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President Hussain Muhammad Ershad opening the Hermann Gmeiner College established by SOS International at Mirpur on Saturday.

## Better upbringing of children has to be ensured: Ershad

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on Saturday inaugurated Hermann Gmeiner College at Mirpur with a call for co-operation from all quarters to help build the future generations in a proper atmosphere, reports BSS.

The President said the children of today were the best resources of the country since the future of the nation was dependent on them. Hence, he said, we must ensure their better upbringing and make efforts for the development of their talents.

The college established by SOS

International on a land donated by the government at Mirpur has been named after the founder of the organisation late Hermann Gmeiner. Earlier, SOS International established a school at the same time for the education of the children of SOS village in Dhaka.

President Ershad recalled the contributions of Hermann Gmeiner in creating an atmosphere for the orphans where they grow up in motherly care. This was his dream and he materialised it through SOS villages and schools built in different parts of the world, he said.

Referring to the government efforts made for the welfare of the children, the President said apart from building Shishu Academy and children parks in the

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## Better upbringing

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cities and towns, 70 Shishu Sadans had been set up for the upbringing of the orphans.

He said the government wanted to create an atmosphere in these Sadans in line with the SOS villages so that the children there could grow under motherly care and family environment. He said under this programme during the Third Five-Year Plan period "Shishu Paribars" would be set up in 37 of the government run Shishu Sadans at a cost of Taka 16 crore.

President Ershad said these efforts by the government were not enough to bring well-being to the children of the country. We said the intention of the government was to extend the child welfare services to the villages and urged the SOS International to spread in the rural areas of Bangladesh. He assured them government co-operation in this purpose.

Recalling the contributions of SOS International in Bangladesh he said 47 girls brought up by them were given in marriage, 32 boys became self-reliant, four brilliant students were studying in the

universities and one in Bangladesh Military Academy.

President Ershad said establishment of more Shishu Paribars like the SOS Villages would be helpful in building up the orphans with proper care and education. He also thanked Mr. Helmut Kutin, President of SOS International, for his personal efforts in spreading the SOS service in Bangladesh.

The function was also addressed by Education Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud, Social Welfare Minister Rezwanul Huq Chowdhury, SOS President Helmut Kutin, Social Welfare Secretary Azizul Huq and SOS Project Director Sheikh Niamat Ali.

Mr. Kutin handed over a cheque for Taka three lakh to the President donated by the SOS Children Village, Germany for the President's Relief Fund. The Project Director handed over Taka 8,000 saved by the children from their tiffin.

The President then formally inaugurated the college by unveiling the plaque.

Earlier, the President visited the classrooms of the school and talked to the children. He also visited the Science Fair organiser by the students.

Four children brought from Urichar and being brought up at the SOS Village were introduced to the President.

These orphans were brought from Urichar at the initiative of President Ershad after the cyclone and tidal upsurge there in 1988.

The function was attended by Speaker Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, Deputy Prime Minister Prof. M. A. Matin, Ministers, Chief of Naval Staff, diplomats and high officials.