., can each be given a new impetus under the dynamic process initiated by science and technology in this country. The need, indeed is for a thorough reorientation of our national outlook and educational programme to the modern stimuli and benefits of science as it is being cultivated the world over to solve problems and to augment human happiness.