



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the third convocation of Bangladesh Open University at Gazipur on Saturday.

BOU can play key role for expansion of women edn: PM

GAZIPUR, June 7.—Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today laid paramount importance on the establishment of a society based on education and knowledge imbuing all concerned with the spirit and belief that education is the real security for society, reports BSS.

"We attach importance on education for free exercise of thoughts and intellects. We believe education is the only and real security for social well-being", Begum Zia said while speaking at the third convocation of the Bangladesh National University.

The Prime Minister said there is no alternative to education for making independence and democracy meaningful. On the course of education and learning, Begum Zia said, learning should be spontaneous and must act for arousing the freedom of thought and conscience.

Begum Zia, who is the Chancellor of Bangladesh Open University, said "education must be linked with happiness".

The Prime Minister said that her government had accorded utmost importance on the quality education adding, "as a nation we are lagging behind due to deterioration in standard of education. This results in wastage of money

and labour".

The function was also addressed by education Minister Dr M Osman Farooq, State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haq Milon and Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Open University Dr M Ershadul Bari.

Prof. Abdul Waheed Khan, assistant director general for communication and information of the UN educational scientific and cultural organisation, delivered convocation speech entitled "shaping, the future with knowledge".

The Prime Minister formally opened the third convocation of BOU and conferred degrees on more than six hundred graduates who were brought before her by the respective deans.

Begum Zia also awarded gold medals among the brilliant graduates for their outstanding academic feat.

Earlier, the prime minister entered the convocation venue leading the convocation procession.

Begum Zia began her speech quoting two US presidents—Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy—said the two former US presidents believed that real safeguard of democracy is education. And liberty without learning is always in

peril.

The Prime Minister thanked the new graduates and wished them success in life.

Begum Zia had also attended the first convocation of Bangladesh Open University (BOU), established in 1992 by her past BNP government to enhance scope for disadvantaged people to improve their lot and to turn the economically-backward people into human resources.

In his convocation speech Prof. Waheed said "future needs to be imagined, sketched, dreamed, thought out, constructed, made and composed." Knowledge is a key to the future, it is indispensable for economic growth, social transformation, cultural enrichment and political empowerment", he added.

He dwelt on issues of knowledge, education and learning investment in human capital, relevance of open and distance learning in the knowledge based society, bridging the digital divide, an ICT agenda for the future and Bangladesh: new vision and initiatives.

Prof. Waheed said Bangladesh must invest in scientific and technical education at the university level especially in the information technology area.