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Corruption free society must for dev : PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a corruption-free society with transparency and accountability in all spheres is a prerequisite for accelerating national development, reports UNB.

"We'll have to ensure transparency and accountability in all sectors for which data collection and dissemination is highly important," she said while addressing the inaugural function of Parishankhan Bhaban at Agargaon in the afternoon.

The complex of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics is being constructed at an estimated cost of Tk 44.52 crore with eleven-storied twin-towers and two 3-storied and one 1-storied buildings to accommodate its office and other necessary units.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and Statistics Division Secretary

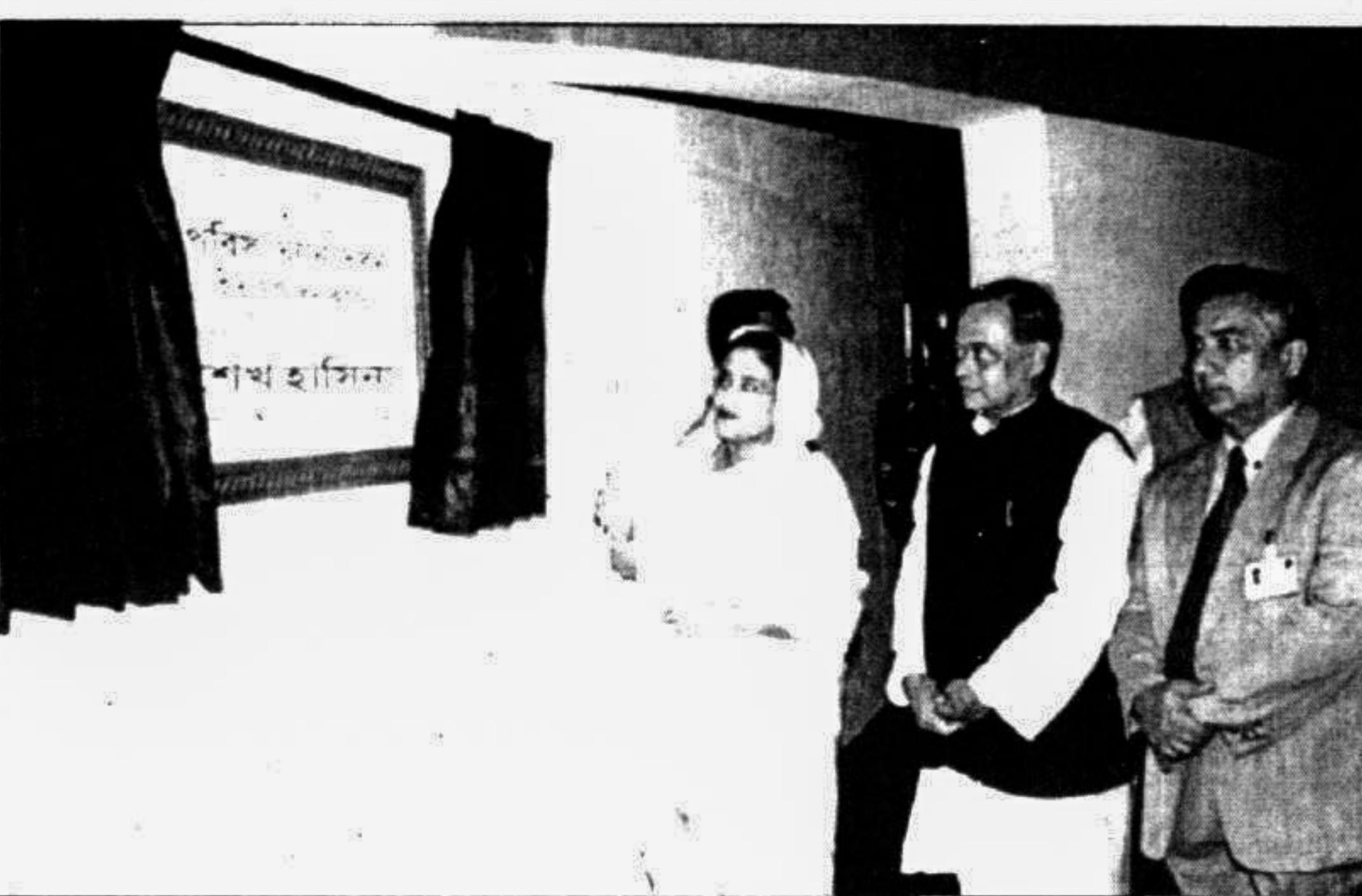
Mamunur Rashid also addressed the inaugural function in the newly constructed building.

The Prime Minister regretted even after 28 years of independence the country could not attain expected levels of development for disruption of democratic process.

"Democratic process does not continue, there also does not exist transparency and accountability and corruption engulfs entire society," she said.

The country had been under overt or covert military rule for a long time for which corruption massively spread in society and seriously disrupted development, she said.

Hasina said the present government restored democracy in the country through an arduous struggle and is trying to mop up corruption by ensuring people's power.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurating the Parishankhan Bhaban in the city yesterday. — PID photo

Ershad Shikdar refuses to make confessional statement

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 25: Notorious crime lord Ershad Shikdar has flatly refused to make any confessional statement.

"If you want to torture me to death, you may go on. But I am the last man to give confessional statement under 164," Shikdar was quoted as saying to senior police officials during interrogation on Sunday and also today.

A KMP source said that both complainants and witnesses of three murder cases filed against Shikdar have identified the *alamats* (evidences) recovered from the bed of the Bhairob river.

They identified the *alamats* under 164 on Sunday, said DC (South) of KMP Mazharul Huq. Huq said Surja Banu, mother of Shiraj, has identified clothes of her son, Selina and Ayub, wife and younger brother respectively. Of Insaf also identified clothes of the victim, Insaf, Abdul Hamid identified clothes of Kamal.

Police said that Sramik League activist Siraj was killed on October 2, 1997 at the Skid Ghat. Insaf and Kamal were murdered on the same night following the same *modus operandi*. Their bodies were cut into three pieces each and dumped into the river near Fish Landing Ghat, police said quoting confessional statement of Noor-e-Alam, body guard of Ershad Shikdar.

Meanwhile, the CMM's Court here has granted a five-day remand of Farida Banu, 58-year old mother-in-law of Ershad Shikdar. But the CMM said she must be interrogated in presence of a female police officer among others. Farida will be questioned in connection with Jahangir murder case. Jahangir was Ershad's house tutor. Ershad killed him suspect-

Hearing of contempt petition against Nasim today

A contempt of court petition against Home Minister Mohammad Nasim for his statement in Parliament on September 6 is likely to come up for hearing in the High Court today, reports UNB.

The petition, filed by lawyer of the Supreme Court Mohammad Ataur Rahman, said the Home Minister by his statement in Parliament fulfilled the role of the highest judiciary and the judges of the Supreme Court.

The statement of Nasim was widely broadcast and telecast by Bangladesh Betar and TV and also published in the press the following day, said the petitioner.

He submitted the clippings of two dailies which published the statement of Nasim.

DU student's death

From page 1
cles. When a section of DMCH employees chased the students, exchange of brick bats and chase and counter-chase began. DU students from nearby class rooms also joined the agitating students.

Around the same time, another section of DMCH employees ransacked the doctor's canteen, some rooms of the Dental College and some office rooms of DMCH. Neither police nor hospital sources could confirm why they went on the rampage inside the hospital.

The injured students included Mithu, Masum, Sattar, Shaheen, Sajal, Towhid and Mujahid. They were treated at the DU Medical Centre and clinics nearby.

Later the agitating students in a memorandum to DU Vice-chancellor Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury demanded proper investigation into the death of Monir, punishment of the persons responsible and financial help for the poor family of the student.

Health Minister Salahuddin Yusuf and State Minister for Health Amanullah visited the hospital after the incident. They held a meeting with the

ing that he was having an affair with Khodeja, his first wife.

In another development, Mohammad Siddique Rahman, president of 'Ershad Mukti Mancha' has been detained for one month under Special Powers Act. He was recently arrested under Section 54 pending investigation into his alleged involvement in organising movement for release of Ershad Shikdar.

Meanwhile, BDR have been withdrawn from Skid Ghat with effect from early this morning. The reason is yet to be known. Battalion Ansars have been deployed there instead. They will assist police in maintaining law and order at the Skid Ghat and said a source of KMP.

Officials and employees residing in the railway quarters have expressed their deep concern at the withdrawal of BDR personnel from their Skid Ghat camp. They have appealed to the authorities concerned to redeploy BDR until and unless Ershad and his accomplices are convicted and the verdict is executed.

UNB adds: Ershad Shikdar would be tried by a special tribunal, informed sources said on Monday.

A six-member committee headed by Public Prosecutor See Page 11 Col 8

Biman flight
Dhaka to take up issue with Islamabad

By Special Correspondent

The government is taking up with Pakistani authorities the issue of 'holding' a Biman flight shortly after take-off from Karachi airport and ordering it to land back in violation of international aviation rules, Biman sources said yesterday.

The flight from the Gulf via Karachi on Sunday was asked to return by Pakistani air traffic controllers (ATC).

ATC radioed the Captain of the Airbus 310 on way home not to proceed further.

It asked the flight 15 minutes after take-off to return to Karachi airport for a check of the immigration status of certain Pakistani passengers said to be of Bangladeshi origin. As it prepared to land, the ATC asked the captain to go back, saying immigration check was not required.

We have requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take it up through diplomatic channels", a Biman official said.

Biman is issuing a statement clarifying the whole situation today, he said.

Abud Sattar, a former foreign affairs secretary, was appointed Foreign Minister, private banker Shaukat Aziz was named Finance Minister and Aziz Munshi was named Attorney-General.

Speaking at the rally, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan strongly criticised the Prime Minister for her comment against opposition's one-point movement and said that she might realise it when her party would have no time to abdicate.

He asked the PM to resign immediately and hand over power to a caretaker govern-

ment for fresh national election in the city yesterday reiterated the opposition's demand for immediate resignation of the Awami League government and early national election for establishing a people's government.

Senior BNP leaders at a rally in the city yesterday reiterated the opposition's demand for immediate resignation of the Awami League government and early national election for establishing a people's government.

They down immediately and hand over power to a neutral caretaker administration, and warned that it would oust the government through a mass upsurge if it failed oblige.

City BNP organised the public rally at Paltan Maidan yesterday in observance of the countrywide "Demonstration Day" to protest against alleged attacks on opposition pickets during Oct 21 hartal and killing of a Shibir activist in Chittagong.

He said that the AL, which was committed to separate the judiciary from the executive, was now hatching conspiracies to curb the independence of the judiciary.

Bhuiyan warned that the people of the country would not tolerate any attempt at curbing the independence of the judiciary and freedom of the press and asked the government to refrain from making "objectionable" comments against the judiciary and the press.

Presided over by city BNP convener Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, it was addressed, among others, by Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Dr Khandaque Mosharrif Hossain, Tariqul Islam, Mirza Abbas, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Amanullah Aman MP, Abdus Salam, Habibnabi Khan Sohel, Kazi Abul Bashar and Chowdhury Alam.

The meeting over, BNP activists brought out a procession, which terminated in front of the party central office after parading different city streets.

An official statement said

BSF acknowledged that the 1974 treaty could help avoid many frontier disputes, they refrained from making any commitment to implement the accord.

Cairn, along with another company, Holland Sea Search, has been operating in these two blocks under two separate PSUs signed in 1994 and 1995. After it struck the Sangi field in early 1996, it brought in US oil company Halliburton Brown & Root and Shell Oil as investment partners to develop the field.

During this time, Cairn acquired Holland Sea Search shares and sold those to Shell Oil without informing Petrobangla. Shell Oil remained in the shadows and started gradual take-over of Cairn's concerns in Bangladesh.

Cairn now maintains a low-profile office in Dhaka with only a few staff. Shell has launched full-fledged office with some 22 expatriates from July last.

Commenting on the operatorship transfer, a high official said Petrobangla had just initiated audit of Cairn during the period of 1996-97 and Cairn was unwilling to cooperate.

"Maybe the operatorship change would help the auditing, but it may create potential problems for us to pressure Cairn which is now not ac-

complained.

The host side alleged that

BSF and Indian nationals regu-

larly infringed the agreed bor-

der guidelines.

On their part, the Indian side

alleged "unprovoked firing by

the BDR" and "intrusion of

criminals."

Sources said the Indians also

made off the repeated alle-

gation of cross-border opera-

tion by Indian insurgents and

illegal migration by

Bangladeshis into India.

Bangladesh denied outright

existence of any Indian insur-

gents here and also illegal mi-

grants," one official told UNB

after adjournment of the talks.

The meeting will resume on

October 28. In the mean time,

the Indian delegation will be

out of Dhaka for two days.

Sources said the BSF DG and

his delegation members would

go to Rangamati and Cox's

Bazar districts. They are likely

to visit some disputed areas

along the frontier.

However, talking to UNB, a high official of BDR said he had no idea of the delegation's trip outside Dhaka.

Various other issues, includ-

ing exchange of enclaves,

Timbigha Corridor, border de-

marcation, smuggling of arms,

drugs and other items, repair

and maintenance of border

pillars, and woman and child

trafficking came up in the open-

ing round of talks.

Director General of Indian

Border Security Forces Sri EN

Ram Mohan led his team while

BDR Director General Major

General Mohammad Azizur

Rahman led the home side.

BDR Deputy Director

General sector commanders,

directors concerned, staff offi-

cers and officials from home

and foreign ministries,

Bangladesh Land Record and

Survey Department and repre-

sentatives from Joint River

Commission of the two coun-

tries are attending the confer-

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