



President Hussain Muhammad Ershad offering munajat after laying the foundation stone of the Institute of Higher Islamic Learning at Savar on Thursday.

**Islam must be understood in its pristine glory: Ershad**

## Mass literacy crying need of coming decade

SAVAR, Dec. 28 (BSS): President Hussain Muhammad Ershad inaugurated the Institute of Higher Islamic Learning of the Darul Ihsan here today expressing the hope that it would become a focal point for the understanding and comprehension of Islam as a moral and social force.

The President said, Let the world regard education as the basic necessity for human progress.

Islam conveyed, "Referring to the importance attached by Islam to education, he said mo-

der of the Makkah-based Muslim World League, Dr Abdullah Omar Nasseef, President of Islamic Academy at Cambridge Shaikh Ahmad Jamjoom, National Professor Syed Ali Ahsan, Dean of the Institute of Higher Islamic Learning Sheikh Muhammad Abdur Rahim and Baderuddin, Chairman of Darul Ihsan Trust Syed Ali Ahsan and Assistant Rector of the Institute Syed Ali Nagi.

Professor Anwar Dil presented an Islamic calligraphy to President Ershad and some others to different organisations while Shaikh Muhammad Abdur Rahim Jad Baderuddin led a Munajat seeking divine blessings for the success of the Institute.

The inaugural ceremony of the Institute was attended, among others, by ministers, high civil and military officials, diplomats and educationists.

The President said nearly one fifth of the present global population was illiterate and most

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## Mass literacy

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of them were from the developing countries. The industrial nations even in this century had about 17 million people who could not read and write, he said adding mass literacy and basic education for all were the crying need of the coming decade.

He said there was a renewed

sense of urgency in the world

to ensure education for all and

the international bodies, the

UN system and nations of the

world were moving in concert

to achieve this objective. In a

basic sense, he pointed out this

realisation was a reassertion of

the eternal wisdom of the first

revelation enshrined in the

Al-Quran which calls upon the

believer to read.

President Ershad said the

Institute would be able to ful-

fil its noble mission if it could

help education-complete education as envisaged in Islam

and spread it all over the world.

He said Bangladesh welcomed

this non-government initiative

as a significant step furthering

cooperation within the Islamic

Ummah.

He said the brotherly nation

of Saudi Arabia not only had

custody of most sacred places

of Islam but played a central

role cementing the bonds of

amity and unity among Muslim

nations. It was heartening to

see that alongside the govern-

ment, the distinguished people

of Saudi Arabia had come for-

ward to help other countries

in the fields of education and

economic development, he said.

The President noted with

happiness to find that this pri-

ate venture was supported by

eminent friends of Bangladesh

and said with the advice, gen-

eral and guidance of scholars from

home and abroad this Institute

could be transformed into a

centre of excellence. He ascer-

ted that his government would

watch the progress of this en-

deavour with keen interest and

assist it in all possible man-

ners. He thanked Dr Nassef for

arranging to extend the facil-

ties of Darul Ihsan Trust to

Bangladesh and said his pro-

posal to extend the facility of

this Institute to students from

the SAARC countries was wel-

come.

President Ershad referred to

the complications being cre-

ated in the environment due to

the effect of modernisation in

different fields and said man

had seemingly overreached

himself as the world was be-

coming increasingly less live-

able. He said the tide had to

be turned by arresting the

known to the entire humanity, he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Education Minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam hoped that the Institute would help contribute in higher Islamic learning in this part of the world. In this context, he said, Islam since its advent had promoted the cause of learning and rejected ignorance.

Secretary General of Muslim World League, Dr Abdullah

Omar Nassef, said as the government of President Ershad

was encouraging private en-

deavours in all fields of ac-

tivity, he was sure that it would

provide unstinted support—ad-

ministrative, academic and fin-

ancial to the Darul Ihsan Pro-

ject.

National Professor Syed Ali

Ahsan said education system

in Bangladesh should be faith-

based. He said setting up of

the Institute was an attempt

to provide the country and

the rest of the world with a

practical demonstration of the

nature, character and overall

benefits of such a faith-based

system of education.

The Institute now being

housed temporarily in Dhan-

mondi Residential Area in the

capital would be shifted to its

own campus in Savar as soon

as the construction work was

completed.

The teaching and research-

based Institute would be con-

structed at an estimated cost

of about Taka 85 crore which

included one three-storied mos-

que, academic complex, train-

ing centre for teachers, resi-

dential hostels for students and

residential quarters for the

teaching staff.

The President unveiled the

plaque and formally inaugu-

rated the Institute. He also

saw the model of the Insti-

ute complex to be built on 13

acres.

TIMELESS TEACHINGS

He said unite all men, all nations

mean humanity from lack of

education as well as mal-edu-

cation. In this context, he asked:

Could there be a more

practical recourse to the timeless

teachings of Islam?

The President said a happy

balance between the spiritual

and material dimensions. He

said the Almighty Allah had

ordained to keep the world safe

and make it eminently livable.

President Ershad said when

these troubled sons had seemingly

lost his son and sense of

direction, the lessons of Islam

must be understood in their

pristine purity. The teachings

of the eternal and universal

code of life needed to be made