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Accountability in edn sector must: PM

CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY, Apr 7: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that the present democratic government wanted to establish accountability in the education sector by ensuring that educational institutions play their due role, reports BSS. "The poor people of the country are bearing the expenses of education. In a democratic social system they (the people) have right to know whether their money are being utilised properly", said the Prime Minister.

She was addressing a function, organised on the occasion of the inauguration of the Institute of Forestry Complex and Foundation-laying of a residential hall for female students at the university campus. Begum Zia said emphasis should be given on maintaining congenial academic atmosphere and advanced teaching system and asked the students to prepare themselves for taking up the future leadership to build a happy nation. The Institute of Forestry Complex will be built on a 20-acre of land with an estimated cost of Taka six crore and fifty lakh. The Institute of Forestry at Chittagong University was established in 1976 but it could not work properly due to the lack of a complex.

The institute is the only organisation in South Asia providing graduation degree on forestry. The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of a residential hall for the female students, which will be constructed at an estimated cost of Taka 7 crore on a five acre of land. This will be the second residential hall for female students in the university which will accommodate about 500 students.

The construction work of the hall is being started as per the Prime Minister's directives to provide required fund to build it. Earlier, on her arrival at the university campus, the Prime Minister was received by the Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University Prof. Rasiquil Islam Chowdhury. Prime Minister Begum Zia contd. on page 8 col. 6

Accountability in edn

Contd. from page 1

was the second head of the government to visit this university, situated at a location of natural beauty. Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had visited the university campus twice.

The Prime Minister said the nation must achieve economic emancipation to make its independence meaningful. She said the main formula of attaining economic freedom is education as it could consolidate democracy and break the cycle of poverty.

Referring to different countries including Switzerland which had achieved commendable progress through educating their people, the Prime Minister said her government had identified education as the main national sector.

She went on saying that her government had taken measures to double the present rate of literacy by the year 2000.

The Prime Minister also laid stress on the women education saying "an educated mother means an educated family".

On campus violence, Begum Zia said her government had given necessary directives to curb terrorism sternly and assurances to all educational institutions including the universities to extend all cooperation to check it. She expressed her firm commitment to free the campuses from terrorism saying "we cannot allow to keep the country's future hostage at the hands of terrorists".

Begum Zia also sought cooperation of all political parties

and the teachers to eradicate terrorism from the campuses.

The Prime Minister welcomed the construction of the new Forestry Complex and hoped the Institute of Forestry would play a vital role in making the countrywide tree plantation drive a success and contribute in maintaining an ecological balance.

The Prime Minister declared that a sports complex would be built at the university providing athletic tracks and swimming pool.

She also assured that other demands of the university teachers and students would be resolved in phases.

The function was addressed among others by Forest and Environment Minister Abdul-lah Al Noman, Vice Chancellor of the University Prof. Rasiquil Islam Chowdhury, Pro-VC Prof. Badul Alam, Deans of Science Faculty Prof. Sultan Ahmed, Director of the Institute of Forestry Sirajul-Huq, and Mayor of Chittagong Municipal Corporation Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin.

Ministers, MPs, teachers, students and officers and employees of the university attended the function.

The members of Chittagong University Jatiyatabadi Teachers' Parishad also called on the Prime Minister and supported the government's steps to curb terrorism.

Prof. Mahfuzul Huq, Dr. Mahbubullah, Prof. Badul Alam and Prof. Abul Kalam were among others who spoke on the occasion.