

BUET convocation held

Education system has to be democratic: PM

Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said her Government had given top priority to education because it was sine qua non for the rapid progress of the country.

Education is the key to success. It is foundation of development, "the Prime Minister said while addressing the third convocation of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) at the University ground yesterday. The convocation took place after a gap of 16 years.

The function was also addressed by Prof Shamsul Huq, Chairman of University Grants Commission and Prof. Mohammad Shahjahan, Vice-Chancellor of the BUET.

Begum Khaleda Zia, who is also the Chancellor of the BUET, said the present government has identified education as a priority sector for attaining quick progress in all fields. She said highest allocation had been given to the education sector in the current budget.

"The education system has to be democratic... every one has the right to education as per constitutional commitment. Compulsory primary education had been launched as the first step towards democratisation", the Prime Minister said.

The BUET Chancellor said, the mass education programme had been geared up and steps for creating equal opportunities for talents were being taken through setting up open university. She said education for girls upto class eight in rural areas had been made free adding "educated mother means educated family."

Begum Zia called upon the engineers and architects who were conferred degrees in the convocation to evolve an appropriate technology saying "technology means prosperity and progress."

"Government has to spend over Tk 40 thousand per year to produce an engineer. This money comes from the people. Now you

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have to return it through removing backwardness and poverty", she said.

She said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman who underscored the need for innovating technology, had adopted a national science and technology policy and created a separate ministry of science and technology.

But autocratic regime, she said, had rejected the policy and downgraded the Ministry into a division. Emphasis was being given to research and growth of technology for materialising the desired agricultural and industrial revolution, she added.

"Bangladesh is not a country of problem only, it has unlimited resources of which exploration needs an appropriate technology", she said. She further added the condition of Thailand and South

Korea were not better than Bangladesh in 1972, but today they have progressed a lot.

The Prime Minister said the universities had to play pioneer role in the introduction of production-oriented practical education system saying the function of universities is not only distributing certificates.

She regretted that session jam also gripped the BUET resulting in a large scale of brain-drain. She called upon all quarters to create a congenial academic atmosphere by removing session jam.

In the convocation a total of 3,185 graduates, post-graduates, M-Phil and PhD degree holders who completed their course after 1976 were conferred degrees by the Chancellor.

The Prime Minister reached BUET at 9.10 in the morning where she was received by the Vice-Chancellor and deans of various faculties.

She entered the venue in a procession after wearing the traditional convocation robe along with the teachers of BUET.

She declared open of the convocation at 9.35 am and declared closed at 11.50 am. She presided over the function.

Addressing the convocation Prof Shamsul Huq observed about 70 per cent people in the country were illiterate and no development could be possible leaving such a vast people unlettered.

Prof Mohammad Shahjahan said, BUET was going to open a new department named petroleum and mineral resources engineering.

The convocation over, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and convocation Speaker Prof Shamsul Huq were given convocation crest by the Vice-Chancellor.

The convocation was attended, among others, by ministers, diplomats, Dhaka University teachers and high officials.