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PM announces at public meeting

Steps taken to turn Ctg city into commercial capital

CHITTAGONG, Feb 27: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today suggested the opposition political parties to take lesson from the just concluded municipal elections and launch movement on socio-economic issues to win the people's heart, reports UNB.

"Also take lesson from the people's participation in the municipal voting," she told her political opponents while addressing a public meeting at the Polo Ground here in the afternoon.

Hasina said the people, already quite conscious of their fundamental rights, took part in the election to exercise the right to franchise.

The people have "foiled all conspiracies against the municipal election," she said, adding that the City Corporation and Upazilla elections would also be held with the "same spontaneous" participation of the people.

The Prime Minister urged the people to remain alert against any plot to snatch their fundamental rights. "We've earned the voting right at the

cost of blood, remain alert so that none can snatch it again."

She said the Awami League called hartals while in opposition to restore the voting rights of the people, but the present opposition has been calling hartals against that right.

Referring to the recent entrance of Begum Khaleda Zia and HM Ershad, she said: "We don't understand how the opposition leader can join hands with a person whom she once identified as the killer of her husband."

"Both Begum Zia and Ershad were rejected by the people for stealing votes in the elections of 1996 and 1990. Now the two thieves have joined hands," Hasina said.

About the Zia murder case, she said the government has given permission to proceed with the case that is now pending with the Chittagong court. "Trial of the killers of Zia will be held on this soil," she asserted.

The Prime Minister said the government has taken all necessary measures to develop the port city as the commercial cap-

ital of the country and will continue its efforts in this regard.

Listing the development activities, she said the government has taken up Tk 1,000-crore development projects for the port city.

She said a five star hotel will be built at the city's Tiger Pass hill at a cost of Tk 580 crore.

Hasina said a project of Tk 550 crore has been taken up to develop the Patenga beach area as a modern entertainment hub with Japanese investment.

An export processing zone (EPZ) is being set up by a South Korean firm on the bank of river Karnaphuli on 2527 acres of land. After the setting up of this EPZ about 1.5 lakh people would get jobs and export earnings would increase substantially, she said.

The Prime Minister introduced the incumbent City Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury as the next mayor candidate of Awami League, saying Mohiuddin, during his tenure, tried his best for the development of the port city.

CHITTAGONG, Feb 27: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today asked the administration here to take drastic action against crimes, reports BSS.

The Indian foreign minister said the bilateral meeting would take place on the sidelines of a South Asian ministerial conference in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.

Singh accompanied Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpejee on his historic visit to Lahore last weekend, at the end of which Vajpejee and Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif signed a declaration aimed at easing tensions between the two newly nuclearised states.

Singh said: "We believe Pakistan will walk the path with us for the sake of our children and future."

Singh, rejecting suggestions of a third-party mediation between India and Pakistan, said the talks would be held at the end of "experts, foreign secretaries and foreign ministers".

"Some foreign powers had tried to fish in troubled water in the sub-continent but New Delhi has firmly told them that there is no room for outside intervention," Singh told the press.

The prime minister further asked the law enforcing agencies to identify the sensitive spots and deploy all available manpower and other machinery to check crimes.

Addressing a meeting of the Chittagong Divisional Law and Order Coordination Committee at the local circuit house, the prime minister also directed the authorities concerned for quick disposal of cases.

Sheikh Hasina asked them to be cautious so that the people do not become frustrated about rule of law. She directed them to take necessary measures so that the criminals are not freed by taking advantage of procedural loopholes.

The prime minister further asked the law enforcing agencies to identify the sensitive spots and deploy all available manpower and other machinery to check crimes.

The Ekushey Book Fair on its third day concluded yesterday. By DU Correspondent

The Ekushey Book Fair on the Bangla Academy premises concludes today.

Meanwhile, a discussion meeting on "Bangla Academy: Expectation and achievements" was held yesterday on the Academy premises.

Chaired by Manjur-e-Mawla, the discussion was participated by Prof Abul Kashem, Fazlul Haq, Santosh Gupta, Selina Bahar Jaman and Prof Shahidul Islam.

Forty-two more new books were introduced at the fair yesterday.

A function marking the end of the month-long fair will be held on the Bangla Academy premises at 5 pm today with Poet Shamsur Rahman in the chair.

6 burnt alive

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a few hours ago.

Last night, thousands of affected people were found sitting under the open sky helpless; many of them had nothing to eat as their children cried for food.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam and Dhaka mayor Mohammad Hanif went to console the slum dwellers. Hanif immediately ordered 160 kilograms of rice from DCC's relief godown for the hungry.

Experts during their technical sessions would discuss issues of sources, causes, occurrences and distribution of arsenic contamination in groundwater in Bangladesh, effects of arsenic contamination of drinking water on health and its management.

They will also discuss supply options for safe drinking water and groundwater studies and field measurement of level of arsenic in water.

At the concluding session today, a set of recommendations would be made for action.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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Walling Taslima said none

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Tobarak

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