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Khaleda's address at ICTVTR

Youths to help brighten future of Islamic states

GAZIPUR, Oct. 27 : Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that the better understanding that existed among the younger generation would help build a bright future for the Islamic countries in the present day world of conflict and despair, reports BSS.

"We have a glorious past, but are now lagging behind because of a period of inaction and slumber," she said adding "strongly believe what we have done in the past can be done again and our younger generation who are the soldiers of Islam will give the leadership to achieve the objective".

The Prime Minister was addressing the fifth convocation for the award of degrees, diplomas and certificates of students and trainees of Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR) at the

centre's premises.

Begum Zia hoped that the students and trainees who received training in the ICTVTR would act as catalysts in the development process and activities of their respective countries.

She also hoped that the friendship and fellowship that the young people from different Islamic countries had developed during their training period in the centre would form a bridge among the younger generation in the Islamic countries.

The Prime Minister said Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) which had set up ICTVTR, was functioning for the last 22 years on the basis of consensus. She said "the unifying factor is our great religion, Islam, our common culture and heritage".

The OIC had come to stay, she said and hoped, it would grow

from strength to strength and play a pioneering role to restore the past glories of Islam.

The Prime Minister said "my government will endeavour to further improve our close ties and bond of friendship with the Islamic world".

Terming ICTVTR as a glowing symbol of joint Islamic Action, Unity and Solidarity, Begum Zia said Bangladesh feels very proud and for being chosen as the location of ICTVTR and deeply involved in rendering services to the Islamic Ummah in an important area.

Begum Zia was happy to note that ICTVTR was successfully training engineers, technologists, technicians and technical teachers for rapid technological and economic development of the Islamic Ummah. She also expressed her

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happiness to know that the executive body of the ICTVTR had decided to rename the centre as Islamic Institute of Technology, offering regular long academic and short training programmes to bring it in line with other similar international institutions of repute.

The Prime Minister recalled the support of member states of OIC in establishing ICTVTR and said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman laid the foundation stone of ICTVTR in presence of PLO leader Yasser Arafat and past OIC Secretary-General late Dr Habib Chatti in 1981. She said due to the untiring efforts and abiding interest of Shaheed President Zia ex-

cellent physical facilities and infrastructure for the ICTVTR were completed.

She said the ICTVTR belongs to all of us and it is very dear to us. We would rear it as a symbol of joint Islamic action in perpetuity and my government will extend all support to develop this as a centre of excellence for technological education and research.

Foreign Minister, ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Aramisoglu attended the function as the guests of honour.

Ministers, members of parliament, diplomats, high civil and

military officials were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the Prime Minister distributed certificates among the 53 students of different Muslim countries including Gambia, Tunisia, Jordan, Somalia, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Iran, Pakistan, The Maldives and Bangladesh, who received degrees and diplomas on different technical and vocational subjects.

The Prime Minister, wearing the ceremonial dress, also took part in the academic procession which started from the administrative building and entered the central plaza through the gate of five fundamentals of the centre.

The function was also ad-

ressed by the Director-General ICTVTR Prof Dr A M Patwari.

A message of the OIC Secretary-General Dr Hamid Algabid was read out on the occasion the message said this centre, a long cherished dream of the Muslim Ummah, has now become a reality and recalled with pleasure that Shaheed President Zia had laid the foundation stone of the centre. It said President Zia was a great exponent of the Muslim unity and he made tremendous contributions for strengthening the OIC. The message also expressed gratitude to Begum Zia for her keen interest and abiding commitment in the overall activities of OIC in general and centre in particular.