



New BGMEA building under construction at Begunbari canal.

Rajuk slaps penalty on BGMEA

BGMEA has to pay Tk 12.5 lakh for constructing new building without approval

TAWFIQUE ALI

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) has decided to slap a penalty of Tk 12.5 lakh on the BGMEA for constructing its 15-storey office building in the city's Begunbari canal area before obtaining approval for the construction plan, sources said.

"The Building Construction (BC) committee-4 has determined a penalty of Tk 12.5 lakh that BGMEA has to pay to obtain approval for the plan," said a highly placed source. "This includes Tk 12 lakh approval fee at penalty rate and Tk 50,000 fine."

The BC committee members have endorsed the decision unanimously. "We will inform the BGMEA authorities of our decision in a letter on Sunday (today)," said authorised officer of the BC committee Muzaffar Uddin when asked about the decision.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) now has to meet three conditions to obtain approval from Rajuk for the building plan that it had previously submitted, Muzaffar said.

The conditions include paying approval fees at penalty rate (ten times more than the regular fees), demolition of unauthorised portions (non-

He said BGMEA did not reply to the Rajuk letter issued in the first week of this month informing the BGMEA of its anomalies in constructing the

when asked about the penalty. "I will meet the Rajuk chairman to find a solution and we will resolve whatever problems we have regarding the plan

what anomalies we have in constructing the building."

A top official of Rajuk said on condition of anonymity that now there is no scope to negotiate with the Rajuk as the BC committee has already ascertained a penalty.

The BGMEA has to demolish those parts of the building that are not specified in the proposed plan and do not comply with Rajuk's setback rules of building construction.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) meanwhile in a survey of Begunbari-Hatirjheel area for a proposed development scheme by Rajuk recommended a 100-foot sewage channel in Begunbari canal, also known as Sonargaon canal.

According to sources, Rajuk had asked BGMEA to submit any construction plan in Begunbari canal in consultation with the Buet but BGMEA did not do that.

The BGMEA was supposed to build a beautiful bridge to approach the building from the main road, as the study report suggested keeping the canal flowing for protection of environment and facilitating sewerage flow.

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complying with rules) of the building and giving an undertaking that they will remove the earth-filled approach road on the canal and build a beautiful approach bridge.

"In case they decline to comply with the decision, Rajuk authorities will go for demolition as per law," said the Rajuk official replying to a question.

In the letter, Rajuk asked the BGMEA to pay penalty for having constructed its office building before obtaining approval of the proposed construction plan and demolish some portions of the building that do not comply with the rules.

"It is not a big deal," BGMEA President SM Fazlul Haq said

approval." "We do not differ with Rajuk on keeping the canal flowing with an approach bridge to be built between the main road and our building," he said.

Replying to a question on why they had completed construction of the building before obtaining approval, he said, "Actually I need to look into the details of it to tell you

Rallies, demos cause commuting problems

RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN

Demonstration programmes, rallies at key traffic points in the city are causing a downside in transport workers' daily income and increase inconveniences and sufferings for commuters and the traffic department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

The link between Paltan and Zero points was closed from Wednesday evening till Friday as Islami Oykya Jote (IOJ) is holding sit-in programme at Muktangan to press their demands. Demonstrations and many open-air programmes usually take place at key traffic points.

Bikolpo Auto Service driver Abu Hanif, told Star City on Thursday noon that he missed at least two trips since morning. "I have to take a different and longer route to reach Motijheel from Mirpur because the roads are closed," he said. He said

that usually he makes 14 to 15 trips a day along this route but did not know how many trips he would miss.

His daily income depended on the number of trips he ran a day, and missing trips meant reduction of his earnings. "I get Tk 70 for each round trip," he said adding that his helper too, like him loses money with the loss of trips.

Somoy Niyontron driver Afzal Hussain told Star City that his daily income too depends on how much the bus make trips, and he too does not have a fixed salary.

"I could not pick any passenger up from Shahbagh, Press Club point and Paltan, after the few that were riding the bus got off at these points," he said. "This happened during the third round trip and most commuters suffer because of such detours," he added.

Badrul, a CNG auto rickshaw driver said that demonstration programmes and rallies cause

heavy traffic congestion all over the city that in turn reduces his daily income.

"Congestions cause a loss in time, reducing the number of hires we can take and makes it very difficult to make up for daily deposits of the vehicle," he said.

Feroz Al Mujahid Khan, deputy commissioner of DMP Traffic (South), told Star City that the traffic police are compelled to close certain roads and divert traffic because of the rallies.

"It takes extra effort to divert traffic and it also puts heavy pressure on the whole traffic system," he said.

"We do not have other options other than diverting the traffic," he said when asked about traffic management during the pre-general election period.

"There should have some definite places far from the key traffic points for such demonstration programmes and mass gatherings in the city

so that these activities will not hinder the routine lives of city dwellers," he added.

Abonti Nurul, an employee of a non-government organisation (NGO) said that because of the closure of the roads she had to spend Tk 20 more to reach the office at Purana Paltan.

"Usually the bus halts in front of my office, but because of the demonstration I had to arrange alternative transport that costs me more. This is not fair," she said.

"With the general election approaching, and campaigns, rallies and mass gatherings that will be held, disruption in the flow of traffic is bound to take place, and people like us will be the sufferers in the end," she further said.

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Political demonstrations on busy streets cause traffic gridlock putting commuters in great difficulty.

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Bangabazar Market-Friday
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New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
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Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
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