

**International Conference on
Skills for the Future World of Work and TVET for Global Competitiveness**

Speech by

HE Sheikh Hasina

Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

The Chair,
Colleagues,
Foreign delegates,
Members of IDEB,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Assalamu Alaikum and a very Good Morning to you all.

I welcome you all at this International Conference on "Skills for the Future World of Work and TVET for Global Competitiveness" jointly organized by Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) and Colombo Plan Staff College.

At the outset, I would like to pay my deep homage to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the martyrs of the 15th August in 1975. I also pay my deep respect to the four national leaders, 3 million martyrs of the war of liberation and 2 hundred thousand women who lost their innocence in 1971.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the invention of newer technologies and their multi-dimensional benefits, a constant change is taking place in the lives of the people. Use of life-related technologies are increasing fast. A fast change is also taking place in production system. As a result, scarcity of workers at domestic and international labour market is deepening everyday. Only skill can provide worldwide sustainable development and ensure jobs. Accelerating living standard of people and reducing poverty through utilizing science and technology is the main target of the world community.

People-centric use of technology for the welfare of masses has brought revolutionary changes in the living standard. The average life-span of people has increased. On the other hand, the number of active people is decreasing in the developed countries. The number of dependant people is also rising. Those countries are increasingly getting dependant on the countries those have demographic advantage. In Bangladesh, 49% people are at 24 or below. We have to utilize our demographic dividend. Bangladesh is at the highest position of the global demographic dividend. Our government is very active to utilize this opportunity. We have already undertaken various projects attaching special importance to building human resources. Our government's main objective is to build a skilled and knowledge-based society.

In 1974, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman told the first Education Commission that technical education will be our priority among priorities.

The rate of students in technical and vocational education was only 1.8% before Awami League assumed office. With our concerted efforts, the number has now rose to 14%. The government has taken a policy to increase the students in technical and vocational education at

20% in 2020, 30% in 2030 and 50% in 2040. We are very keen to transform our technical education system like developed countries, including Japan, Singapore, Korea and Malaysia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I believe that country's population is not a burden. Our 160 million people are our precious resources. There is nothing valuable than that of skilled human resource.

We have been implementing massive programs for the development of science, technology and vocational education aimed at turning the population into human resources. There are 49 government polytechnic institutes, including 3 for women, and 467 government approved private polytechnic institutes in the country. They are conducting four-year diploma engineering course.

In every government polytechnic institute, second shift has been introduced. We have also taken initiatives to establish 23 polytechnic institutes in the remaining 23 districts. Besides, one women technical school and college will be set up at each divisional headquarters. We have already 64 technical school and colleges where programs are underway to build skilled human resources.

The government has also taken a program to set up one technical school and college at each upazilla of the country. Work on such college has begun in 100 upazillas. There are 70 technical training centers (TTC) in the country to build skilled manpower in different trades. We have decided in principle to establish government TTC at each upazilla.

In the global labor market, 93-94% workers are in the lower to middle grade. In the changed global system, we have to give attention to create skilled manpower for our development and prosperity. And to achieve the goal, we have to attach due importance in technical and vocational education and training-TVET.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A skilled manpower can boost the development of a country and nation. We have to reform our human resources development education integrating knowledge-based skill and applied skill.

In this respect, TVET may play an important role. So, the technical education should be incorporated in the mainstream of the education system.

One of the main objectives of the conference is ensuring supply of skilled and standard workers according to the demand of the labor market and establishing TVET network among developing countries for exchanging mutual experience and research knowledge in the field of technical and vocational education. This conference, I think, will play an important role in building an identical platform of concerned researchers, practitioners, educationist, entrepreneurs and policy makers in the field of technical and vocational education and training for preparing future work plan.

I would like to urge the IDEB and Technical and Madrasa Education division of Ministry of Education to jointly prepare the platform. I believe that the proposed platform will be able to face the challenges of upcoming policies and new technologies in the competitive labor market.

Engineers Leaders, Experts and Delegates,

Bangladesh is the most affected country by the adverse impact of climate change. Untimely flash flood has damaged huge crops in the Haors (Large water bodies). Currently, a vast area of the country is inundated by the waters coming from the upstream and created public sufferings. Landslides in the hills also caused huge losses.

We have successfully faced the calamities with efficient management of our government and are still facing those. The implementation of the plans and activities mainly depends on your skill, performance and integrity. Never compromise in maintaining the quality of work.

We all have to fight against terrorism, extremism, poverty with mutual cooperation for the welfare of the people and a livable and peaceful world in the present competitive situation. Keeping this in mind, I am hopeful that the efforts given by the distinguished guests in the summit will be fruitful and successful.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is strongly suggested to create skilled labor force in six stages under the structure of technical and vocational competency in the 7th five-year plan. National Skill Development Council has been constituted in 2008 to expedite the implementation process.

The appropriate use of IT facilities along with providing in one-stop service centers has also been recommended in the 7th five-year plan. A strategic Action Plan is needed to be formulated immediately. To ensure the quality manpower, existing qualification framework has to be turned into universal manpower structure- Bangladesh Qualification Framework - as per the National Skill Development Policy -2011.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have to undertake more effective system to attain further ability in manpower development plan and research activities. The graduates will be able to apply their acquired knowledge, skill and quality instantly. Education from primary to university levels has to be directed as per the demand of local and global labour market. It is required to make a labour force demand related forecasting to ascertain the local and international demand of workers. Applying information technology, administrative activities have to be more organized to ensure all types of services at a Single Point Service.

I hope that, a magnificent action plan will emerge out from the 2-day regional conference held on 25-26 July 2017 and the 3-day long international conference which has started from today in Dhaka. The plan will play an effective role for the welfare of people not only in Bangladesh but also in developing and developed countries of the world. Bangladesh government will continue its all out cooperation in this regard.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is now on the highway of development. We have achieved desired development in every sector of the country for the last 8 and a half years. Bangladesh has become a 'Role Model' in socio-economic development. We shall turn Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041, Insha Allah.

Let us unite to build a non-communal, hunger-poverty-free and happy-prosper Bangladesh. Let us build Sonar Bangladesh as dreamt by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Khoda Hafez
Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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