

Take A Look At Education

Over past years there have been a few sporadic attempts to make education more meaningful for the common man. Long rejected as suiting the needs of only the rich the fact that educational resources continue to be unevenly spread, is a cause for concern. Since independence, the emphasis has centred mainly on creating an educated elite rather than, as it should be, on providing basic education to the masses, thus vindicating the view held by the poor.

Although some innovative solutions have been introduced into the system, such as for example, the introduction of a new curriculum including practical classes, which have turned out to be, rather disappointingly, only for the boys, the fact that most of budget for education is still spent on higher education means that the outcome of such innovations is still largely in doubt. For today, there is little difference in standards, and little enough increases in the number of children who are inducted into the system and who manage to pass through it unscathed.

When one considers the effect of the current preoccupation with higher levels of education one can readily see that the focus has not really benefited the economy very much for there are more graduates being turned out each year than there are jobs. And the downside is that, if they are to "stand out in the crowd", new applicants for jobs have to martial far more diplomas and degrees than previously, if only to prove themselves better than the other man.

The irony in all this is that, despite the surfeit of graduates, would be employers still face problems when searching for qualified managers or technicians. In many other areas there are strong indications of serious shortfalls in manpower but efforts expanded for improving the quality and relevance of education have also been shown to be useless, mainly because the pace of change is itself too slow, therefore education requires a new look.

Experts and other serious students of the system have also come to realise that it is simply not possible to restructure the educational sector without first restructuring the economy, therefore there have been few encouraging signs that a revolution in education is underway. Nor is it at all clear that economically we are any better off than we were for, despite the successive economic plans, the percentage of people still living in poverty, has remained largely the same, an indication that all the efforts have come to nought.