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# Uphold democratic values

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were taken on the occasion. Some student groups, apparently supporters of opposition political parties, staged demonstration, away from the venue of the meeting.

## GOVT WON'T INTERFERE

Pointing to the autonomy questions the Prime Minister said amidst applause, "we want to declare in clear terms that we had not and we will never interfere in the internal affairs or academic independence of universities. We want that the universities should discharge their duties towards the society independently and neutrally."

Begum Zia said though it was her first visit to Dhaka University after becoming the head of the government, she was close to the students and teachers of the university, and recalled the exchange of views with them many times during the movement against the autocratic regime. She thanked the teachers for their suggestions which she said were very beneficial for her.

## CONSCIENCE OF NATION

Mentioning the glorious tradition and history of the conscious students of the Dhaka University, she said in

the true sense Dhaka University is the conscience of the nation.

The Prime Minister said time had come when we should go for self-retrospecting, to question whether we could uphold the glorious image of the university.

Begum Zia said political democracy had been established after a long struggle against the autocracy. We want to establish economic democracy and for this we have identified education as our priority sector, she said.

The Prime Minister said a nation was known by its standard of education. The emphasis had been laid on the qualitative education. University is the source of qualitative education and we want to see the universities and seats of higher education in this light, she said.

## HELP UPLIFT OF EDN INSTL

The Prime Minister said the government alone could not realise all the demands even of one university. So she called upon the affluent people to follow the example of modern concept of universities and help the government in the development of higher learning.

Begum Zia, while mentioning the demands of the Vice

Chancellor placed in the function said the government was actively considering these and had already taken necessary steps to fulfil some of them. The rest of the demands were on the priority list of the government, Begum Zia said.

## VICE-CHANCELLOR

In his address of welcome, Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Moniruzzaman Miah briefly mentioned about the problems faced by the institution. These included shortage of space, dearth of infrastructural facilities for research, need for modernisation of the library, residential accommodation shortage both for teachers and students, and low quality of food supplied to the students in hall canteen.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the government for handing over shops built on the university land at Katabon area.

the Vice-Chancellor urged the private donors to come forward in aid of the educational institutions including the Dhaka University since it was not possible for the government to finance the entire bill in the education sector.

Pro-VC Wakil Ahmed also

spoke on the occasion.

Later the Prime Minister distributed the gold medals to over sixty recipients from different disciplines for their extraordinary achievements.

The medals include Ibrahim Memorial Gold Medal, Hari Prashanna Roy Gold Medal, Salekunnesa Gold Medal, Nurunnesa Khatun Biddaya Binodini Gold Medal, Nazmul Karim Memorial Gold Medal, Abdur Rab Chowdhury Gold Medal, Dilnashin Khanam Gold Medal, Masud Khan Gold Medal, Chancellor Gold Medal, Dhaka University Award, Sultana Memorial Silver Medal, Badrunnesa Gold Medal, K.D.H. Laboratories Gold Medal, Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Industries Gold Medal, Rohen Polchnic Gold Medal, Prof. A.U. Ahmed Gold Medal, Abul Mansur Ahmed Gold Medal and Square Pharmaceuticals Gold Medal.