

## Varsities to be made centres of excellence: PM

CHITTAGONG, Mar 5:—Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said that the avowed policy of her government was to make the Universities infrastructurally and financially self-reliant in order to make those as centres of excellence for creative research, reports BSS.

"Our commitment to the coming generations is to utilizing education as an instrument for development of human creativity in future" she said.

The Prime Minister was speaking as the chief guest at the foundation laying of "Bangabandhu Memorial Hospital" and inauguration of Paediatrics Ward at the Science and Technology University (USTC), Chittagong at a simple but impressive ceremony.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salauddin Yusuf, USTC President National Professor Dr. Nurul Islam and Syndicate member M.A. Salam also spoke on the occasion.

Education Minister ASHK Sadeque, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan, Civil Aviation

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## Varsities

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Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain, Mayor of Chittagong ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Abul Kashem Master MP, Rafiqul Anwar MP, USCT syndicate members, teachers, students and local elite attended the function.

The Prime Minister said that her government had put special emphasis on science and technology to face the challenges of the 21st century. "I hope the USTC will further strengthen its efforts in initiating an era to fulfil our commitment", she said.

Referring to the various steps taken by her government for the promotion of science and technology education in the country the Prime Minister said after assuming office her government has doubled the allocation of fund in this sector compared to that of the previous regime. In the current fiscal more than Taka 444 million has been allocated in this sector, she said.

The Prime Minister said her government is implementing far-reaching projects in science and technology sector. In this connection, she said the implementation work on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Planetarium, Atomic Medical Centre, Ruppur Atomic Project and Bio-gas Pilot Project are in process.

Sheikh Hasina recalled that Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave autonomy to the universities through the University Act 1973 upholding the ideals of morality and humanity. "Following the path of that ideal we want to give something more—that is freedom and that freedom has been initiated through private universities."

"Our attitude and policy towards private universities are crystal clear", she said. A large number of unauthorised universities with mere signboards here and there were found during the past regime. "We are moved by the plight of the helpless guardians and their wards who became victims of those universities", she said, adding that to resolve the problem her government had constituted a high level enquiry committee. As per recommendations of that committee her government has brought the private universities under the pervue of legal discipline.