



Dhaka still for regional approach

President Hussain Muhammad Dhaka.

Ershad here on Saturday reiterated that Bangladesh wanted permanent solution to the problem of recurring floods, reports BSS.

Inaugurating the Hermann Gmeiner College at Mirpur this afternoon the President said to achieve this objective Bangladesh had sought both regional and international co-operation.

With this end in view, he said, he had visited India and would visit Nepal tomorrow. He said, we would also visit Bhutan and China and hoped that we would be able to achieve a permanent solution to the problem.

He said we do not want any more floods like this year's one which rendered many children orphans and damaged many schools. He said, we want to rear these orphans with motherly care and rebuild the schools for which cooperation from all quarters were needed.

The President thanked the SOS International for coming forward with their cooperation in this regard.

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 site for the education of the children of SOS village in

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 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. He said the intention of the Government was to extend the child welfare services to the villages and urged the SOS International to spread cooperation in this purpose.

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

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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 West 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 class rooms of the schools and talked to the children. He also visited the science fair organised by the students.

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

These orphans were brought from Urirchar at the initiative of President Ershad after the cyclone and tidal upsurge there in 1986.

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.