

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A KEY TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

DHAKA SUNDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2019, FALGUN 5, 1425 BS 32

Some ways to reduce youth unemployment

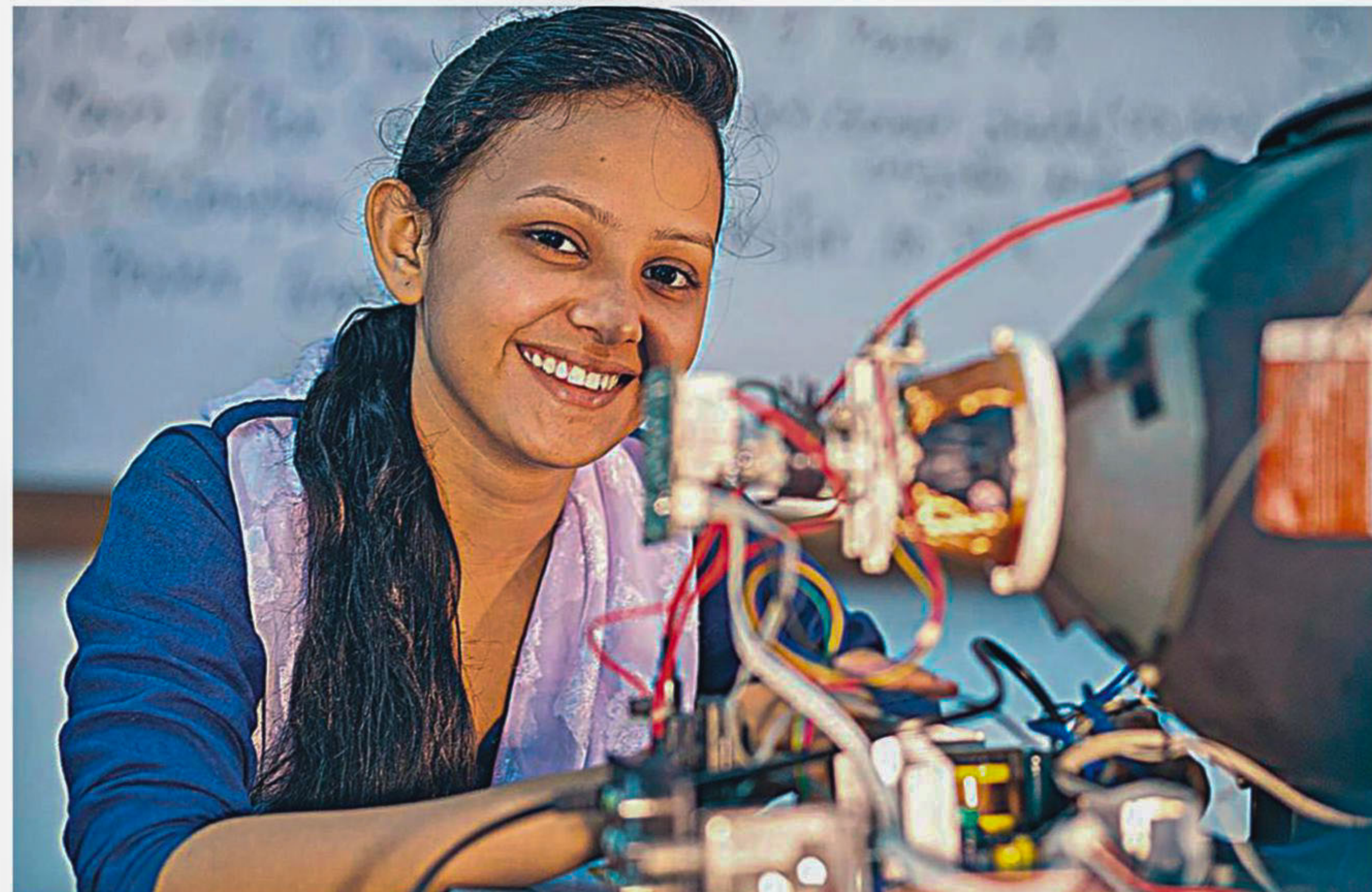
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nations at leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT), coming in at 125th position in the ICT Skills Index—behind India at 102, Nepal at 117 and way behind Sri Lanka at 30.

When seen together, these two reports suggest that our higher education institutions are indeed failing to provide students with skills that are considered to be important, especially when it comes to the technological knowhow that is needed for the employment of the future, as explained by experts from various fields of expertise. While this is one area that we certainly have to focus on to improve, what we also cannot forget is that some of the most important global innovators didn't necessarily discover their world-changing inventions from what they had learned at their higher educational institutions. Rather, many of them had, in fact, opted out of their respective educational institutions to pursue their dreams of becoming inventors and entrepreneurs.

In order for our youth to have the courage, motivation and determination to pursue similar paths, the culture of how we view potential innovators and inventors, and those looking to become entrepreneurs and even those trying to establish their own start-ups, must change. As without the support of their families and from society at large, it is extremely difficult for young people to pursue the bold path of discovering something new and important, which could eventually have a cascading net positive effect on society, including on the road to generating new employment opportunities.

Another mentionable point in regards to education is that, while it is important to introduce new technologies in the curricula at educational institutions, we must remember to be extremely cautious not to abandon the irreplaceable attributes that the great



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teachers of history have always possessed. That is, the ability to motivate students, to inspire them to be curious and to pursue their curiosities, to think for themselves and to develop the moral character and principles that would serve them throughout their entire lives. If teachers can ingrain such

values in their students, then the youth of today, with the innumerable tools that they have available at their fingertips (e.g. the Internet), should be more than capable of succeeding in high-tech fields even without much direct assistance. And, in fact, that is how it worked in most cases in countries that

have had the greatest success in developing the most advanced and innovative technologies that we see in our world today.

This is where providing more and more centralised government-planned education may not be the best option, as it almost always concen-

trates on maintaining the status-quo, rather than nurturing out-of-the-box thinking among students, that challenges them to look at things differently. However, at the end of the day, rethinking our education alone may not be sufficient.

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