

Aga Khan Academy opening in Dhaka

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Dhaka, Jan 24 (UNB) – Amid the changing nature of knowledge and information, students must prepare themselves to keep on learning and become “effective and ethical” leaders to overcome challenges ahead, says an expert.

“If you have the capacity to keep on learning, you will be in a very good position both from economic point of view and also as a human being,” Aga Khan Development Network Director of Academies Salim Bhatia told UNB.

Bhatia who is responsible for leading the establishment of the Aga Khan Academies across Africa, Middle East, Central and South Asia, said the Aga Khan Academy Dhaka, is being established here to provide international standard education for students and prepare them for leadership roles in Bangladesh and across the world.

He said Bangladeshi young talented students, regardless of their socio-economic background, gender, race or religion, can access a world-class education.

“We will provide hundred percent support for the poor and marginalized students who are talented,” he said.

Asked about quality of education in Bangladesh, Bhatia said, “It would not be fair to make a judgment. What I would say is that Bangladesh has done a great job of making basic education available to such a large percentage of population.”

He said, definitely there is something positive but the “quality of thinking is more important than what we know.”

Asked why some young talented people are getting involved in terrorism, Bhatia, a former chairman of the North Carolina Electronic and Information Industries Association, did not want to get into this sensitive issue.

Bhatia, however, laid emphasis on 'broad-based liberal education with an understanding of differences and tolerance" to remain on track without indulging in dangerous path.

He said the Aga Khan Academy will be located on a 20-acre of land in Bashundhara and will enroll 750 students with a capacity to expand to 1200.

The Academy will be part of an integrated network of world-class schools of Aga Khan Academies offering an international standard of education to promising students from pre-primary to secondary levels, located across 14 countries regardless of their ability to pay, Bhatia said.

Explaining his purpose of visit, he said since they are moving ahead with the Academy in Dhaka, it is important to make sure that their partners in Bangladesh government understand much more clearly that this is project to help improve the quality of life through quality education.

Bhatia was involved in building several business enterprises and the development of social and community institutions.

He laid emphasis on teachers training and innovations in education system to overcome the challenges of competitive world.

Through its Professional Development Center (PDC), the Academy will act as a regional hub for academic innovation and excellence, officials in Dhaka said.

They said it will be dedicated to training new teachers to the highest standard while offering veteran teachers the opportunity to stay on the cutting edge of education through research and practice.

This expertise will then be shared to enhance teaching and learning at government and other schools.

Officials at the AKDN said the award-winning Aga Khan Academy Dhaka represents a significant investment in education by Aga Khan Development Network for the benefit of Bangladesh and it will become a new national asset for the whole country and for its broad educational community.