

# Construction of Bangla Academy building yet to start

WAHIDA MITU

The construction work of Bangla Academy building is yet to start even eight years after its foundation laying as the authorities could not relocate the tin-shed quarters at the construction site.

Moreover, the construction work is delayed due to frequent changes in the design of the building.

During the foundation laying in 1998, the plan was to build a 21-storey building. Later the authorities revised the design to make it a 12-storey building and finally curtailed it to a seven-storey one.

The first phase of construction work to build five floors was scheduled to begin last month under the supervision of Public Works Department (PWD) and expected to complete by June 2008.

Bangla Academy officials said the work may now start

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next month.

Asked why the size of the structure has been curtailed twice, Murshid Anwar, assistant director of Bangla Academy, said: "This area is restricted and we cannot build high-rise buildings here."

"As the design has been changed, the project cost has decreased to Tk 18.25 crore

from the previously estimated cost of Tk 25 crore," he said.

"At the project site there are several tin-shed quarters of Bangla Academy staff. We have to demolish these quarters before starting the construction work. We hope to start the work next month."

He said a four-storey building will be constructed in the first

phase that will mainly be used for administrative offices, auditorium and library.

At present all activities of Bangla Academy are run from Burdwan House on the Dhaka University campus.

The BNP government during its previous tenure planned to construct a 21-storey building to signify the spirit of Amar Ekushey (21st February) following a proposal by the

academy.

On February 7, 1998 the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone of the building named "Ekushey Bhaban." But the present government changed the name to "Bangla Academy Bhaban."

Bangla Academy was established in 1955 to promote, protect and conduct research on the Bangla language.



An artist's view of the proposed Bangla Academy building (left). The pond in the academy premises awaiting a land filling where the foundation of the building will be laid (right).

## Child help line

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toll free phone number, we can make the help line effective within three months."

She said that the initiators have already started communicating with the ministries of social welfare, women and child affairs, telecommunication, information and science and technology and partner NGOs.

She said three months would be sufficient to install IT equipment and train organisations or institutions in operating the help line.

In the consultation meeting initiators discussed the functional strategies of the help line. The concept paper presented at the meeting said the help line will be working through a partnership based strategy and approaches. The relevant child rights organisations, institutions, and government departments will be linked to this network to ensure all support and care to the child in need.

Help like treatment, counselling, rescue, shelter and legal aid will be ensured through

the specialised partner organisations, the concept paper described.

The toll free telephone numbers will be introduced and detailed out to children, relevant community people and stakeholders of the system through billboards, stickers, posters and individual contacts.

"Establishing a child help line is very essential considering the complexities and magnitude of the most vulnerable segment of the children especially in the case of street children, those involved in the most hazardous forms of labour, victims of commercial sexual abuse and exploitation, children born or sold to brothels and children in conflict or contact with the law and such others," Wahida Banu said.

She hopes the help line will play a pivotal role with the objective of supporting and assisting the children facing various kinds of risks and dangers.



Activists of Paribesh Bachao Andolon, an environmental group, protesting in front of Hotel Sheraton to save a hundred year old tree, which was about to be cut down by the authorities to widen the road.

## Deprived viewers can now watch favourite channels

ERSHAD KAMOL

Hostility between the satellite TV channel distributors has deprived the viewers of enjoying their favourite channels for weeks, even for several months.

The viewers alleged that they have paid full amount of monthly charge to the cable operators but they did not provide many of the popular channels such as Star Plus, Sony, Ten Sports, ESPN and Star Sports since October last year.

However, telecast of these channels was restored a week ago following a High Court order and intervention by the high officials of Star TV Network.

Sources said Vivek Arora and other high officials of Star TV Network managed one of the two major rival distributors to solve the crisis.

Sheikh Ehsanul Haque, an inhabitant of Paltan area, said, "I missed many of my favourite programmes for many days, as the local operator did not provide Star channels for more

than eight months."

"Moreover, they stopped popular sports and movie channels on last July 24. But I had to pay the same bill what I had paid before the crisis began," he added.

People involved with the satellite TV channel business believe the current crisis is the result of rivalry between the distributors in Bangladesh and the involvement of cable operators association deteriorated the crisis.

Sources said a number of government-backed groups are taking the opportunity to grab a major chunk of the lucrative business.

The latest crisis began when the government allegedly on instigation by a section of distributors on July 24 issued an order to stop downlink of 13 channels including ESPN, Star Sports, TEN Sports, HBO and others, saying there was no permission for downlink of these channels.

Nationwide Communication Limited (NCL) and Total Sports (a sister concern of NCL) used to downlink eight of the 13

channels while MGH Infocom two and Translinks one. The other one is free-to-air channel.

Many involved in satellite television business think that the ministry was provided with incorrect information that prompted the ministry to impose the ban. They said one of the rival groups, which is trying to establish monopoly in the business, played a key role behind the government order.

Besides, questions arose how come the distributors continued the business for so many years if they did not have proper documents and permission and why the ministry had not taken any decision earlier.

After the High Court issued stay order on the ministry ban, the cable operators resumed the channels. ESPN, Star Sports and Ten Sports got the stay order. But, without getting such, the cable operators started telecasting HBO.

Humayun Mazid, chief executive of Translinks, the local distributor of HBO, said even though it has NOC [no objection certificate] and other required documents, the

government included HBO in the order issued on July 24.

"We received the NOC on July 25, 2002, from the Ministry of Information."

However, ministry sources said they did not know that Translinks had a licence and NOC from the ministry. "They did not even send a copy of the order to us, as they did not know that Translinks was the distributor of HBO," Mazid said.

"The Ministry of Information assured us of reviewing our case. If they don't, we will talk to our legal experts," he added.

On the other hand, the conflict between the distributors have unveiled so many shady business in this sector what the government has failed to control.

SM Anwar Parvez, president of Cable Operators Association of Bangladesh (Coab), in a recent press conference identified a number of distributors as corrupt and said, "We want proper investigations into how these distributors are paying bills to the foreign TV channels without proper permissions."

"The distributors do not pay

32.25 percent of the subscribers' line rent, which they are supposed to pay to the government as entertainment tax," he alleged.

He also pointed out a few flaws of the rules enacted by the Ministry of Information concerning the downlink of satellite channels.

According to the cable TV operators, the Ministry of Information on August 1 banned 11 free-to-air channels terming them vulgar. This ban also proves the government's not having correct information. Many of these channels including Ren TV and Fashion TV were banned earlier in 2002, the operators said.

"The question is, how could the Ministry of Information ban a few channels twice without withdrawing its previous decision," said Nazrul Islam, director of Dhaka East Cable Vision, operating in the eastern part of the capital.

## healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH	MARKET CLOSED	TAXI CAB	LIBRARY & INFO
<b>Hospitals</b> Anjuman-e-Mofidul Islam 9336611, 7411660 BARDEM 8616641-50 Cholera Hospital (ICDDR) 8811751-60 CMH (Dhaka) 9870011 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital 8628612-6 Holy Family Red Crescent 8311721-5 Islamia Eye Hospital 9119315, 8112156 Lion Eye Hospital 9129127 Medinova Medical Services 8620353-4 Mirpur General Hospital (Pvt) Ltd 9007873, 8015444 Mitford Hospital 7319002-6 National Heart Foundation Hospital 8014914, 8010491, 8021399 Orthopedic Hospital 9112150 Salimullah Medical College Hospital 7319002-6 Samorita Hospital 9131901 Shahid Suhrawardi Hospital 9122560-78, 9112086, 8114856, 9130800 Shishu Hospital 8116061-2, 9119119 <b>Clinics</b> Akand Clinic 8015855, 8022581 Arogya Niketan 9333730 BAVS Maternity 8016413-4 Dhaka Monorog Clinic 9005050 Gulshan Mother & Child Clinic 8822738, 8812992 Ibn Sina Clinic 8119513 Jahanara Clinic (Pvt) Ltd 8912929 Judi Maternity 9113322 Paltan Poly Clinic 9557385 Retina Eye Center (Clinic) 9884588, 9884566 Shishu Bekash Clinic 9351625 The Eye Clinic 9333238 <b>Blood Bank</b> Red Crescent Centre- 9116563 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319022 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9 <b>Eye Bank</b> Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040 <b>Ambulances For Dead Body</b> Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867, Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday Elephant Road-Friday Bishal Center-Friday Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday Polwell Market-Friday BCS Computer City-Friday Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday Stadium Market-Friday Bangabazar Market-Friday National Museum-Thursaday Ahsan Manzil-Thursaday New Market-Tuesday Gausia Market-Tuesday Mouchak Market-Sunday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday Eastern Plaza-Sunday Farmview Super Market-Sunday Muktiyuddha Jadughar-Sunday Dhaka Zoo-Sunday Shishu Jadughar-Sunday <b>Passenger's Complaint</b> 01711-000990, 01711-000991, 01711-000992, DMP-999, 2627. Cab Salida Ltd. 9344477, 01711-620888, 01711-610405 Cosmo Cab Ltd. 9112959, 8127191, Nitel Cab Co. Ltd. 8125285, 01711-621953 JBS Cab Ltd. 0191-364575 Coal Cab Ltd 8130485, 01711-826731 Limujin Cab Ltd. 9318351, 9337204 Multi-Cab Ltd. 9666502, 9570740 Nihon Taxi Cab Ltd. 8624742, 8624741 Orion Taxi Cab Ltd. 934727, 9347277, 01711-155144 Reliance Cab Ltd. 9339563-4 RMS Cab Ltd. 8118536 Shatarupa Taxi Cab Ltd. 731083, 01711-458740 Tinni Cab Ltd. 9662009, 01711-645257 Teletax Cab Ltd. 7202201 Alif Cab Co. Ltd. 0191-357838, 83116948 Cab One Ltd. 9563054 Ext.-3077, 3178 United Cab Ltd. 7510166, 01711-348474 Ulka Express Ltd. 9359885, 01711-313554 Cab Bangla Ltd. 9563077 Ext.-3054, 3178, 01711-622644 Cab i Ltd. 9563054, 9563077, 01711-629585 Cab line Ltd. 8321162 Capital Cab Co. Ltd. 9352847-9 Classic Cab Ltd. 200825, 01711-233851, 01711-812415 Comport Cab Ltd. 8817610-4 Cab Express Ltd. 9341369, 9339337, 9348401 Ext.-111 <b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b> Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673 Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407 Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation- 8116133 Alliance Francaise- 8611557 Information Resource Center, The American Center- 8813440-4, 9886395-9 British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7 Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604 Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6 Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8850141-2 The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412 Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) 9330081-4			