

2 CCC officials suspended on corruption charges

UNB, Chittagong

Two officials of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) were suspended on charges of corruption on Thursday.

They were identified as M Shahidullah, superintending engineer (electrical), and Hasan Mahmud Shamsher, APS to the mayor.

Shahidullah is one of the six, including Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury, accused in a corruption case filed two weeks ago.

CCC Chief Executive Officer served the suspension order issued by the higher authorities concerned.

Govt allows transmission of six more TV channels

UNB, Dhaka

The government has given permission for transmission of six more satellite TV channels.

The channels are Australia Network, Australia Cable Entertainment, CCTV-9 English, CCTV-4 Chinese, Phoenix Chinese and Jam-e-Jam-3 Channel, said a PID handout on Thursday.

Earlier, the government approved transmission of a total of 78 local and foreign TV channels in the country.

BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 34th episode of the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap will be held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city at 5:45pm today.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, BNP Standing Committee Member and former army chief Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman, Awami League Presidium Member Suranjit Sengupta and Barrister Tania Ameer will feature the four-member panel for this week's Sanglap, says a press release.

Masud Hasan Khan of BBC Bangla Service will moderate the Sanglap, jointly organised by BBC World Service Trust and BBC Bangla Service.

The Sanglap programme will be aired on BBC Bangla radio at 7:30pm tomorrow and on Channel i at 8:00pm on Monday.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, left, Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker, right, and author Tahmima Anam, middle, launch the Bangladesh edition of the novel 'A Golden Age' at Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday.

BANGLADESH EDITION

'A Golden Age' launched in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though independence has been the greatest achievement of the country, its values -- equality, social justice and democracy -- have not been materialised even after 36 years.

One of the reasons might be that these values could not be passed on properly to next generations who actually carry out the messages and contribute to nation building.

A Golden Age, a novel by Tahmima Anam, is an effort to tell the people, especially the younger generation that the Liberation War is not an event to be forgotten, but a set of values to be passed on from generation to generation.

"Of course, we shall look forward to future, but not by forgetting the past. We will use the past as the foundation of future," said Tahmima at the launching ceremony of the Bangladesh edition of 'A Golden Age' at Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed and Air Vice-Marshal (retd) AK Khandker launched the Bangladesh edition published by Shahitya Prakash.

The first English novel on the Liberation War of Bangladesh, 'A Golden Age' was published in Great Britain by John Murray in February this year, receiving rave reviews from across Europe.

Yesterday's function was aglow with the presence of prominent personalities including cultural activists, educationists, members of the civil society, politicians, rights activists, diplomats and former bureaucrats.

Tahmima said, "We must remember the Liberation War in our hearts so that we can claim that

the war for freedom was ours."

In response to a question, she said there are many young Bangladeshis at home and abroad who do not know what the war was all about and its significance.

"I tried in my novel to show how the common people, especially the women, participated in the war and how it affected them. They did not take up arms and go to the battlefields, but played a heroic role in the war," said Tahmima, daughter of Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, and human rights activist Shaheen Anam.

She said she was inspired by an incident that took place in 1971 when the Pakistani army attacked the house of her grandmother who bravely managed to save her children.

Tahmima said she tried to draw a humane face of the Liberation War in the form of a fiction.

Speaking on the occasion, AK Khandker, who was the deputy chief of staff of Bangladesh Force during the Liberation War, said the novel is excellent as it takes one down to memories of the war of independence.

"The characters became live in the novel that painted how hard it was to achieve independence," he said, urging the young generation to learn about the heroic struggle.

Lauding the novel, eminent Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar said he was happy that Tahmima wrote a novel on the Liberation War. He recalled the glorious era that he covered at that time in his writings.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said the novel was so interesting that he simply couldn't put it down once he had started reading.

The book has the power of poetry and capacity of looking at the incidents in detail, said the

noted litterateur, adding that a Bangla version should be published as soon as possible.

Mofidul Haque, publisher of the Bangladesh edition, said Tahmima has done a great job through her creative writing that actually is the best means to make connections between the values and ideals of generations.

Speaking on the occasion, Shaheen Anam said, "We are all proud today that Tahmima wrote about us, but the most important thing is that she wrote about the common women of our society."

These common women are still fighting for their independence braving all the obstacles, and contributing to their families and society, she said, adding, "I am very proud that Tahmima is not only our daughter, but the daughter of our generation. We can take a collective pride in her novel."

A question-answer session followed the launch. Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam of Dhaka University, filmmaker Catherine Masud, and Prof Kaiser Haque, among others from the audience, took part in the session.

Earlier, English Department Drama Society of Dhaka University staged a play reading of a part of the novel.

Prof Tahmina Ahmed of English department directed the reading performed by artiste Mita Chowdhury and others.

Cultural activist and freedom fighter Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu organised the ceremony conducted by Dr Naila Khan.

47 children get Meridian Ananda Alo Painting Awards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The award ceremony of 'Meridian Ananda Alo Children Painting Award 2007' was held amid festivity at the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) in the city yesterday.

A total of 47 child painters of seven groups were awarded prizes and certificates for their outstanding works.

In the first session of the ceremony, renowned painter Hashem Khan gave away awards to the best sixes of Machhranga (kingfisher) group.

Afterwards, litterateur Ali Imam, Managing Director of Meridian Foods Ltd SM Kamal Pasha and litterateur Amirul Islam handed over prizes to other group winners.

An instant art competition was also held at Multipurpose Hall of the IDEB.

When asked, Hashem Khan told The Daily Star that the drawings of the kids are wonderful and it proves that they can do a lot if they are given chance.

He also said painting means creating some beautiful things and these beautiful things enter the children's mind through their painting.

"It is very good to see that nowadays children's paintings are also considered as usual work in the country though it was not so in the past," he said.

Rajin, a class two student, who took part in the instant competition, told this correspondent that "It's very nice to draw pictures on my family in such a competitive programme."

Earlier, an exhibition of pictures painted by the children was also held where the children with their crayon and brash painted nature, fishes, birds, villages, Shaheed Minar and family.

A film was screened in the programme and a child dance programme was also held.

Ananda Alo Editor Rezanur Rahman, Ananda Alo Executive Editor Shaikat Salahuddin and Brand Manager of Meridian Foods Ltd Ferdous Amin also spoke at the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Children draw pictures at an art competition at 'Meridian Ananda Alo Children Painting Award 2007' giving ceremony at the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh (IDEB) in the city yesterday.

Project to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality

DFID, EC to provide \$ 31m

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Commission (EC) will provide \$31.2 million for the first-ever UN joint project in the country to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

The project titled 'Accelerating progress towards maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity reduction' will be jointly implemented by the government, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed between the three participating agencies at a city hotel on Thursday.

UNFPA Representative Pornchai Suchitta, UNICEF Representative Louis-Georges Arsenault and Acting WHO Representative Dr Khaled Hassan signed the MoU.

An agreement of funding was also signed between Pornchai

Suchitta and Sarah Sanyahumbi, acting country representative of DFID Bangladesh, on behalf of their respective organisations.

The five-year project will start next month with an emphasis on addressing the equity issues to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5.

In the first phase, the DFID and the EC will provide \$ 8.3 million to implement the project in four districts. Later, it will be implemented in 20 districts.

UNFPA Representative Pornchai Suchitta said that although Bangladesh has made significant progress towards the improvement of both child and maternal survival, formidable challenges still remain, particularly in implementing effective and efficacious interventions at a national level.

He also said that maternal mortality and neonatal mortality, estimated to be 320 per 100,000

and 41 per 1000 live births respectively, are still unacceptably high.

With the progress that the country has made in reducing mortality and morbidity from infectious causes, neonatal mortality now accounts for over 66 percent of overall infant deaths, he said.

Health and Family Welfare Adviser Maj Gen ASM Matur Rahman was present at the signing ceremony as the chief guest.

He said the government is committed to reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and has been working to improve the health of women and children and also to attain MDGs 4 and 5.

Ehsan Ul Fattah, secretary to the health ministry, Louis-Georges Arsenault, Sarah Sanyahumbi and Dr Khaled Hassan also spoke.