

Remembering BB

Three years on, her legacy endures

Thousands gather at former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's assassination site

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Benazir Bhutto lost her life three years ago, but her memory is still vivid and strong in the hearts and minds of her followers. The third death anniversary of former two-time prime minister was observed with zeal and enthusiasm here on Monday by a large number of political workers, human rights activists and loyalists.

To honour the memory of the former chairperson of Pakistan Peoples Party, a large number of people gathered at Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi, the site where the leader was assassinated.

A recital of the Quran was held and fateha offered for the departed soul. Portraits and banners of the Bhutto family were also displayed in and around the city as a build-up to the occasion.

Benazir Bhutto was assassinated on December 27, 2007, when she was leaving the historic Liaquat Bagh after addressing what turned out to

be her last election rally. The mystery of Benazir Bhutto's murder is yet to be solved despite the lapse of three years.

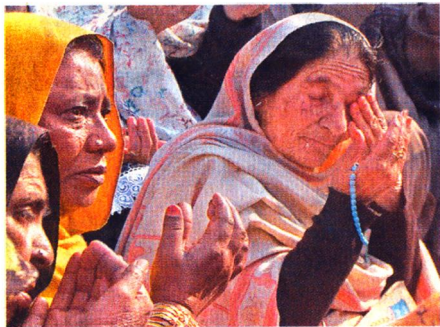
The workers and leaders of Pakistan People Party (PPP) travelled to Rawalpindi from all over the country to participate in the function held at Liaquat Bagh Chowk.

The influx of people to the site was huge due to which traffic was closed at the Benazir Bhutto Road, formerly Murree Road, till Gawalmandi Chowk. Participants were asked to park their vehicles near Rescue 15 and Gawalmandi Bridge.

Federal Minister for Water and Power Raja Pervez Ashraf, Leader of the House in Senate Nayyar Hussain Bukhari, Managing Director Baitul Mal Zamurd Khan, Member Central Executive Committee Qazi Sultan Mahmood and PPP city chapter president Aamir Fida Piracha addressed the function and shed light on the various aspects of life and achievements of their slain



ETERNAL FLAME: Candles were lit up on Monday by a gathering of civil society members at Super Market, Islamabad, to pay tribute to the assassinated leader. PHOTO: QAZI USMAN/EXPRESS



IN TEARS: Women remember their leader during a gathering at Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi. PHOTO: MUHAMMAD JAWAD

leader.

The PPP leaders assured the gathering that killers of Benazir Bhutto would be held soon. Raja Pervez Ashraf predicted that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would become prime minister of Pakistan very soon. Similarly, Qazi Sultan said that the day a will come when the murderers of the "BB Shaheed" would reach a logical end.

Addressing the occasion, Zamurd Khan said Bhutto may have lost her life but her mission could never die. The dissident group within

PPP, led by Naheed Khan, who was political secretary and a close aide of Benazir Bhutto, and like-minded party workers, did not take part in the main public gathering. They separately gathered at Liaquat Bagh and offered prayers.

Sheraz Kiyani, who claimed to be an eye-witness of the tragic incident, told *The Express Tribune* that he recorded his statement before United Nations probe commission that a police vehicle "misguided" Benazir's squad due to which the murderers succeeded in accomplishing their

act.

Khalilur Rehman, an aged diehard loyalist of Bhutto, told *The Express Tribune* that he was living at the memoir site of 'shaheed BB' since three years.

The ceremony started around 1 pm and ended by offering collective prayers at 4:00 pm. Zamurd Khan also promised to set up a Bhutto 'langer khana' (free food facility) for PPP workers.

Meanwhile, a candlelit vigil was held in front of Super Market in sector F-6 on the occasion as well, with partici-

pation from a large number of civil society activists who held placards and portraits of the slain leader.

Speaking on the occasion, Marvi Sarmad, a human rights activist, said that Benazir was a symbol of democracy and human rights and her death ended hope and aspiration of downtrodden segment of the society.

Samina Nazir, another attendant, said that Benazir was a torch bearer for the poor and downtrodden segment of society and her assassination had pushed the country back.