Military rulers

FROM PAGE 1 Ayub hailed them as true

representatives of the grassroots people.

A presidential referendum Sarkar system. was held the next month giving the right to franchise union parishad elections the only to the councillors. next year and pledged to Ayub was the lone candistrengthen local government.

date, who claimed to have secured 95.6 percent "yes" votes. He declared himself president after the referen-

In quest for legitimacy, effective means to consolidate both Zia and Ershad, who power at grassroots level. seized the office of president Ershad introduced the upazila unconstitutionally, organised parishad system and used it referendums seeking people's effectively. mandate in favour of their regimes.

referendum he organised in

1985. Ershad claimed to have

obtained 94.14 percent "yes'

votes in his favour as the presi-

Both the elections were

marked by large-scale vote

referendum and the presiden-

tial election [1978], which is

something Ayub never did,"

said a study conducted by

local government expert Prof

Rural Development (BARD),

an autonomous body, pub-

lished the study "Decentrali-

sation and People's

Participation in Bangladesh: A

the two military regimes

manipulated local govern-

ment bodies to attain political

served, they took no time to

turn away from local bodies to

The parties extended all-

out support to their regimes

movements through violence,

Within a year of capturing

power, Zia looked out for ways

to legitimise his regime by

him because the institutions

built by Ayub provided a very

solid foundation. Mujib had

bypassed those institutions,

causing utter frustration

among them and they looked

for a 'new Ayub,'" said the

Zia launched the first pub-

lic relations campaign with

the chairmen and members of

union councils within six

He met and addressed

them at four divisional head-

quarters, and used govern-

ment officials in districts,

thanas and unions to mobilise

He tried to convince the

councillors that there would

be more development work in

rural areas and the local coun-

cils would be given the

responsibility to implement

he development

Zia, who altered his posi-

tion from deputy chief martial

law administrator to chief

martial law administrator in

November 1976, declared

himself president in April

1977, forcing Justice Sayem to

resign on grounds of ill health.

election, Zia shifted his

emphasis from local bodies as

he had already moved to form

a political party for contesting

He formed BNP that

secured a landslide victory in

the second parliamentary

regime introduced a broad

rural structure -- Swanirvor

Gram Sarkar (Self-reliant

village government) in 68,000

villages, marginalising union

the members of ruling BNP

much to the annoyance of

union parishad representa-

Sarkar] was operationalised, it

laid itself open to criticism

that it was being used for

extending the influence of the

ruling party," said another

study "Local Government in

Bangladesh" edited by sea-

soned bureaucrat Kamal

...In the manner it [Gram

By the end of 1980, the Zia

parliamentary election.

election in 1979.

parishads.

Siddiqui.

ERSHAD ERA

After the 1978 presidential

programmes.

local body representatives.

months of seizing power.

"The task was easier for

'NEW AYUB FOR LOCAL

using a civilian base.

political parties.

processions.

BARD study.

BODIES"

Once their purposes were

The study described how

Political Perspective" in 1987.

Bangladesh Academy for

Tofail Ahmed

The system was introduced in 1982 but polls to upazila Before staging the referenparishads were held in May dums, they too organised 1985. The candidates of govelection to union parishads ernment-backed Janadal, across the country and later renamed Jatiya Party, increased allocations for local won 45 percent of the posts of government bodies to get the upazila chairman. support of the grassroots.

In the absence of parlia-In the 1977referendum, Zia ment, upazila chairmen was the only candidate and his enjoyed the power, prestige regime claimed a voter turnand status of lawmakers. They out of 85 percent. He bagged played an active role in resist-99.5 percent of "yes" votes in ing movements against the favour of his rule as president. Ershad regime and worked for General Ershad was also his political party. the lone candidate in the

President Abdus Sattar.

Union parishad represen-

The Ershad regime held

tatives welcomed the annul-

ment of controversial Gram

The regime got large-scale

support from union parishad

representatives in staging the

He looked for a new and

referendum in 1985.

Before announcing the date for third parliamentary election, Ershad met upazila chairmen several times in Dhaka and other divisional headquarters to discuss the national polls and movements by the opposition.

Ershad took a few upazila Some of the councillors in parishad leaders with him on an interview expressed that tours across the country. They Zia compelled them to snatch were seen beside the president ballot papers and put them in most of his public appearinto ballot box during the

The UP chairmen extended full support to the government to organise the third parliamentary elections in 1986. Jatiya Party won the polls.

"If one looks at the political process of Bangladesh from 1982 onwards, the clear political role of the upazila system in consolidating the power base of military regime is not hard to mark. This was the only major programme the military rulers persistently and carefully handled from 1982 to 1985 and finally attained success," the BARD study observed.

However, the local body leaders, especially the UP chairmen, began losing consolidate power by forming ground after the parliamentary polls as ruling Jatiya Party curtailed their political role.

Cops fail and resisted anti-government

counter-violence, rallies and FROM PAGE 16

Later, he was taken to National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD) where he succumbed to his injuries around 8:30pm.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Ramna Police Station Shiblee Noman said police are yet to arrest the accused in the case as they are absconding since

However, police picked Russel, younger brother of the prime accused Faisal, for interrogation.

The OC said they are waiting for the autopsy report to decide whether the case, filed by Yousuf, will be converted into a murder case or not.

Dhaka Medical College Morgue sources told The Daily Star that Syed Yousuf might have died due to beating as severe injury marks were found on his skull.

Meanwhile, blaming the negligence of police, Yousuf's nephew Syed Imran Ali Robin said, "Police could have arrested the accused soon after the case was filed on Thursday noon. Instead, they gave them the opportunity to flee by acting late".

Locals said the accused including Faisal, Badsha, Ripon and Mohammad Ali were involved in extortion and mugging in the area in the name of BCL.

Hajj flight

the authority deferred the schedule following a request from Saudi Civil Aviation as it was facing some technical difficulties.

A flight of Boeing-747 will carry the pilgrims to Saudi

About 94,000 pilgrims from Bangladesh are likely to perform hajj this year, Biman officials said on Thursday. In most cases, Gram Sarkar Around 55,000 Bangladeshis committees were formed with performed hajj last year.

> Apart from Biman, 10 other airlines will carry Bangladeshi pilgrims to and from Saudi Arabia.

> This year 6,565 pilgrims will perform hajj under government management and 87,167 under different hajj agencies.

> Biman plans to ferry some 45,000 pilgrims to and from Jeddah by operating 198 flights in two months.

The national flag carrier has leased two Boeing 747-400 Ershad cancelled the unpopuaircraft for carrying the hajj lar Gram Sarkar system after capturing power on March 24, pilgrims. It has also engaged a 1982 with the overthrow of DC-10-30 aircraft for the task.

FROM PAGE 1

All fishing boats and trawlers in the north bay and deep sea have been advised to remain in shelters till further notice.

"New moon and heavy rainfall with gusty wind triggered by the prevailing depression have unleashed the nature's fury on the low-lying coastal areas," said meteorologist SM Mahmudul Haque.

River communication between Dhaka and the coastal districts was partially disrupted as Bangladsh Inland Water Transportation Aauthority (BIWTA) decided not to allow operation of any launch smaller than 70 feet. Internal launch communication in Patuakhali also remained suspended till last night since Tuesday, due to the same reason.

Ferry communication on Mawa-Kawrakandi and Paturia-Daulatdia routes were also disrupted causing long traffic jams on both sides of the highways.

A teenage boy and a girl were killed in the capital's Kha Para of Khilkhet as a boundary wall collapsed on them due to heavy rain. The victims are Sumi Akter, 15, a garment factory worker; and Ratan, 13, a tea-stall worker, said Officerin-charge of Khilkhet Police Station. At least three people includ-

ing a child were killed in Barguna, reported our Patuakhali correspondent. The dead were identified as

Sapin, 5, of Char Colony area of Barguna town; Minara, 28, of Atharogachhia village; and Noren, 30, of Tiakhali village of Amatali upazila. Local residents said Sapin

was washed away by a tidal surge around 9:00am as their house was being inundated. Later, family members recovered his body from nearby Khakdon canal Minara and Noren died in a

separate incident when their mud house collapsed on them. Road communication

between Kuakata, a tourist spot in Patuakhali, and others parts of the country remained snapped till last night as gangways of four ferry terminals on Patuakhali-Barisal highway went under water. Golam Mostafa

Chowdhury, president of Barguna District Fishing Trawler Owners Association, said at least 50 fishermen of the area were missing since Wednesday with five trawlers. An unusual tidal surge occurred at the coast of the district yesterday. Since Wednesday night

9,047 hectares of crop lands went under water in Patuakhali, 8,831 hectares of those had been newly planted with aman paddies, 150 hect ares had been planted with vegetables, while 66 hectares had been betel leaf fields, according to the district's Relief and Rehabilitation Office.

Lowlands and more than 100 shoals in the 7 upazilas of the district were flooded in the last three days, inundating more than 100 villages as flood control dams were breached at 50 points.

Around 14,000 houses of 142 villages were inundated as 40 kilometres of embankment of different upazilas collapsed in Cox's Bazaar. Around two hundred shrimp enclosures was also washed away, reports a correspondent from Cox's Bazaar.

At least 15 villages in Padmapukur, an Aila affected union under Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira district, were inundated as water entered into the areas collapsing embankment at two points on the river Kabodak due to violent tide on Thursday night, our Satkhira

correspondent adds. The embankment covering 120 yards at two points--Khutikata and the house of Daud Moral-- at village Padmapukur was devoured into the river caused by heavy pressure of water from the river due to high tide inundation.

Over 12,000 people of all most all the villages in Padmapukur union were marooned and again compelled to take shelter on high lands in the areas.

Due to heavy downpour and collapse of embankments at Aila affected Dakop and Koira upazilas of Khulna district, Sharankhola, Morrelganj and Mongla upazilas of Bagerhat district, over three lakh people were rendered homeless again, reports our correspondent from Khulna.

According to UNOs of Koira and Dakop upazilas, 74 villages have been submerged under five to six feet water after the embankments were washed away. All UNOs of Khulna and Bagerhat districts have been asked to remain standby to render their services to the marooned people.

Cargo handling at Mongla port remained suspended since Thursday due to hostile weather.

incident, PCJSS brought out a Six ships laden with procession in the town and imported food grains, fertiliser, held a protest rally at clinker and exportable jute Rangamati deputy commisgoods have been moved to sioner's (DC) office yesterday. safer place at Mongla port, said They criticised the govern-Harbour Master Inamul Huq.

ment for not banning UPDF, Several lakhs of people in which they said is a terrorist the low-lying areas in all the upazilas under Chandpur organisation and the main district, chars of Matlab and barrier to implementing the Haimchar were marooned due CHT peace accord.

to the downpour. Similar reports were that the police arrest the culreceived from Noakhali, prits, and the government ban Barisal, Chittagong, Feni, UPDF immediately. Bhola and other coastal areas.

Ceaseless rain Power crisis

NEWS

The PDB generated around

4,600 MW of power on some

occasions this year, but usu-

ally it generates around 4,000

MW. But by the end of this

year, it hopes to generate at

least 4500 MW on a regular

country's power demand

ranged between 5,200 MW

and 6,200 MW this year. Next

year, the demand would go up

By December next year,

the government hopes to add

between 1,500 and 2,000 MW

of power, which will signifi-

the crisis would be 'reason-

ably resolved' by 2012 as new

power plants would start

contracts for power projects

having 2,500 MW production

capacity. By December, we

will sign deals for production

of another 2,500 MW," the

PDB chairman said referring

to some larger gas-based and

dozens of conventional oil

and gas- based power pro-

jects, the government is also

focusing on large coal-based

plants, solar and wind power

projects and energy conser-

In addition to taking up

dual-fuel power projects.

"So far we have signed

operation one after another.

The power secretary said

by nearly 10 percent.

cantly ease the crisis.

On the other hand, the

basis.

FROM PAGE 1 also because many existing plants have become old and inefficient.

Ninety percent of the country's power plants operate using natural gas. Alamgir said the PDB

expected that at least five petroleum- run rental power plants would add 450 MW by December. And the figure could be higher if two more rental

power projects, which missed deadlines several times, could come into operation within this period. The rental plants will have

contract terms of three to five years. These stopgap measures have been taken to address the power crisis temporarily while larger longterm power projects are implemented. Meanwhile, the govern-

ment has raised its five-year new power generation target to 11000 MW from its previously planned 9,500 MW to make sure that even if some new projects fail to be launched, load shedding is gone before the next general elections. Coupled with the lack of

new power projects for several years, gas supply crisis has deeply affected power supply. Power shortage is hovering between 600 MW to 2,000 MW this year, resulting in frequent

president Thorbjoern Jagland

said Mr Liu was "the foremost

symbol of the wide-ranging

struggle for human rights in

Mr Liu's wife and some

China said the award was

Western nations have called for

contrary to Nobel principles

and could damage relations

knew the choice would be

controversial. He told local

television before the

announcement: "You'll under-

stand when you hear the

Mr Jagland, reading the cita-

tion, said China's new status in

the world "must entail

eral international agreements

to which it is a signatory, as well

as of its own provisions con-

Mr Jagland said that, in

practice, freedoms enshrined

in China's constitution had

"proved to be distinctly cur-

of Mr Liu had become clear

leader in the Tiananmen

Square protests in 1989, was

jailed for 11 years on Christmas

Day last year for drafting

Charter 08, which called for

multiparty democracy and

respect for human rights in

The Nobel Foundation

citation read: "Liu has consis-

tently maintained that the

sentence violates both China's

own constitution and funda-

Jagland said: "The campaign to

establish universal human

rights in China is being waged

by many Chinese, both in

Foreign ministry spokes-

man Ma Zhaoxu of China said:

"Liu Xiaobo is a criminal who

violated Chinese law. It's a

complete violation of the

principles of the prize and an

insult to the Peace Prize itself

for the Nobel committee to

award the prize to such a per-

Jens Stoltenberg said it would

be "negative for China's repu-

tation in the world" if it chose

to punish Norway over the

she was "so excited" by the

Jana Sanghati

Avilas was a leader of UPDF, a

group that opposes the

Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)

peace treaty, and joined PCJSS

in-charge (OC) of Kotwali

Police Station, said they are

Meanwhile, protesting the

Leaders also demanded

trying to identify the killers.

around four years ago.

FROM PAGE 16

Mr Liu's wife, Liu Xia, said

She told AFP news agency:

Norwegian Prime Minister

China itself and abroad."

Ending the citation, Mr

mental human rights.'

China.

early in the selection process.

Mr Jagland said the choice

Mr Liu, 54, who was a key

tailed for China's citizens".

"China is in breach of sev-

'CURTAILED FREEDOM'

increased responsibility".

cerning political rights."

his immediate release.

China".

with Norway.

name.

Jailed Chinese "I want to thank everyone for

supporting Liu Xiaobo. I

strongly ask that the Chinese

government release Liu."

Mrs Liu said police had informed her they would take her to Mr Liu's prison in the north-eastern province of Liaoning on Saturday so she could give him the news.

The prize is worth 10 million Swedish crowns and will be awarded in Oslo on December Mr Jagland admitted he

> German governmen spokesman Steffen Seibert said China should free Mr Liu so he could attend the ceremony. France's Foreign Minister

Bernard Kouchner also welcomed the award and called on China to release Mr Liu. Rights group Amnesty

International said Mr Liu was a "worthy winner". But Catherine Baber, deputy Asia-Pacific director, said:

"This award can only make a real difference if it prompts more international pressure on China to release Liu, along with the numerous other prisoners of conscience languishing in Chinese jails. No candidates are

announced ahead of the Peace Prize but others mentioned in the media included Afghan women's rights activist Sima Samar, Russian human rights activist Svetlana Gannushkina former German chancellor Helmut Kohl and Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai.

The Nobel committee had to defend last year's controversial Peace Prize choice of US President Barack Obama.

FROM PAGE 16 formed to scrutinise the pro-

posals and recommendations to introduce an effective system with a combination of a central monitoring cell, speed guns, speed sensors data networking and CCTVs, said Saiful Haque, director (engineering) of BRTA.

Shamsul Haque, director of Accident Research Institute (ARI), said two kinds of mechanism should be introduced to make the system a success.

First, speed gun meters should be distributed among highway police and then there should be a central monitoring system to watch and penalise the vehicles that cross the speed limit, he observed

According to an ARI study, about 26,000 vehicles of different kinds ply Dhaka Chittagong highway every day.

Referring to a police report, an ARI official said over 200 people die every year in road accidents on Dhaka-Chittagong highway while over a thousand sustain injuries. Communication Secretary

Babul Uddin Sarder, officer Mozammel Haque Khan told The Daily Star that the aim of introducing the system is to ensure road safety. On the budget for the pro-

ject he said it depends on the mechanism the government would opt for. Sohrab Hossain, deputy

inspector general (DIG) of highway police, said they have some speed detectors but they are not sufficient compared to the need.

He said, "Manpower shortage makes checking of all the vehicles on highways impossible. However, a few are checked when the highway police are on duty." 2003.

Boraigram

FROM PAGE 1

When one of the AL attackers shot a bullet in the air, all BNP activists except Babu left the spot. The attackers then caught Babu and beat him indiscriminately.

Babu received severe head injures and there were cuts on the hands and legs and beating marks all over the body, said doctors who performed the autopsy.

BNP activists led by Babu brought out a procession from the upazila parishad premises as part of the opposition's month-long demonstrations across the country. Babu was supposed to address a public gathering after the procession. Mohammad Nasim,

injured reporter of the Bangladesh Protidin, told The Daily Star that Babu was profusely bleeding and lying unconscious on the road for nearly an hour while police watched the situation from a distance. Later, Babu's wife and BNP activists rescued him and whisked him to a hospital, added Nasim. Anwar Hossain, officer-in-

charge of Boraigram Police Station, said Babu was killed as Awami League and BNP activists were locked in a clash at Bonpara Bazar. He said the clash started when BNP activists were holding a procession and AL men intercepted. Ruhul Kuddus Talukder

Dulu, president of BNP Natore district unit, termed the incident a pre-planned murder. "The killers cut the tendons

of Babu's hands and legs to make sure he died. The murder took place, as the government is encouraging killers by freeing them from death row, he alleged. Mizanur Rahman, general secretary of AL Boraigram

upazila unit, said the incident

is not political as BNP is prop-

agating. No AL leaders were present on the spot during the incident. He said local businessmen belonging to AL requested BNP leaders not to hold the rally on Friday, the Jumma day.

"The incident took place when the BNP activists disobeying the businessmen brought out the procession and confronted with Chhatra League activists," said Mizanur Rahman.

The injured include Rafiqual Islam, upazila Jubo Dal president, Jamal Uddin Mozammel, Nazim, Jamal and Rafiq. The two other injured journalists are ATN Bangla's cameraman Masud Rana and Tofazzal Hossain of the Dainik Destiny.

The attackers snatched two cameras from the journalists when they were taking shots of the assault on Babu, the only son of Boraigram civil surgeon Saber Hossain.

Around 7:00pm, agitated BNP activists staged a demonstration and blocked Bonpara Bazar road for half an hour. They also attacked and vandalised business centre of including that of AL-backed vice-chairman of the upazila Ataur Rahman and the house of local AL leader Zakir Hossain. The activists also vandalised Patwari Clinic, where Babu was rushed to after the incident.

In a statement, BNP Chairperson and the Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia condemned the killing of Babu by the ruling party men.

Demanding arrests of the killers and punitive action against them, she said, "It seems that the government has taken a project to eliminate the opposition. The Boraigram upazila chairman has just fallen a victim to that plan.

AL, BNP

FROM PAGE 16

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, BNP's senior joint secretary general.

Alongside party leaders, some popular individuals, not belonging to BNP directly, may also get party support in some areas, but party's local committee will take the final decision, he added.

Earlier, BNP refrained from participating in four city corporation elections during the military-backed caretaker government in 2008.

Central BNP leaders are scheduled to visit upazilas across the country to resolve internal conflict and reenergise party activities as part of their preparation for the election. Party leaders hope that the

central leaders' visit and chairperson's countrywide rallies will strengthen the party. Talking to The Daily Star,

BNP standing committee member Mahbubur Rahman said central leaders will work with the grassroots during their visit to select popular candidates.

There are 4,488 union parishads and 309 municipalities across the country. The last municipal elections were held in 2005 while the last union parishad elections in

Deals on border haat, trade this month

Faruk to lead business delegation to India Oct 20

UNB, Dhaka

A business delegation led by Commerce Minister Faruk Khan will leave for New Delhi on October 20 aiming to ink a number of deals related to investment, border haat (market) and removal of trade barriers.

During the four-day visit, a number of issues including duty-free access to Indian market, further reduction of the number of items from India's negative list, Free Trade Agreement and investment are likely to dominate the discussions, officials said. Talking to UNB over phone,

Faruk Khan said the agenda of the discussion is yet to be "There are four to five major agenda...Right now I can't tell you specifically, but a

final agreement regarding

border haat will be signed during the visit," he said. Leaders of the FBCCI, BGMEA, DCCI, BKMEA, MCCI, CCCI, IBCCI and other business bodies are included in the 22-member delegation.

return home by road via Guwahati to see the exact condition of the road commu-Replying to a question, the

Faruk Khan said he would

minister said he will brief the media with the entire delegation before leaving for New Delhi, most likely between October 10 and 12.

India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) president Abdul Matlub Ahmed said Bangladesh would emphasise on further reducing the negative list for access to Indian market, existing problems relating to sale of jute bag with "Made in Bangladesh" sea and how the Indian investment in Bangladesh can be boosted.

He also hinted that the final agreement on border haat. which will be a common marketplace for both Bangladeshis and Indians to boost local business and trade between the two close neighbours, would be signed on October 21.

The two countries had agreed to set up border haat along their international border in the northeast when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited India in January this

Border haat was earlier scheduled to be launched on April 14 or Pahela Baishakh the first day of the Bangla Year. Dhaka finally agreed to sign

the proposed agreement on border haat after New Delhi had assured of nonimposition of any local tax on Bangladeshi products. According to the final draft of the agreement, an individual will not be able to trade

and the trading should be conducted in the currencies of both Bangladesh and India. The draft agreement said a committee comprising government officials and officers of border security forces of the two nations will manage the

above \$50 at the border haat

markets and will sit periodically to review its operations. Two border haats will be opened in the first phase-- one in Sunamganj and another in Kurigram district--along the international border.

The commodities to be traded in these haats will include locally produced agriculture and horticulture products, spices, minor forest products excluding timber, fresh and dry fish, dairy and poultry products, wooden furniture and cane products, handloom and handicraft

Teenage suicide closed, and the usually jam-

for DNA tests in Islamabad, said Parhiar.

The bombs exploded at the entrance of the shrine to Abdullah Shah Ghazi, a saint in the Sufi mystical strain of Islam, as devotees packed it for a weekly gathering in the city's seaside Clifton district. Witness Gul Mohammad

said he was outside the shrine when two huge blasts were heard in quick succession. " rushed inside and saw blood and human flesh," he said. "Some bodies were lying on

the ground and several people wounded in the blasts were crying in pain. Then ambulances started arriving and moving the injured to hospi-"It was a terrorist attack, said Sindh provincial home

minister Zulfikar Mirza, who said the government had decided to seal all shrines in the city immediately over security A bomb attack in July at a popular Sufi site in the eastern

city of Lahore killed more than 40 people. Militant Islamists see visits to Sufi shrines and some of the rituals practised by the sect as un-Islamic. There was no immediate claim of responsibility but the

Pakistani Taliban has been blamed for similar bombings in the past. Karachi shut down yesterday after religious and politica parties called on people to

protest the attacks in the city. Shopping centres, gas stations, schools and shops were

More than 3,700 people have been killed in a series of suicide attacks and bombings, many of them carried out by the Taliban

packed roads were deserted.

and other Al-Qaeda-linked extremists, in Pakistan during the past three years. The United States, whose intensifying campaign of drone strikes against Islamist militants in northwest Pakistan has raised

tensions with Islamabad, condemned the attack. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Washington stood "shoulder-

to-shoulder with Pakistan in its struggle against terrorism". The United States has dramatically increased drone strikes against militants in the lawless tribal areas allegedly at the centre of a plot to carry out Mumbai-style attacks on

European cities.

Container

FROM PAGE 16

giving work orders to the private berth operators. The authorities signed agreements with the six opera-

tors Thursday evening for container handling at six general cargo berths. General Secretary of the federation advocate Mahfujur

Rahman Khan said the port workers protested since the private operator took some outsiders to work at the jetty and their demands were yet to

aside our own rich culture."

The premier said that she is

in favour of building a bridge by

jumping the divide of North-

South and East-West. "In that

context, we are taking initiative

to build infrastructures for

regional and inter-regional

connectivity that will help

increase communication and

exchanges among different

diversified ancient heritage

and cultures. The impact of

globalisation is visible in the

biennale art exhibition would

help the artists of the region to

grand prizes among three

participants of Japan, South

Korea and Bangladesh while six

honorary prizes to six partici-

works on display at the audito-

Later, the PM visited the arts

know about themselves.

She mentioned that the

The premier distributed

She said Asia is the land of

countries and cultures."

Asian culture.

pants.

rium.

PM calls

She said that the culture of the country should be further enriched to face the challenges of the present time and also in the future.

Hasina expressed the high hope that the cultural activists and the artists of the country would be able to face the tough challenge with their talent and creativity. She said that none would be

able to create anything of lasting impact without relation to his or her homeland. "But that doesn't mean shutting down the window. We've to open our windows to see the world. By this, others will also learn from our great creations." Referring to the present government's various activi-

ties for the betterment and flourishing of local arts and culture, Hasina that her government always patronises expanding local arts and culture to the rest of the world. "Our government is always

alert in trying to combine the cultural heritage with the overall development strategy to be a developed nation in the world arena.' She said that after killing the Father of the Nation

The exhibition will continue up to November 6 in different parts of the city. Chaired by Information and

Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad, the inaugural function was also addressed by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Promod Mankin, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy director general Kamal Lohani and noted artist

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975 the perpetrators repeatedly tried to destroy the local culture and heritage. "Hectic moves were going on to input foreign culture by putting Rafigunnabi.