

# AUW to help boost women education: CA

Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed on Saturday hoped that Asian University for Women (AUW) will inspire women generations for pursuing best education they can, reports BSS.

"Bangladesh has been able to make exemplary strides in empowering women in education, in economic fields such as micro-finance and protection of rights" he said and added now the country is deeply enthralled at the opportunity to host the AUW.

The university is located in Chittagong, at an attractive hilly landscape in Pahartali area.

The Chief Adviser, who is also the chief patron of AUW, said this while addressing the launching ceremony of Asian University for

Women (AUW) held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center (BCFCC).

Adviser, high civil and military officials, educationists, dignitaries and students attended the ceremony chaired by the Chief Adviser.

Nobel laureate and Founder of Grameen Bank Prof Muhammad Yunus was the chief guest on the occasion.

Chairman, Board of the AUW Support Foundation Jack Meyer, Co-Chair and Member of Parliament and former minister of Denmark Ms Lone Dybkjaer, Acting Vice-Chancellor and Provost of AUW Dr Hoon Eng Khoo and member of the Foundation Kathy Matsui spoke on the occasion.

President and CEO of the Foundation Kamal Ahmad conducted the programme. The programme was followed by a cultural function.

Women students from Cambodia, Myanmar, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and host Bangladesh are now studying in AUW.

The government of Bangladesh has donated 104 acres of land for establishing the women university in Chittagong.

AUW started its Access Academy, a pre-collegiate bridge programme, from last March to prepare its students for pursuing university education.

AUW has already students of six different Asian countries, Dr Fak-

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ruddin said and added in the next year students from another five countries will become represented in the student body.

The Chief Adviser said AUW could make an important contribution to fostering excellence in higher education by actively engaging in recruiting the most gifted students from across Asia and faculty from all over the world.

By bringing women from all across Asia, Dr Fakhruddin said AUW could also help forge a new Asian identity that could be immensely beneficial in a region where economic prosperity has accrued unevenly.

In Asia, he said most successful new economies in the world today exist side by side with largest concentration of poverty in the world.

Nobel laureate Prof Yunus said, the AUW will be a melting pot for Asia where girl students from different countries, ethnicities, languages and religions will study together and will transform them into new human being.

Common people's daughters will get access to the education of AUW. Dr Yunus hoped and added this center of knowledge and excellence will present such students who will have capacity and wisdom to solve the problems of their own community and will not be isolated from the respective societies.

He also hoped that AUW will set examples to others in educating the students who will not only create jobs for their own but also will provide jobs for many others.

Dr Fakhruddin appreciated AUW's decision to reserve one-

half of its new enrollments to students who are the first in their families ever to enter university.

Lauding its commitment to be open to the students from different national backgrounds in Asia, the Chief Adviser said, the AUW can help create new pathway for families to break the vicious cycle of social exclusion.

Expressing his satisfaction at the large-scale global mobilization of support triggered by the AUW in its behalf, he said, it is a rare occasion indeed when a project conceived in Bangladesh attracts support from different corners and dignitaries.

Referring to progress of AUW, Dr Fakhruddin said, a new Asian identity can help our region in turning the extra ordinary economic strides made by a few Asian countries known as the 'Asian Miracle' into a truly Asian phenomenon.