

Hartals can't bring welfare to nation

Develop technology for progress: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Sunday laid stress on building a movement for developing technology in the country so that it could be properly applied in different sectors of economy to attain self-reliance, reports BSS.

Addressing the ninth national conference of the Institute of Diploma Engineers (IDE) at its central office premises in Dhaka she said that her government wanted to harmonise technology with the development process and ensure application of technology in the removal of the country's existing problems.

She also said her government was contemplating reforms in the existing technical education and asked the diploma engineers to contribute to the national uplift through their efforts.

Presided over by its President Shafiuddin Sarkar, the inaugural function of the four-day conference was also addressed by A.K.M.A. Hamid, General Secretary of IDE.

At the beginning of the function one minute silence was observed to show respect to the martyrs of Language Movement and Liberation War.

The Prime Minister announced a grant of Taka 30 lakh for the IDE.

She said that her government had taken up programmes for plourishing technology in the country and added emphasis had been laid on the human resources development.

Begum Zia said old technological knowledge could not help develop the nation and added a high-powered committee had also been formed to

bring about necessary reforms in the existing technical education.

The Prime Minister underlined the need for achieving self-reliance in the field of technology and asked the diploma engineers to help develop technology based on local raw materials.

It needs patriotism and technology to remove all obstacles on way to development. She said adding backwardness in the technological field was one of the major reasons for the country's poverty and unemployment.

Referring to the system loss and deficit in the power sector Begum Zia said this could be met by utilising the country's local technology.

Electricity can be generated from solar power, she said suggesting the setting up of small 'bio-gas plant' in villages which would help accelerate industrialisation, apply technology in the agriculture and rejuvenate rural economy.

The Prime Minister asked the engineers engaged in the formulation of development projects and their implementation to see that how par the projects would benefit the people.

Accountability is a must in democracy, she said adding that it must be looked into how much the engineers were serving the people. She reminded them that it was public money at the cost of which the engineers and doctors were being educated.

The Prime Minister termed it as a good sign that the diploma engineers had abandoned the programmes of movement, strike and hartals and

had been trying to set up example of giving additional services.

She mentioned it was for the first time that a strike was observed in the eastern parts of Germany after seventy years and in Thailand the practice of work stoppage had almost gone. "I do not say that hartal or strike cannot be called in democratic system. But that should be the last weapon", Begum Zia said.

The Prime Minister said that the country's socio-economic reality and the necessity of maintaining peace and stability and the issues of investment in industrial sector must be considered before calling hartal or strike.

"Hartal, strike and destruction cannot bring welfare to the nation," she said and stressed the need for forging a national consensus for the country's development.