



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina tries her hand at painting on a canvas at the inaugural ceremony of a month-long solo art exhibition of celebrated artist Shahabuddin Ahmed at Shilpakala Academy in the capital yesterday. PHOTO: PID

GRADUATION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY

A slap on critics: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh's graduation to a developing country is a slap on those who forecast that Bangladesh would be a bottomless basket after independence.

"A quarter during the Liberation War asked what the country would achieve after being independent and said it would be a bottomless basket," she said, adding that Bangladesh's progress is a slap in the face of those critics. The premier said this at the inaugural ceremony of a month-long solo art exhibition of celebrated artist Shahabuddin Ahmed at Shilpakala Academy in the capital.

Shilpakala Academy and Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata (India) in association with the Bangladesh Ministry of Cultural Affairs have organised the exhibition titled "Shanti" (peace) at Gallery No. 2 of National Art Gallery of the Academy.

At the function, the premier unveiled the

cover of a book "Amar Muktiuddha", written by Shahabuddin. Sheikh Hasina said a nation is enlightened when it is enriched with education, art and culture.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh lost its way after the assassination of Bangabandhu in 1975 as distorted history gives birth to distorted character of the people.

Describing Shahabuddin as a great asset for Bangladesh, the premier said the most important thing is that he is a valiant freedom fighter. "He is a freedom fighter, he portrays it in his works and we feel proud of it," she said. "We want the touch of his brush to continue to sing the glorious history of our Liberation War."

The exhibition, featuring over 30 recent artworks by the maestro, includes portraits of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi along with works of Shahabuddin's famous series like "Freedom Fighter", "Birangona", "Speed" and "Victory".

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50pc of Ehsan's right eye retina damaged

Says father quoting doctors in India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah



Dhaka University student Ehsan Rafiq, whose right eye was badly injured in an attack by a band of BCL activists on February 6 over a calculator, returned to his village yesterday after being treated at a hospital in India.

On March 8, Ehsan left for Shankar Netralaya in Chennai for better treatment as per advice of several eye specialists.

Talking to The Daily Star, Ehsan's father Rafiqul Islam said he got his son admitted to the hospital on March 11 and a team of doctors led by Durga Das conducted a surgery on March 13.

"His (Ehsan) retina has suffered at least 50 percent damage. But no damage was seen in the cornea," said Rafiqul, quoting the doctors.

He said the doctors asked him to take Ehsan to the hospital after six months. Then, it could be said for sure if the damage to the eye is under control, he quoted the doctors as saying.

The whole treatment cost Tk 3 lakh. On behalf of earth and environment science faculty, its dean Prof Maksud Kamal provided Tk 50,000 for Ehsan's treatment, said Rafiqul.

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Resist anti-liberation forces: President

UNB, Gazipur



President Abdul Hamid yesterday stressed the need for spreading the spirit of the Liberation War among all to resist the conspiracy of the anti-liberation forces, which could raise their heads whenever they get scope.

"We have to resist any type of conspiracy and evil efforts for the interest of the nation and the country. For this reason, we have to spread the spirit of the Liberation War among all. It is our duty to build up our new generation imbued with the spirit of Liberation War," he said.

"The anti-liberation forces did not forget the stigma of defeat in the Liberation War. So the evil forces raise their heads whenever they get scope. They are the enemy of the country's independence, democracy and development," he said.

President Hamid was addressing a rally at Gazipur Rajbari field in the afternoon. "Swadhinatar Prothom Soshostro Protirod Dibos Uddjapan Committee" organised the rally to mark the first armed resistance against the Pakistani occupation forces in Gazipur.

"There was an evil effort to teach the distorted history of our Liberation War to the next generation. Those who distorted the history did this deliberately. They did this as they are afraid of Bangabandhu, Liberation War and the history of the Liberation War," he said.

"Now we are the citizens of an independent country. The country is moving towards development with pride. If the trend of development continues, we must be placed in the group of developed countries by 2041," he said.

He said the historic March 19, when the first armed resistance against Pakistani forces took place in Gazipur, is an important milestone in the history of freedom struggle. This resistance had accelerated the preparation of armed freedom fighters and encouraged the general public to participate in the war, he said. About the historic March 7 speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, President Hamid said in his speech Bangabandhu had clearly given the outline of the country's independence and the Liberation War.

Chaired by Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur district Dr Dewan Md Humayun Kabir, the rally was addressed, among others, by Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq, local MP Zahid Ahasan Russell, Gazipur Zila Parishad chairman Aktheruzzaman and local Awami League leaders.

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