

JAGANNATH UNIVERSITY

Rajuk to stop construction without approval

TAWFIQUE ALI

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), the city development authority, is likely to suspend Jagannath University (JU) from proceeding with any construction without Rajuk's approval of the building plans.

JU authorities have not obtained any approval for building construction, Rajuk, chairman, KAM Haroon told Star City yesterday.

"I have already instructed the

officer concerned to stop any attempt by the JU authorities to construct buildings without an approved plan," Haroon said.

Haroon, who is member secretary to the Urban Development Committee, also said: "We will take up the matter at the committee meeting too."

The JU authorities have taken a stand to construct a 20-storey high-rise demolishing a 150-year heritage building under the establishment of Jagannath University Project.

But they have started to imple-

ment the project without obtaining plan approval from Rajuk.

Before a construction plan that involves a heritage site is approved, it is referred to the departments of archeology and architecture for opinion, said Rajuk officials, and approval of such a plan depends on the opinion of these departments.

Archeology Department Director, Md. Shafiqul Alam said: "Ethically, a historic monument with architectural and archeological significance should not be demolished, even if not enlisted

as a protected heritage site."

"I will send a regional director to the site immediately, to examine the building inform if we could enlist it as a protected heritage building considering its historical and architectural value," Alam said told Star city yesterday.

Chief architect of the Department of Architecture, ASM Ismail said: "If any plan is referred to us for opinion, we will definitely conserve the heritage site while considering the plan."



The 150 years old building of Jagannath University that faces total demolition.

MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE CITY

Tales of toiling men

Day labourers express mixed feelings about the ongoing blockade

WAHIDA MITU

Kanchon Miah works in Karwan Bazar as a day labourer and unloads products from the trucks that come every day from outside Dhaka. Yesterday he seemed very anxious and unhappy as his income became uncertain for the present indefinite blockade programme.

"I get Tk 10 per sack that I unload and thus I earn Tk 600 to Tk 800 per day. But in the present situation it becomes difficult for me to earn," he said.

"My income went down but my expenses increased, every day I need Tk 100 to Tk 150 to pay rents and buy meals," he added.

The ordinary working class of Dhaka city had to remain jobless most of the time in a sheer uncertainty during the 14-party enforced repeated blockade programmes.

The 28-year-old Kanchon did not understand politics and he do not want to understand this kind of politics which causes nothing but suffering.

"What I want is a smooth life. We poor have to go through a hardship throughout the life. But the present politics is inflicting more suffering on us," he said.



Workers laze around at Karwan Bazar during blockade yesterday.

Everybody is fighting for power and we the working people are becoming the victim. As long as politics exists in the country we the poor people cannot live peacefully,

He watches the current turbulent situation in the TV channels and do not understand why they are doing this nuisance. Is it for the betterment of the political leaders or for the betterment of the people like him, he questioned.

"Being poor and illiterate I managed this job with great difficulties, but the present politics, the doggedness of one man make the situation critical," he said.

Hiron Ali, a bus conductor was seen calling passengers from Satrasta intersection. He said after idling the whole morning the driver has decided to bring his transport in the road in the afternoon amid risk.

If the bus is not in the road then there is no income for him. "Every day I earn Tk 400 by doing this job. But if there is no work there is no money for me like you or other jobholders," said Hiron.

He said as the day is passing the word 'politics' is becoming vague to him. Nowadays politics means power to him.

"Everybody is fighting for power and we the working people are becoming the victim. As long as politics exists in the country we the poor people cannot live peacefully," he said angrily as he had to do his job with the risk of being attacked by the pickets.

Mohammad Mokhles, a driver of a Mymensingh bound bus at Mohakhali Bus Terminal said during the blockade he had to pass each day without earning.

He, after reading the newspaper yesterday, became very hopeful about the end of the

blockade programme. But he said that everything is uncertain in the present politics. At present, it seems that the chief election commissioner for whom all this is happening will quit to bring back normalcy in life.

"But the political leaders will bring another issue and make our life hell," said Mokhles.

Lokman and Hasan, helpers of two Jamalpur bound buses, said they have to spend time idling around. "Every day I earn Tk 180 but nowadays the owner of the bus is giving us Tk 50 for buying meal," said Lokman.

Hearing this one coolie raised his voice and said, "You are lucky because you have ready meals during this situation. On the other hand my five family members and I have a very blurred future as my source of income is blocked with the start of the blockade programme."

However, rickshawpullers and van pullers are earning handsome amounts during the blockade. They are earning thrice the amount they earn normally.

But some rickshawpullers cannot grab the opportunity like others.

Mohammad Hannan went on major roads in the city with the hope of a good income, but had to come back disappointed.

"The roads are totally occupied with lots of rickshaws. It seems there is no chance for me. So after waiting a few minutes for a passenger I came back in the alleys," said Hannan while pulling a rickshaw in one of the alleys in Rampura.