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Jaya showers Trichy with new projects

TRICHY: Keeping in mind the ruling AIADMK's new 'national' agenda, posters on street walls in Trichy district and newspaper advertisements welcomed chief minister and AIADMK supremo J Jayalalithaa by hailing her as the future prime minister. Visiting her Srirangam constituency for the second time within a fortnight, Jayalalithaa launched several projects worth Rs 1,854 crore against the backdrop of an upbeat mood within the party.

"My government has been taking efforts based on the concept of promoting humanity and enhancing the state's infrastructure facilities, which will make the state achieve all-round development," she said, unveiling her government's new initiatives.

Another major scheme included in the announcement was to set up an industrial park on 1,077 acres at an outlay of Rs 107 crore in Manapparai taluk with a view to improve the economic conditions of such areas. She also offered subsidies ranging from Rs 45 lakh to Rs 2 crore and financial assistance through Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC) to those who would like to start business in the park.

The chief minister said the park will attract investments worth Rs 3,000 crore and provide employment to 25,000 people.

Based on the investments that the companies would attract, the government would offer subsidy anywhere between Rs 45 lakh and Rs 2.25 crore, Jayalalithaa said. New projects at a cost of Rs 433.65 crore inaugurated by her had been completed in Srirangam.

Moreover, the foundation stone for three important new schemes in Sethurapatti - the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) at Rs 128 crore , Government Engineering College at Rs 60.84 crore and a polytechnic college at Rs 37 crore - were laid by her.

Her announcements also included the laying of the foundation stone for the Rs 1,200 crore multi-layer double coated paper board project in the constituency that was still opposed by a section of villagers.

While the protests were brewing against the proposal for setting up the paper board project for reportedly acquiring mostly agriculture lands, the chief minister said that the economic status of Srirangam and Manapparai areas would be improved with the project which would give employment to 2,000 people directly and indirectly. The factory with the capacity of 2 lakh metric tonne would come up in Mondipatti, K Periyapatti North and Chettichathiram revenue villages at an outlay of Rs 1,200 crore.

On the National Law School to be set up on a 25-acre piece of land at Srirangam, she said classes for the first year students would begin this academic year. The foundation stone for the

school was laid by her in February.

While protests had peaked in the wake of acute water shortage during the crop season in the delta districts last year and there was apparent displeasure over the near-power crisis, Jayalalithaa's popularity seemed to soar with the opening of Amma canteens serving low-cost food across the state on Sunday.

Jayalalithaa came on a day when the people stood patiently in serpentine queues to get their low-cost food and officials said it was such a huge hit that around 3,500 people ate on the first day alone. At each eatery, 12 people from the women's self-help groups had been employed.

As if reflecting the morale within the AIADMK, an advertisement issued by party functionaries hailed Jayalalithaa as 'Dr Puratchitalaivi Amma, the next prime minister of India'. This is the chief minister's fourth visit to her constituency since she came to power in May 2011. On May 30, Jayalalithaa made a brief personal visit to Srirangam to seek the blessings of the newly-appointed 46th pontiff of the prestigious Ahobila Mutt and also visited the Srirangam temple.