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## Education must be linked with production: PM

RAJSHAHI, Nov. 18: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today underlined the need for combining the education system with productivity and utilising it for bringing about the desired changes in society, reports BSS.

Addressing the foundation-laying ceremony of the fourth women students hall of Rajshahi University here, the Prime Minister sought cooperation of all quarters, particularly the educationists, to supplement the government efforts to turn education into a social movement.

"We want such an education system which will be independent, democratic and suited to the development of society. Our goal is to ensure education for all by the year 2000 AD", Begum Zia said.

She said the education system should be directed to breaking the circle of poverty, developing sustainable technology and creating development-oriented spirit and mentality.

Begum Zia's visit to the Rajshahi University, the first by an elected head of the government after a long time, created great enthusiasm among the students.

Thousands of students wearing badges cheered as the Prime Minister's car entered the University campus. They lined up the roads as she was sitting in jeep amid a cavalcade of cars. They waved hands and

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shouted slogans hailing the Prime Minister.

Begum Zia first unveiled the plaque of the fourth women students hall which would be constructed at a cost of Taka three crore and a half and would accommodate about 500 students.

Then she came to the foot of "Shabash Bangladesh", a sculpture built in honour of the martyrs of the War of Liberation, wherefrom the Prime Minister addressed the gathering of teachers, students, officers and employees of the university.

The students received Begum Zia through clappings and welcome slogans when she reached the meeting venue. "Go ahead Khaleda Zia, we are with you", "Begum Zia in Parliament, we are in the streets", shouted the students.

The foundation ceremony was also addressed by Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, Prof. M. Anisur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University and RUSCU VP Rizvi Ahmed, State Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Aminul Huq, State Minister for Land Kabir Hosain, Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor

Mizanur Rahman Minu, former Minister Imran Ali Sarkar and pro-Vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University Prof. Azharuddin were also present on the occasion.

Begum Zia laid emphasis on higher education and said it is directly related with development and prosperity and helps increase per capita income and national growth rate. Citing examples of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand, she said these countries had achieved progress by laying emphasis on higher education.

Begum Zia said academic session of Kulna University had started, open university and national university bills were passed and the standard of university colleges had been enhanced.

The Prime Minister underlined the need for ensuring standard, efficiency and accountability at higher education. Accountability must be institutionalised, she said adding this accountability would be to the people who provide expenditure of the universities.

She also supported the autonomy and academic freedom in the higher educational institutions. The Prime Minister said her government was considering the introduction of "community-oriented" education system.

Begum Zia said one of the major policies of her government was to ensure the participation of women in the national development.

This government, she said, had attached importance to women education and had taken various programmes to educate the country's women and to create job opportunities for them. "To educate a girl is to educate a family", she said.

She laid emphasis on good relations between the teachers and students to ensure congenial academic atmosphere.

Terming the laying of foundation stone of the hall as a milestone of progress, she said it would help expand education and strengthen the base of democracy.

The Prime Minister also paid rich tribute to the memories of the students and teachers of the university including Dr. Shamsuzzoha who laid down their lives in the War of Liberation and other democratic movements of the past.

Earlier, on her arrival at the Rajshahi Airport, she was received by the State Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Aminul Huq, State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain, State Minister for Communications Fazlur Rahman.