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## PM's call to ensure food security

# Agri Instt made Sher-e-Bangla University

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday announced conversion of Bangladesh Agricultural Institute as Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University urging the agro scientists to devote in research and innovation for ensuring food security of the people, reports UNB.

"We've limited lands and a huge population that is increasing day by day. So, we'll have to raise food production and bring down the population growth," she said addressing the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the Institute in Dhaka in the morning.

Hasina hoped by adopting modern technologies the agricultural scientists would be able to play their due role in facing the

challenges of future for ensuring food security of the people.

The government has made special allocation for research and laid emphasis on science and technology, she said adding there is no alternative to agriculture for attaining economic emancipation in the new century.

The Prime Minister said: "Bangladesh is an agro-based country... The government has put utmost importance on agriculture and is taking steps to ensure balanced development of the country by increasing production and raising GDP growth."

She said scientists and researchers would have to adopt (See Page 16 Col. 2)

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plans and programmes so that optimum production could be possible in the limited lands of the country. "We'll have to take all plans considering the small lands."

The economy of the country basically depends on agricultural production and the government is working hard to continue its success in agriculture in a bid to march towards a prosperous future, she said mentioning the country's massive success in the sector.

Hasina said the country has achieved self-sufficiency in food following four consecutive bumper harvests. This was possible for the pragmatic steps taken by the government.

"We want to continue our success and increase food production with the rise of population. And the role of researchers and scientists is very important in this regard," she said.

The Prime Minister hoped that the fortunate students of the new university would utilise the opportunity and give the nation something more for continuing the success in agriculture.

She said 32 per cent of GDP comes from agriculture and 60 per cent of the manpower are involved in this profession. Considering the importance of agriculture, the government has taken massive, integrated and effective steps for overall development of agriculture.

Education Minister ASHK Sadique, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, agriculturist and Awami League publicity secretary Abdul Mannan, President of Old Boys' Association of BAI Mahabubuzzaman, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council Dr Zahurul Karim and Member Secretary of the Diamond Jubilee Celebration Committee AFM Bahauddin Nasim also spoke at the function.

With the announcement of BAI as a university, the students burst into cheers and chanted slogans welcoming the Prime Minister and her decision.

Earlier, the Prime Minister formally inaugurated the celebration programme by releasing balloons and pigeons.

The Institute was established in 1962 by the then Chief Minister of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul