

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

It is just not possible to shut out technology. It has never been. Technology once developed invariably makes advances in diverse directions. We can, however, accelerate the process and make the transfer less stressful and more beneficial. The delay, deliberate or otherwise, deprives the people of the possible advantages and means but loss of time.

The present age is often called the 'Age of Information'. Information explosion is indeed common experience these days. We all know how very important information is for decision-making. But it is not possible through the traditional system to make use of the latest information in a meaningful way. For that we have to take the help of Information Technology (IT) which of course combines the Computer and Communication Technology.

The IT is already on the way to replace at least partly the present paper culture and traditional educational system. It has been recognised by many countries of the world as vital to ensure competitiveness of their economies. There is also increasing appreciation of the potential of IT as decision support aid to the planning and monitoring of rural development schemes. What is of greater significance is that the whole process is developing at a breakneck speed and we risk being at an irretrievable position unless we jump on the bandwagon right now.

It is heartening that the issues have been getting closer attention at the highest level in Bangladesh. The country already has a National Computer Board (NCB) headed by a Cabinet Minister and an expert as Adviser to the President on Computers. The potential of manufacturing computers and developing software in the country is also considered significant.

In this backdrop came off the five-day 'Top Level national seminar on Information Technology (IT) Applications in Government Administration and Decentralised Development' sponsored by the National Computer Board in collaboration with Kuala Lumpur-based Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC). The seminar concluded in the city on Thursday last making a number of recommendations for promoting the use of computer system.

The seminar provided an opportunity for interaction between the local and foreign experts and the users of information technology and enriched the knowledge of all concerned. The experience would certainly be helpful in determining the future course of action and provide stimuli for transfer of technology to our country.

Emphasising the importance of modern information technology Vice President Moudud Ahmed in his inaugural address called for planning and organising information system in every government office for increasing management efficiency and giving better service to the people. Some of the Third World countries even in our own region have made substantial progress and the key to their success is adoption of modern information technology.

In the scheme of things of the government, therefore, are not only introduction of the IT in the secretariat at the apex but in all spheres of national life extending through local bodies down to upazila for increasing their management efficiency. The need to acquaint children at schools with computers has also been felt to enable them to pick it up well. All this indeed augurs well for the country.