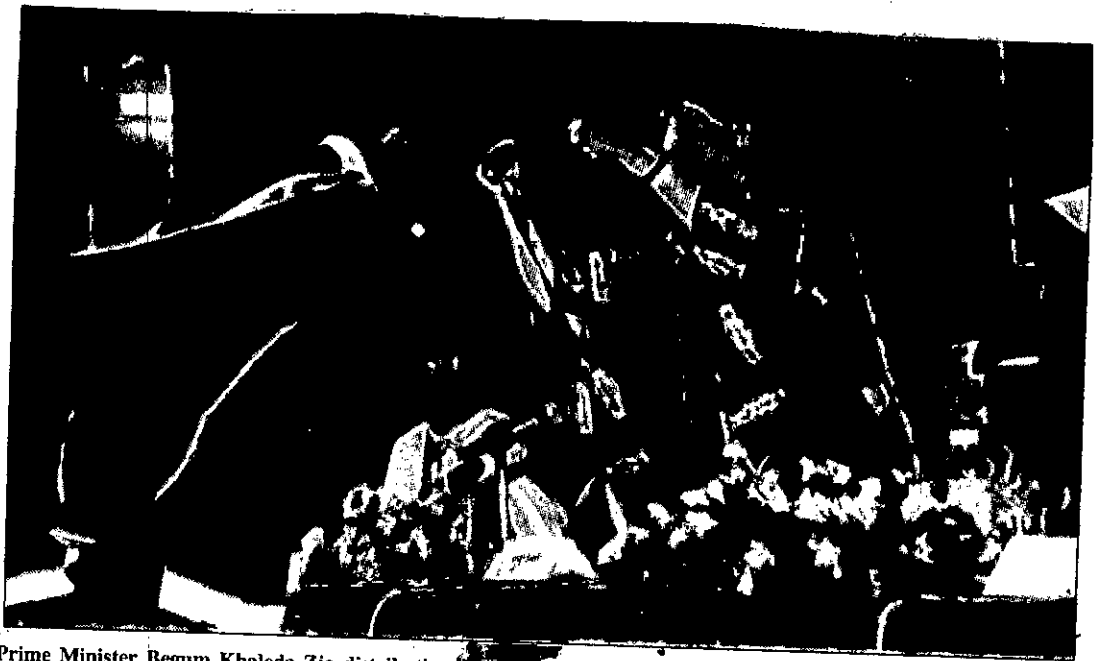


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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia distributing gold medals among meritorious students at the 15th convocation ceremony of Islamic University of Technology on Monday in Gazipur.

15th IUT Convocation held

Khaleda calls for fulfilling Muslim world's aspirations

GAZIPUR, Oct. 29: Formally upgrading the Islamic Institute of Technology to a university today Prime Minister Khaleda Zia called upon graduates from this varsity to do their best to fulfil aspirations of the Muslim world facing the challenges of 21st century, reports UNB.

Offering Bangladesh's help for expansion of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), she said: "I hope all ex-graduate students of IUT will be able to build up necessary unity for Islamic Ummah against the backdrop of prevailing world situation through consolidating link up between each other."

The institute was renamed as University last June and formally opened today aiming to build well-versed technologists for socio-economic uplift of the IOC member-countries.

Addressing the function of formal inauguration and Fifteenth Convocation ceremony of the institution at the IUT auditorium this (Monday) morning the Prime Minister said as an active member of OIC Bangladesh was making effective contributions to the development of the Islamic Ummah. "We are committed to sustain it in the future."

Visiting Secretary General of OIC Dr Abdelouahed Belkeziz who is also Chancellor of IUT and IUT Vice-Chancellor Prof M Anwar Hossain received the Prime Minister as she, attired in convocation robes, reached the university premises at Gazipur.

In 1995, Khaleda Zia as a premier had formally inaugurated the naming of this institution as Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT) from Islamic Center for Technical Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR), run by members of the Organization of

Islamic Conference. And now she inaugurated it as a university.

She distributed certificates of master, graduate, higher diploma and diploma for 2000-2001 academic year among 133 students of various disciplines including departments of instructor training and general studies, electrical and electronic engineering, mechanical and chemical engineering.

The awardees are the citizens of 12 countries: Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Cameroon, Morocco, Niger, Gambia, Palestine, Somalia, the Maldives, Yemen and Jordan.

Tawfique Hasan of Bangladesh, B.Sc. Engineer in Electrical and Electronics Department has been nominated as recipient of OIC gold medal 2001 for outstanding performance and results. Khaleda decorated him with the gold.

Six other graduate, post graduate and higher diploma students were given IUT gold medal 2001.

Congratulating the students who successfully completed the courses and received degrees and diplomas, Prime Minister Khaleda said, "Your countries are looking towards you with high hopes."

The aim of the establishment of this prestigious institution was not only to produce educated and trained engineers, technologists and technical teachers who can contribute to the technological development of the Islamic Ummah and respective countries but also act as multipliers, she observed.

Recalling her visit to this institution five times on earlier occasions of convocation as chief guest, Khaleda told the degree obtaining students that they are not merely graduates of an educational institution but also young pioneers who can be reckoned as standard-setters.

Hence, I believe that you will provide leadership in the development of technology in your countries, the Premier advised the students of IUT.

She noted that the OIC was formed for establishing unity and solidarity of Islamic Ummah and for the development of Islamic world.

The Islamic world has been making relentless efforts for converting the Muslim people into skilled human resources through modern education and technology, she told the function.

The OIC has sustained its advancement for overall progress of the Islamic Ummah including infrastructural development through successful application of

technological and engineering knowledge.

She observed that a vast region of the world was brightened with Islamic civilization following advent of Islam 1400 years ago.

The Muslim scholars of the world left behind a great contribution to the culture of science of knowledge for about one thousand years.

The Muslim scientists had ushered in a new knowledge to the world in the field of medicine, mathematics, chemistry, astronomy and philosophy during the golden age of Islamic Civilization.

The Prime Minister said Shaheed President Zahir Rahman had laid the foundation of this institution on March 27 in 1981 in presence of President Yasser Arafat of Palestine and the then Secretary General of OIC the late Dr Habib Chetty.

He (Zia) put forward the proposal for establishing this institution to the OIC with a view to developing human resources and socio-economic advance of the Muslim Ummah. The OIC countries positively responded to his call and honoured Bangladesh by establishing this institution.

"This institution has been playing a commendable role since its establishment... as a result, this institution would start its new journey today leaving behind its identity of ICTVTR and IIT," Khaleda said.

She said the number of students of the university had increased over the last few years whereas the budget remained at the same level for five years.

Saying that the budget of this university depends entirely on mandatory contributions from OIC members she also appealed to the affluent states to provide further financial support as donation as IUT is in immediate need of a second Academic Building to accommodate more classrooms, laboratories and workshops.

Later, the Prime Minister unveiled the IUT plaque after taking part in a brief academic procession marking the convocation.

OIC Secretary General Dr Belkeziz, and IUT Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwar Hossain also spoke on the occasion.

Foreign Minister Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and Labour and Manpower Minister Abdullah Al-Noman, clad in the convocation dresses, also joined the academic procession.

Some senior and junior ministers and MPs of the ruling party were present.