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Opposition instigating closure of edn institutions: PM

BHAIKAB (Kishoreganj), Sept 10.—Prime Minister Khaleda Zia today accused the opposition of concocting issues and instigating closure of educational institutions in the country with ulterior motives, reports UNB.

"The opposition having no issues has started conspiring to halt development process initiated by the four-party alliance government," she said referring to the recent unrest in the campuses.

The Prime Minister alleged that the opposition does not want people to be educated; they want to close down the educational institutions to keep people illiterate.

She made the remarks while addressing a huge public meeting at Haji Hasnat College ground where hundreds of people gathered braving heavy downpour to hear from the PM her government's plans for their welfare.

Presided over by local BNP leader M Giasuddin, the meeting was also addressed by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas and Education Minister Dr Osman Faruque.

A number of Ministers, including Dr Moyeen Khan, Abdul

Matin, Barrister Aminul Haq, Nazmul Huda and Salahuddin Ahmed, MPs including Ilias Ali and Naser Rahman and local BNP leaders were present.

The Prime Minister, who earlier inaugurated the Bangladesh-UK Friendship Bridge over river Meghna, expressed her sincere thanks to the people who gathered in the meeting ignoring inclement weather.

She said this was a very special day of happiness for the people of the area as the new Bangladesh-UK Friendship Bridge was opened today removing the last ferry hurdles on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway.

Begum Zia alleged that work on the bridge had been halted for two years by the past Awami League government only because its foundation was laid by her in 1995. There has been no development done under the Awami League regime, she said.

The Prime Minister emphasized building up huge human resources through educating the people for national development.

She mentioned her government's development programmes in education sector, particularly

for girls' education, stipend for poor and meritorious students.

Begum Zia also charged the past AL regime with misappropriating wheat allocated for the food-for-education scheme launched by the BNP government in 1991-96 period.

She said Awami League had been involved in corruption and looting immediately after independence and was rejected by the people. "They came to power after 21 years through massive rigging and was again rejected for their misdeeds."

Referring to the demands for nationalization of local college, the PM said she would ensure development if the people in return give her party a representation in the area.