

First convocation of BOU held

Build up efficient leadership in all fields : Khaleda

GAZIPUR, Nov 18: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today underlined the need for building up efficient leadership in all fields to leave for the country's future generation a more prosperous Bangladesh with greater potentiality, reports BSS.

She said university education is a valuable medium for attainment of the ultimate goal and added the universities would build up efficient and skilled manpower to take up the future leadership of the nation.

"Such leadership will have to be built in science and technology, in social and economic fields, in industries and commerce as well as in political and religious fields", Begum Zia said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at the first convocation of the Bangladesh Open University at its premises here. She said education is necessary to make the poor and the toiling masses more effective and

production oriented. "Proper education and training alone can transform them into human resources", she added.

The Prime Minister said that the Open University had been established with the commitment of implementing the universal right to education. She underlined the need for the access to education of the innumerable people in rural areas, who are deprived of education.

Vice Chancellor of the Open University Prof M Shamsher Ali spoke on the occasion while the convocation speech was delivered by Mr Azizul Huq, a former Presidential Adviser.

Ministers, academicians, members of the Board of Governors and Academic Council of the Open University and representatives of the diplomatic missions were present on the occasion.

The convocation procession entered the hall with the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the University, Begum Khaleda Zia,

marking the beginning of the ceremony.

The Bangladesh Open University (BOU) tune was played when the procession entered the hall. Prof Shamsul Kabir, Dean of the School of Education, presented about three thousand graduates for conferring the degrees.

The Prime Minister conferred degrees on the students and distributed certificates among them.

Begum Khaleda Zia left the hall leading the procession immediately after the end of the ceremony.

The Prime Minister extended her heartiest congratulations to those on whom degrees were conferred in the august ceremony. Describing the Bangladesh Open University as a unique institution for higher education Begum Zia said BOU had established the universal right to education. She said BOU would remain as a mile-

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stone in the implementation of the strong commitment to universal education that has been enshrined in the great religion of Islam as well as in the country's Constitution.

The Prime Minister said BOU had created a scope for those who are deprived of education for various reasons, to pursue their education in this university from their places of employment or homes. The door of education, she said, had been opened by this university for the rural women, housewives, primary and secondary school teachers and health and family planning workers. There is no age-bar and time limit for passing out in BOU, Begum Zia said.

The Prime Minister said that convocation was almost lost from the memory of the university students after the independence of the country. She said after elected to power the BNP government again started holding of convocation ceremonies in the universities including Dhaka University.

Today's exams at DU postponed

The authorities have postponed all the examinations scheduled for today (Sunday) at the main examination centre of Dhaka University due to student strike called by Pro-Awami League Chhatra League, reports UNB.

A DU Press release on Saturday said the fresh schedule of the examinations will be announced later. The time-table of other examinations announced earlier will remain unchanged.

Pro-Awami League Chhatra League called for a day-long strike on the campus today (Sunday) demanding immediate release of its leaders and workers arrested during the opposition forced blockade and hartal programme.

BUET, Agriculture University and Islamic University.

Begum Zia said that the Bangladesh Open University Act was passed after the BNP took over the responsibility of running the state. The activities of the Open University began in 1992, she said and added the BOU had been working sincerely for the last few years to achieve its goal.

The Prime Minister expressed her happiness that the BOU was now imparting education to more than fifty thousand students. She appreciated the sincere efforts and the success of the teachers, officials and employees of the BOU in developing the institution to its present position in a short span of time.

Begum Zia said the responsibility of the teachers, officials and employees would multiply with the launching of new academic programmes and the increase of student enrollment.

The Prime Minister said those who received degrees today were either employed as teachers or were waiting to join the teaching profession. Describing the teaching profession as a noble one she said "we expect from you as teachers continuous pursuit of knowledge, practical skill in teaching and above all total commitment to the profession."

The sincerity and efficiency of the teachers, the Prime Minister said, inspired the learners in acquiring knowledge.

She said as the architects of human character it was the responsibility of the teachers to lead the nation to progress and development. Referring to the pronouncement of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM) about the importance of education for the entire mankind Begum Zia said "in Islam, acquisition of knowledge has been made compulsory both for men and

female education.

There are now 21 universities in the country including ten private universities, she added.

About notable progress in the education sector, Begum Zia said the rate of literacy now stood at 38 per cent as against 26 per cent in 1990.

Prof Shamsher Ali said the total number of enrolment of the BOU now stood at more than 50 thousand.