

## HIGH PASS RATES IN PUBLIC EXAMS Govt to accommodate all: PM

UNB, TUNGIPARA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government had taken necessary preparations to accommodate all the students who qualified for the next level of education through public examinations.

"We've planned to admit all the students for their next level of education when they appear in any public exam... there's no reason to be worried too much," she said to dispel concerns over higher pass rates at different levels.

The prime minister was addressing a stipend distribution and reception programme where she gave away certificates and medallions among GPA-5 achievers in SSC, HSC and equivalent examinations in 2012. It was organised by Gopalganj Zila Samity in Dhaka on the mausoleum premises of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Tungipara.

Hasina said her government would have made education free up to master's level for all, had the state coffer had enough money for that.

Education is the only tool to make the country free from poverty and

hunger, she said. "And that's why we work out our programmes based on education." She claimed that the education sector got highest allocation in the budget.

Hasina said in its previous tenure,



the Awami League government had managed to take literacy rate up to 65.5 percent, which was once 45 percent only.

"But after assuming office this time, we found the literacy rate at 50 percent. It's very regretful that the government after 2001 did not take any effective initiative to increase the rate."

The prime minister said children's attraction to schools had increased as the government introduced PSC, ISC and JDC examinations and provided

free textbooks on the first day of every academic year.

The government also introduced midday meal and constituted the Education Assistant Trust Fund with one thousand crore taka to help the poor and meritorious students to continue their study up to degree level, she added.

Earlier, Hasina paid homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his mausoleum, standing there for some time in silence, and offering fatcha.

Accompanying her, among others, were Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Home Minister MK Alamgir, Civil Aviation Minister Faruk Khan, and PM's Adviser Syed Modasser Ali.

Later, the prime minister inaugurated the Tungipara branch of Standard Bank Ltd, the academic building of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University and several of its under-construction structures, the regional office of Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation, and Gopalganj regional passport office, and laid the foundation stone of the Jatiya Mohila Sangstha Complex building before returning to Dhaka.