

Sonargaon Hotel's unapproved construction continues

TAWFIQUE ALI

Ignoring two notices served by Rajuk, authorities of the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel are going on with their construction work in the Begunbari Canal without approval.

A top official of the town planning section of Rajuk said the hotel authorities have not yet got approval for land use but he was not sure whether they have applied for it.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Secretary Shahid Alam first said the hotel authorities have obtained approval. But when this correspondent pointed out that they have not got approval, he said the hotel authorities have applied for approval.

Asked, Managing Director of Sonargaon Hotel Gholam Nabi said, "I have to talk to the project officials about why they are going on with the work without Rajuk approval."

Another official of the Building Construction (BC) committee of Rajuk said, "We have not yet approved the hotel's construction plan, as they have not applied so far."

The civil aviation secretary,

Rajuk served the first notice on August 6 this year requesting the Sonargaon Hotel authorities to produce approved plan for the construction but the latter failed to make any response within the stipulated time

who intervened in the matter following Rajuk notices, asked the Rajuk authorities not to proceed further as the Rajuk was taking steps against violation of building construction act and rules.

The secretary held a meeting with Rajuk Chairman KAM Haroon on August 30 at Sonargaon Hotel in this regard and directed the chairman not to go further with action against the hotel authorities.

Shahid Alam, a former chairman of Rajuk, is now the ex-officio chairman of the Hotels International Limited that runs Sonargaon Hotel.

Authorities of the five-star hotel started construction work on the hotel's extension project that includes a multi-storeyed

car parking, convention hall, tower block, boundary and retaining walls and peripheral road network to the southeast of the hotel's main establishment, allegedly without land use clearance and approval of construction plan.

Prof Md Mujibur Rahman, who led a study group of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) on the Begunbari Canal, said that constructions like BGMEA building and Sonargaon Hotel extension building are not compatible with the recommendations the team had made in their study report.

But the secretary-level intervention put off legal action against the hotel authorities.

Shahid Alam however said, "I just asked the Rajuk authorities not to hold up the work. I did not bar them from slapping penalty or taking any legal action."

Rajuk served the first notice on August 6 this year requesting the Sonargaon Hotel authorities to produce approved plan for the construction but the latter failed to make any response within the stipulated time.

It served the second notice on August 17 asking the hotel authorities to show cause within seven days as to why unauthorised construction of the hotel's extension should not be demolished.

The notice stated that the hotel authorities have been going on with construction work in violation of section three of the Building Construction Act of 1952.

The hotel authorities have to pay approval fees at penalty rate (ten times than the regular) to get the construction design passed and an additional fine for construction without obtaining approved plan, according to the Building Construction Act.



Work continues despite two notices served by Rajuk.

STAR PHOTO



When will our urban landscape look organised?

STAR PHOTO

BANGLADESH NATIONAL BUILDING CODE

Modernise the BNBC: Say experts

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

Building and construction experts at a daylong workshop in Dhaka on Saturday called for effective implementation of the Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) after necessary modification of the rules.

The participants in the workshop on 'BNBC Administration and Enforcement' discussed the background, necessity, applicability, administrative mechanism and related matters of the BNBC.

The experts laid emphasis on modernisation of some features in the BNBC as the code was originally prepared before 1993. It was made effective through a gazette notification in November 2006.

"In the meantime technology has advanced at a tremendous pace and the construction industry has changed with new knowledge, data and experiences. More particularly provisions for occupancy type, Floor area Ratio (FAR) and parking standards need to be updated in the BNBC," Chief Engineer of Rajuk M Emdadul

Islam suggested.

The Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Institute of Architects, Bangladesh (IAB), Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) and Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) jointly organised the workshop at the Institution of Engineers.

Presenting the keynote paper at the workshop, the Rajuk chief engineer recommended that an effective and attainable administrative mechanism should be devised for enforcement of the BNBC.

The experts suggested that Public Works Department (PWD), Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), Khulna Development Authority (KDA), Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA), Department of Archaeology (DoA), Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI), Urban Development Directorate (UDD), Local Government Division, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), and respective municipalities should be assigned as the administrative authorities for

implementing the BNBC.

They also suggested that the administrative authority should exist at district, upazila and municipality levels.

The workshop participants suggested that the authorised officers/executive engineers of implementing organisations of the city authority should be declared as 'Building Official' and they should be trained properly.

The experts also discussed some flaws in the BNBC.

"The penalty for a flaw in a single rod (used for construction of a building) is seven years in prison while the same penalty is suggested in case of collapse of a building. I fear this might lead to harassment of the persons involved in construction industry," said Syed Azizul Haque, executive engineer, PWD and an expert in structural design.

Dr Ghulam Murtaza, a professor at Khulna University, said in his presentation that there is no need for any building code in the first world countries as the professionals in those countries maintain standards out of their professional obligation.

"We are unfortunate that we need it and that is why it is very important to implement the code properly," said Murtaza.

The experts suggested forming a national committee to formulate the administrative mechanism of Building Official and Code Enforcing Agency. A Panel of Experts shall be formed immediately for continuous updating of the BNBC, they suggested.

The workshop participants laid stress on vigorous campaign for public awareness and professional obligations in BNBC.

They hoped that the Ministry of Housing and Public Works will take necessary measures in the related matters.

Public Works and Housing Adviser Dhiraj Kumar Nath inaugurated the workshop. Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, vice chancellor of BRAC University, and Dr AMM Safiullah, vice chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, moderated the programme.

health, busservices, airlines & traintiming

OSPITALS & CLINICS

- Ahsania Mission Cancer & General Hospital**
9008919, 8051618
- Holy Family Hospital**
8311721-25
- Apollo Hospitals Dhaka**
9891680-4, 01713046684/85
Emergency no. 9896623, 0171409000
- Islami Bank Hospital**
9333739
- Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital**
9118202, 8115843
- Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital**
8828855, 8827575
- Central Hospital**
9660015-19,
- Labaid Cardiac Hospital**
8610793-8
- China Bangla Hospital (JV) Ltd**
8913674
- Marie Stopes Clinic**
8821874
- Dhaka Medical College Hospital**
8626812-16
- Medinova Medical Services Ltd**
8620353,
- Gana Shasthyo Kendra**
8617208, 8617383, 8620178,
- Pangu Hospital**
9112150, 9113041
- Greenland Hospital**
8912663
- PG Hospital (BSMMU)**
9614545-9, 9612550-4
- Gulshan Mother & Child Clinic**
8822738, 8812992

- Rashmono General Hospital**
8317606, 9557354, 8317819
- Ratan's Dental Clinic**
9111090
- Salimullah Medical College Hospital**
7319002-6
- Samorita Hospital Ltd**
9131901
- Shahid Suhrawardy Hospital**
9122560-78
- Shishu Hospital**
8116061-2, 9119119

- ### BLOOD BANK
- Bangladesh Red Crescent Blood Bank**
9116563
 - Modern Clinic & Blood Center**
9883948
 - Sandhani, Dhaka Medical College**
9668690

BUS SERVICES

- Drooti**
8014563
- Eagle Paribahan**
7101504
- Green Line Paribahan**
9339623, 9342580, 8353005
- Hanif Enterprise**
9120116
- Keya Paribahan**
7101894, 7101250, 9121280
- Modern Enterprise**
9123743
- Neptune A/C Coach Service**
7101945, 7101951, 9123092
- Shohag Paribahan (Pvt) Ltd**
9334152, 8316766, 8126293
- Shoukhin Paribahan**
8014397, 9001796
- Silk Line**
7102461
- Shyamoli Paribahan**
9333803

AIRLINES

- lines**
9559930, 9559111, Fax: 9563787
- Aeroflot**
9559930, 9559111, Fax: 9563787
- Air India**
8617783, 8611929, Fax: 9670591
- Biman Bangladesh Airlines**
8917400-19 9560151, 9559610
Airport Office: 8917400, Fax: 8913005
- British Airways**
8815111, Fax: 8815346,
- Cathay Pacific**
9557117, Fax: 9562667
- Druk Air**
9862243, 9892862,
- Emirates**
9892801, 9885574-75
- GMG Airlines**
8825845-9, Airport Office:
8960404, 8915699, Fax: 8826115
- Gulf Air**
9130123-5, Airport Office: 8914573
- Indian Airlines Ltd**
9555915, 9557813,
- Kuwait Airways**
9115182, 9118829
- Malaysia Airlines**
9888211-20
Airport Office: 8916953, Fax: 9890478
- PIA**
9349293-5, Fax: 9345300
- Singapore Airlines**
8811504-7, 9883259
Airport Office: 8911928, Fax: 8811503
- Thai Airways**
8314711-18, 8914343
- Virgin Atlantic Airways**
8816324-5, Fax: 9896481

TRAIN TIMING

- Subarna Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm
- Mahanagar Prabhathi**
Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am
- Mahanagar Godhuli**
Leaves Dhaka at 3-15 pm
- Turna**
Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm
- Parabat Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 6-40 am
- Joyantika Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 12-45 pm
- Upaban Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 9-45 pm
- Tista Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am
- Ekata Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm
- Upakul Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 8-00 pm
- Agnienna Express**
Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm
- Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm
- Reaches Chittagong at 1-55 pm
- Reaches Chittagong at 10-55 pm
- Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am
- Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm
- Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am
- Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm
- Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-15
- Reaches Noakhali at 5-00 am
- Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm

LIBRARY & INFO-

- ### Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers
- Central Public Library-** 8626001-4,
 - Shishu Academy-** 9564128
 - Shilpakala Academy-** 8614673
 - Bangla Academy-** 8619550
 - Islamic Foundation-** 9550280, 9556407
 - Nazul 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-** 813769, 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