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agencies which contributed in one way or the other, who could not be ignored. They have to be included.

The particular angle of the Master Plan which we must look into is whether we are damaging the rural sector due to urban development, whether we are damaging the water course. There are things which depend on policy. These are strategy and standards. There are temporary things, such as agriculture in rural areas. There are certain permanent things which, once the costly mistake is made, cannot be changed. Once a road is made, it will remain there for a hundred years. So that is infrastructure and transport. Then there are certain things which can be corrected, such as municipal and socio-economic. We feel that transparency is needed in all these things.

In development planning, there is planning and building. Planning is off-site and building construction is on-site. There is the Building Construction Act. It mentions haphazard construction. That is the location aspect. That has nothing to do with construction. We don't find this in the BC Act. This has been covered by the rules later on.

What do we need at the development planning level? What are the problems? There should be transparency. Who has what function at what level? For example, it should not be the Mayor's problem as to whether there will be an eastern by-pass or not. The responsibility of the City Corporation is his priority. But that can't just be discarded. Who is to see that?

Then the interests of a small community may seem big to them, but it is only natural that it may not be so big in RAJUK's huge scheme of things. So there is a need for transparency to distributing these things are different levels. There is the inter-sectoral level and the area level.

Let us see what the BC Act has and what it does not have. It has a good side. It has development in congruence with the Master Plan. The BC Act does not mention any provision for making a Master Plan.

There is another good side which has allowed mixed use. Another thing is that if the government so wants, it can withdraw this law from any particular area.

What things doesn't this BC Act cover? The difficulties we find when planning, what we feel was necessary, first, there is no mention of land filling. It mentions excavating ponds, man-made tanks. But it does not mention natural sources of water.

Then there is conservation of agriculture, open spaces, buildings of historical importance and architectural interest. These are not covered in the BC Act.

There is the Construction Act, but there is no provision of quality control or strength of any building. It has no control on land subdivision, which it should have had. There is no land-ceiling, land sharing and land adjustment. RAJUK is often blamed, naturally, about the fact that the price of land is going up, but in acquiring land, developing it and then selling it, it is not possible for many reasons to keep the price of land in control. In many countries there is a land-sharing or land adjustment approach. It can be done here too. We have brought it in our Master Plan, but it would be better if it was given legal strength.

Then just as we don't see surface density when constructing a building, we don't see the underground constraints. There are maximum fault lines along Dhaka City according to geological surveys. This too should be brought under the jurisdiction of law in the case of construction.

Then infrastructure. You need a road, you simply build one. The water course is blocked, no one bothers about the adverse effect. There should be some legal coverage there. Then there is density control, high rise building, major development, floor ratio, height, all these have to be covered. These have been covered, though, under the national code.

Also under the national building code is land occupancy type. But in Dhaka, do we have the preparation to apply this? We have reviewed the entire building code, as seen that in Chapter 3, the planning aspects are somewhat covered, but the construction part is very hit-tech. We have reviewed this and, as much as possible, brought it into the plan. We have brought in some changes, such as we have added two things. One is about open space. This has agriculture, fisheries, recreation, retention pond. The other is for mixed use.

Occupancy type, building type is very important. To use this, land use classification needs to be changed and coordinated. At that time we studied land under RAJUK and brought the issue of land use anew. Stress was laid in flood flow zone. There must be flood flow zone. There will be no haphazard construction there. The building code will be analysed about what buildings can be there for what use. Then there is the sub-flood flow zone. We have divided the zones in this manner.

Since RAJUK is the caretaker, since RAJUK develops this, then let us see what authority RAJUK has under the TI Act. The TI Act authorised RAJUK to prepare schemes, to provide infrastructure, acquire land, lease out land, sell or exchange land. If sharing was there it would be good. It provides public transport. These are the major works. These are essential to keep a city alive. This is in the law. RAJUK is to make a Master Plan. It has done so. RAJUK has another positive

side. It has the authority to give permission for construction of buildings. It is clearly stated that if you apply to DCC for building construction, DCC will refer this to the RAJUK Chairman. If the RAJUK Chairman deems it contradictory to the Master Plan, then he will refuse it and DCC will refuse it too. This not only applicable to DCC, but to the pourashava also. The Act mentions both the Municipal Act and pourashava ordinance. But what about the union council and the upazila?

The requirements are that the land-filling matter must be added. Cutting is mentioned, but land-filling which is being practised so much in Dhaka, must be brought under the law. Land sub-division also should be included.

Mahfuz Anam: I will request former RAJUK Chairman Mr. Rahmatullah to speak now.

Rahmatullah: Under our Building Construction Act of 1969, there is the Building Construction Rules of 1968 and presently we are building, cutting hills, carrying out excavation, re-excavation under this Act in Dhaka City. This law is also applicable to different parts of Bangladesh. Under this Building Act, RAJUK gives, or does not give, permission for building.

There are some salient features of these Building Construction Rules. We have a procedure for application. We have to pay a fee to obtain permission for each building. This ranges from Tk. 100 to Tk. 2,10,000. This depends on square feet of the building which we want sanctioned. Section 3 of the Building Construction Act. Rules for submission of drawing. Persons qualified to sign and submit drawing. Time frame for decision. The other features are relationship with adjacent road. Distance from electric line, you need a safe distance. Land use policy. Boundary wall. Height of building. The rules have more or less all that is needed to make a building or neighbourhood beautiful.

Other salient features are what each floor will be named and conditions for construction of basement. Why these two are in one clause, I don't know, but they are. These can be fixed. There are few lines about ventilation and lighting. Construction of roof, cornice and sunshade. This is quite a controversial matter. Architects always try to take advantage of this particular rule, how large a cornice they can make and RAJUK tries to get them to make it as small as possible. There are such areas where we conflict. Emergency exit and other necessary arrangements. As a person interested in this particular field, I would say it is very inadequate, particularly in view of the high rise buildings now being allowed by RAJUK. The law is very inadequate for emergencies. This must be changed immediately. There is certainly going to be a very big accident. It is inevitable.

Just as there are special rules for residential buildings, there are also rules for construction of garages. There are special rules for commercial buildings and warehouses. Special rules for assembly buildings like auditorium and theatres, etc. There are special rules for industrial buildings. There are special rules for hotels, educational institutions and similar buildings. Then we have special rules for seven-story or higher buildings because we are going high rise. Above all these rules we have something called special control. That is, the government can say at any time that you cannot build a building higher than this. Just if the government wants to, it can do so even if the road is wide enough and everything is there. There are special rules for cutting hills and excavation of tanks.

In the rules of submission of drawing, seven copies of the drawing are to be given to us by those who want permission, like engineers, architects and certified draftsmen.

If Dhaka is to be improved, there has to be co-ordination between all the service providing agencies. It should all come under one man's control. He should be independent and responsible for the job. There should be no interference from outside. There is so much unlawful interference from outside. So if there is one strict man at the helm, it will be his job to protect his officers and organisations. At the same time, he can ensure the accountability of those who will work. But first, unless Dhaka's population is cut down, you can't do anything. We have studied a lot, surveyed a lot. Look at the slums. There has been river erosion, people come to Dhaka. In many cities of the world, in Beijing, probably in Paris too, in Rome, no one can come into the city after six in the evening without an emergency slip. Here where there is no accommodation for 2 million people, if 2 million stream in, what can be done? The state of the municipality of the country, is terrible. About seven or eight million people are having to be fed. They are drinking WASA's water, using the sewerage, using the lights, throwing the garbage, doing it all, but they are not taxpayers. How long can the government pay subsidy?

So the most important thing is to reduce the number of people in Dhaka city. Then there is land use. This is important. Shopping centres are cropping up in all areas. Suddenly a market rising in the middle of an area. Thousands of people go there. How do you control that? We have studied it for the last 20 years or so. It was Chief Engineer of PWD, Director of Environment and so on. Environment is another big hazard coming up. This is coming up very seriously. If this can't be controlled, the little parks are all vanishing. The

A survey carried out by RAJUK last October states that there are about 260 high-rise buildings in Dhaka which are risky and constructed with no specifications. Of these risky buildings, 43 are in Dhanmondi, 29 are in Mirpur and Uttara, 27 in Gulshan, five in Ramna. These buildings are supposed to be demolished. So far RAJUK has failed to break one.

trees are all being cut down. There will be no (healthy) environment left in Dhaka City. However much the City Corporation sprays insecticide, it won't stop the mosquitoes unless it can keep the city clean.

Judiciary has to be there, the police have to be there, so immediate action can be taken.

Mahfuz Anam: Now our co-host from the Scouts will speak. **Mesbah Uddin Bhuiyan, Deputy National Commissioner, Bangladesh Scouts:** Instead of blaming anyone, let us see how we can overcome the problem. Chief Engineer of RAJUK has said that they pass the drawing of a building in many cases. It's perhaps a commercial building with a car park below, but a few days later it is seen that these are made into shops. He said that it is the responsibility of those making the building to inform RAJUK how the building is being made. He said that once the shops are made and DCC is giving them trade licences, they are getting legal rights. So my suggestion is that, when the building is being made, RAJUK can check it from time to time. Then perhaps this can be stopped. Once a shop is made, DCC is giving the trade licence. But when partition walls are being made in a car park space, shutters are being put up, or space is being made for shops, we can see these

As far as I know, RAJUK would never pass a plan for a 10-storied building with a shopping space, but no parking space. But look at Elephant Road, Panthapath or Kemal Ataturk Avenue. If anyone passes a plan for a three-storied building, there is no need for parking. For example, there is the main road of Dhanmondi. There are quite a few shopping centres there, other than Rapa Plaza, which are four-storied. According to the law, there is no need for parking space here. So they can make the structure there without any parking lot, without violating any law. This creates serious traffic jams.

There is Eastern Plaza. It's a nice building. It's a very estab-

lished shopping centre of Dhaka, but on the two Eids the traffic jams caused there are terrible. The developer has not broken any of the prevalent laws. He has kept adequate parking space as is prescribed for a building of that size. But even so traffic jams are created. The designer could have played an important role here if RAJUK had any such law. There could have been a separate drop-off bay. The frontage is extremely small for such a big building.

The 1952 Act or the Building Rules of 1996 has very simple laws. Traffic jams depend very much on the frontage of the building. Yet the height of the building is dependent on the road width. No law can cover the depth of the building. So we can radically change the building laws.

In 1947 Dhaka was a provincial capital. There were

the head will have to be cut off for the sake of the head. There will be no alternative.

Our policy makers were considering a plan that no permission will be given for residential buildings over six or 10 stories in Dhaka City. That seems to me the same thing, cutting off the head to cure the headache. Where technology has progressed so much, why shouldn't Dhaka have 20 to 30-storied buildings. I don't understand. There are some set rules about how many metres are to be left around a building. Everyone is adhering to these rules in constructing their buildings. This is creating the problems. This has almost nothing to do with the plot size. Say, for example, Basundhara. There is no reason why a multi-storied building can't be constructed there. It is such a nice place. Technology can provide proper sewerage, water, electric supply, everything. Nowadays you can even set up a power plant. In recent times we set up a power plant in a textile industry. It can break even in three to four years. So it is really nothing to set up a power plant in a big commercial complex. Similarly there is no need for WASA water supply. Given them permission for deep tubewells. This can solve the problems. The problems that prevail regarding height or density can be easily resolved.

Until the obstacles are removed, a beautiful Dhaka cannot be conceived. Dhaka City Corporation's jurisdiction is 360 sq. kilometres. It has a capacity to house 5 million to 6 million people, not more. But there is an ever burgeoning population. If I make five people live where two people lived, there will naturally be problems. I face some problems.

Mirpur had been a satellite town. More such satellite towns must be built up around Dhaka. We are only coming to this side of the river, not working on the other side. But with the bridge, we can now extend ourselves to the other side to set up satellite towns.

Then, decentralisation of the administration is a must. There may be a huge population pressure, but no one comes here unless they are compelled to leave their parent's home in the village.

You will see that there is a furore in the parliament, there are walkouts, but where national interests are concerned, be it Vajpayee or Sonia Gandhi, they all speak in the same manner. We see this in many countries of the world. Where the people's interests are concerned, they are all united.

Unfortunately, over here if I try to apprehend illegal rickshaws without licences, my brothers in the opposition incite the rickshaw-wallas to besiege of Nagar Bhaban or skin the Mayor alive! Several times my poor rickshaw-walla brothers have come to the Nagar Bhaban and cried out slogans, threatening to skin me alive. I once went to them and took off my shirt. I said that if by skinning me you all were happy, by all means do so. But do not ply these illegal rickshaws. There are 80 thousand licensed rickshaws. I will increase it to 100 thousand, 125 thousand, even 150 thousand. But 350 thousand can't be allowed. Unlicensed rickshaws and unlicensed drivers must be caught. I am trying to withdraw the rickshaws phase by phase. As I withdraw on one hand, they make more on the other. These problems are there.

Rickshaws are one of the reasons, not the only reason, of traffic jams. Rickshaws do not pollute the city. It is a non-motorised vehicle. But still it has to remain within a limit. But when I take action, I want cooperation from my journalist

Mahfuz Anam: I thank our Mayor for agreeing to reply to our questions. He will speak now.

Mayor Mohammed Hanif: This discussion as we are having is really essential. Perhaps we should have had it three years ago, but better late than ever.

Mr. Mahfuz Anam has called upon me, saying that we don't want anything but a beautiful Dhaka. Just tell us what to do and we'll do it. Our former RAJUK Chairman Mr. Rahmatul-

lah has referred to me as the City Father. But what am I? Am I actually the City Father? If so, then I am supposed to have authority in all areas, in all places of the city at all levels. In many developing countries, Mayors do have a lot of power in all spheres. Let me give you a small example.

On March 20 US President Bill Clinton came to Bangladesh. When I was in the presentation line, Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina introduced me as the Mayor of Dhaka City. Clinton said, Mr. Mayor, I have come to your City to stay for some time. I welcomed him. I said that we were extremely happy, extremely pleased at his visit, even though it was such a short visit. Now Bill Clinton is the President of the US, the most powerful country in the world. He said, I have come to your City. In New York, you have to have the permission of the Mayor to enter New York. He sees it in that perspective. Perhaps he doesn't know it's not all the same everywhere.

I was in a false position at the time. I was elected Mayor in January 1994. In 1995, Dhanmondi Walkers Club invited me one morning for tea. They fed me well and informed me about the problems of the Dhanmondi area. They said that Dhanmondi was the first aristocratic area of Dhaka. Gulshan, Baridhara, Banani came much later. Even now, many former ministers, secretaries and renowned persons live there. They were there at the breakfast table. They said that right now the biggest problem was the rehabilitation of Dhanmondi Lake. Was it a lake,

a pond, a ditch or a slum, it was not clear. They said, please fix our lake. I said, Inshallah, I will work on it from tomorrow. I began work. I sent my team of engineers to Dhanmondi Lake and they were obstructed. They were asked why had they come. They said that they had been sent by the Mayor for the beautification of the lake so that the people of the area could walk by the lake to have some respite in the morning and evenings. They were told to go back. Why? Because the water of the lake was of the Ministry of Fisheries. The banks of the lake were of the Ministry of Works. They said that unless they were given permission, they couldn't start work there. I was in a false position, a dilemma. We weren't in power then.

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What will DCC do? I understand decentralisation. Then, construction of satellite towns, then metropolitan government. But where will we go? You have been Mayor for six years. If you have to hand over Dhaka City to a predecessor, look at its state. Mosquitoes had been lessened, but these later increased again.

Over the past six years while you were Mayor, the population increased. That was not in your control. We throw garbage all day and you are trying to control it. But as the Prime Minister said in the Mukhamukhi programme, all problems have an answer, but all answers do not provide a solution.

WASA claims it is doing its job. The REHAB president said that the developers are being blamed, but they are not at fault. So WASA is doing no wrong, the developers are doing no wrong, DCC is doing no wrong, where will we citizens go? You have to take this question. If all of us think we are blameless, then where is the blame? As a citizen when I leave my house in the morning, I can hardly breathe due to lead pollution. Arsenic kills me if I drink water. It takes me three hours in place of one to reach office due to the traffic. Clashes are taking place on the roads. Roads are blocked. Fifty per cent of our energy is sapped in planning our way out of this. This applies to us all.

You say one should do this. I say, one should do this. If we all say one should do this, who will do the thing? You are in power. I can just say you should do this. But you can't just leave it at that. You have to do it because you are in the driving seat. When I call ministers to the round table, they say, this should be done or that should be done. But who will tell the car?

We all know you to be humble, sincere. That is why we expect a lot from you. At the end of the day, the problems are on the rise, not on the decline. I can write what I have heard here today, but what will be the face of Dhaka next week, next month? I find no answer. Let us question Mr. Hanif today. Let us do something, if necessary, like Humayun Ahmed, let us have a hunger strike, refusing to eat until Dhaka is fixed. We have to do something. How long can this go on? I am sorry for becoming a bit emotional.

Mohammed Hanif: You have spoken from your heart. What will you write? We have all discussed the problems, but a good solution has not been offered. This is true, but if there are problems, there are also solutions. I have explained why I want a metropolitan government.

Basically you are a renowned journalist. Even if you sit all day and come up with a solution, I will fight till the last for its implementation. If you say these actions will make Dhaka beautiful and fit to live in, I will try my best to implement them. As for the term *tilottama* Dhaka, I have never said in my life that I would make Dhaka *tilottama*. It will take 100 years to make Dhaka *tilottama*, if at all. That would mean the world's most beautiful university would have to be made in Dhaka. The most beautiful lake would have to be in Dhaka. Dhaka would have to be made the cleanest city. Then only could it be *tilottama*. I have never said that I would make it so. But in my election campaign six years ago, I said I wanted to make Dhaka beautiful and fit to live in. This is where I was born, where I spent by childhood, my youth. I have tried. It is up to you to judge how much I have been able to do or not.

There are problems, there are solutions. If I am told, these are the real solutions, I will fight till the last to implement these solutions.

Azfar Hossain, National Commissioner, Bangladesh Scouts: Mr. Mayor, you have the will. Are you thinking of operating area wise, say like giving all facilities to clean up say, Ramna, then another area of the city?

Mohammed Hanif: This has already started. This was being done in the Kalabagan area. Motijheel area. In some places of Gulshan too. I have had talks with various clubs of these areas. They have asked us to carry away garbage, they will keep the place clean. This is being implemented in some areas already. We have identified five wards in Dhaka as part of a pilot project and will ensure that the problem discussed will be resolved in these areas. A foreign NGO is helping us with this. If this is successful, then within a year Dhaka will take a new shape, a new look.

Kazi Mohammed Sheesh: Just as you are involved with the people or the NGOs to get the work done, your people are not. Let me give you an example. The solid waste disposal drive in Kalabagan began on an individual basis and later through an NGO. They contacted DCC. You were busy so they couldn't speak to you directly. Not getting any response from DCC, they took up the initiative. Later they may have contacted you.

We cannot supply water to slums. They have no legal entity. But they are drinking our water. They would get water from vendors at 100 times the cost. We would get no money. Many groups want to be involved in solid waste disposal. But they are having problems contacting DCC. Last January an international environmental conference was held in Dhaka. The Prime Minister opened the meeting. The Leader of the Opposition attended and closed the last session. Yet there was no representative from DCC at the conference. How will you involve your concerned people in such programmes? You yourself are too busy. You are the President of the City

Awami League too. You can make a group of others, keeping contact with NGOs and other organisations, BUET and so on. Today we are talking about resolving Dhaka City's problems. You are having to reply. It would be better if those who are implementing these things were here.

Mohammed Hanif: I could have answered this before, but since Mr. Anam had asked me not to drag in others but to talk about what my own organisation could do, I did not bring in WASA, DESA, T&T, police and others. If I start, a lot of time will be taken.

You have mentioned some failures of DCC. Yes, it's true. DCC hasn't been successful in all cases. I have said that we have had some successes, some failures. I don't want to bring in your failures into this forum at least.

Still, let me ask you one question. Whose responsibility is sewerage? Dhaka City would be flooded before, why not now? Due to DCC it does not go under days before, now we don't stay there even for two hours. Why? Because DCC has resolved the problem, though this isn't even DCC's responsibility. There was this devastating flood, worst in decades, but Dhaka's southern parts were not flooded. Why? Because of the Dholai Khal power pump carried out by DCC. These were the responsibilities of other organisations, but they didn't carry out their responsibilities. That is why we had to do it. This is an organisation whose Mayor is elected by the people. Since for the first time in the country's history a Mayor has been elected by the people, they expect that the Mayor will come to their rescue for everything. They will not see whether it is in the jurisdiction of the Mayor or not.

They ask me why there is load-shedding of electricity. They ask me about water-logging, about drinking water. I have to answer all the questions as I was elected by their votes. I had wanted to avoid this issue so that bad feeling do not increase. As it is by demanding a metropolitan government I have become unpopular among heads of organisations. So I talk less and keep my mouth shut. I wasn't supposed to be here so long. I was supposed to have stepped down a year ago. But Allah kept a few cases pending, making the elections impossible for the time being.

So I am here a few more days. Pray that I can carry out my duties. The people will say what I have or haven't been able to do.

Dr. Toufique M Seraj: Let me talk about rickshaws. In one day you cannot do away with 300 thousand rickshaws. There is a humanitarian aspect. And even if I can get rid of 300 thousand rickshaws tomorrow, theoretically speaking, what will happen to the people who use these 300 thousand rickshaws. So we need a short-term and long-term transport policy.

Various agencies have prepared various transport policies, but the as the Mayor pointed out, there is no one-stop service. So the transport policies too have to be integrated with WASA, DESA, DCC, RAJUK and all. Three hundred thousand rickshaws can be removed from the streets and DCC should have a long-term policy in this regard as to whether there will be rickshaws in Dhaka after 10 years. How many rickshaws will there be in five years? Will there be rickshaws after 20 years? DCC has to take a pragmatic step for this vision now. The solution to the problem is simply not removing rickshaws. Other transport sectors have to come forward. Rickshaw-pullers will have disincentive to ply rickshaws and a transport policy will be needed for that. The government and the opposition will have to do this together. Tax is involved here. Perhaps 500 double-decker buses can be imported with reduced taxes. Then a large number of buses can be brought to the streets by the private sector. There are presently many private double-decker bus services. There are metro cabs. Can these be availed more easily? The rickshaw problem is involved here.

I don't know what form of metropolitan governance you were talking about, but definitely there should be a one-stop service. I still say that we have a lack of vision. RAJUK is supposed to pass plans according to the Building Construction Act. The RAJUK did so. But over the last few months, we have come to know through the newspapers, that we are trying to turn the clock back. Now the Ministry of Environment is becoming directly involved in the passing of the building. It is thus seen that before RAJUK passes a plan, clearance for high rise building has to be given. So instead of a one-stop service, we are starting up a multi-stop service. We have such a lack of vision.

When you go to get the clearance for environment, then the Environment Ministry will give you 10 forms to fill out. You will have to go to 10 agencies and one of them is DCC. WASA, Titas, even the Fire Brigade. It may take over five years to pass your building. Our vision has to be expanded.

I appeal to those who are in policy formulating to ensure that we can at least have vision at the end.

Mohammed Hanif: You are too right about the lack of vision. Since independence in 1971, we have been talking about the lack of vision. Bangladesh was not born with a silver spoon in its mouth. It was born from destruction.

There was a nine-month war. Almost everything had been destroyed. Bangladesh was born on a pile of destruction. We need a vision.

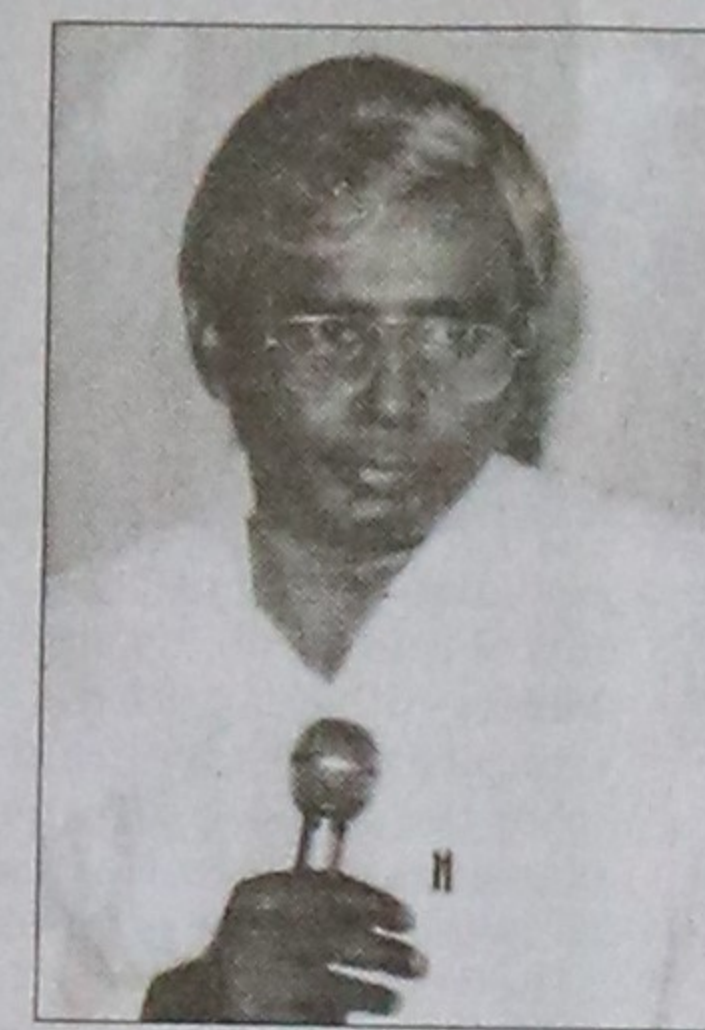
Sanaul Awal Shafi, Architect-Planner: Many of the high

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PARTICIPANTS



Planner Md Shaukat Ali Khan



Engr Dr Azadur Rahman



Engr M M Rahmatullah

things with our own eyes. These can be stopped then.

We, who are influential or well off in society, sometimes do certain things. These encourage the middle-class to also do the same things, which go against the rules. For example, RAJUK has bindings that in the Gulshan area there can be no buildings over six stories in the residential zone. But I know a road in Gulshan, within the residential zone, where there are nine and ten-storied buildings, all on one road. This affects the houses behind which cannot go higher than six stories. They are not getting any light. How this came about, I do not know.

In Dhanmondi, if you look west from Party Centre, you will see a huge high rise building. Later we learnt that the building was not in the Dhanmondi mouza. Yet all around it there are Dhanmondi residential area houses.

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In 1947 Dhaka was a provincial capital. There were

Bangladesh has two documents of which it can be proud of. One is the Bangladesh National Building Code. It is an excellent piece of work. Then there is the Master Plan for Dhaka. These two documents can be rearranged a bit in accordance to the needs of the day and resolve the problems of haphazard building. This is easily possible.

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Mayor Mohammed Hanif: This discussion as we are having is really essential. Perhaps we should have had it three years ago, but better late than ever.

Mr. Mahfuz Anam has called upon me, saying that we don't want anything but a beautiful Dhaka. Just tell us what to do and we'll do it. Our former RAJUK Chairman Mr. Rahmatul-

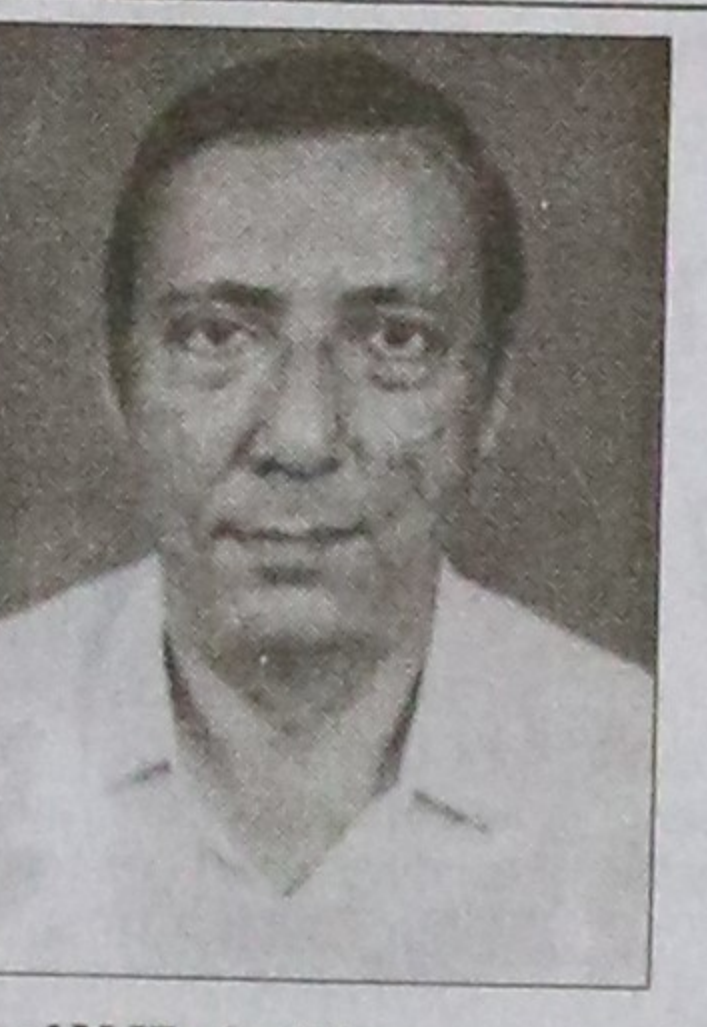
PARTICIPANTS



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Constructor M Mesbah Uddin Bhuiyan



Prof M Khalrul Enam



Engr-Planner Dr Toufiq M Seraj

RAJUK has a book on building rules. It states there how high you can build a building depending on how wide the road is in front of the building. We see, in Siddeshwari, maybe the road is 30 ft wide, but the building is 10 or 12 stories. Unless we try to put a halt to these things now, in future Dhaka City will be in a critical state. DCC will be in a problem, WASA will be in a problem, DESA will be in a problem. Their capacity is limited.

Mahfuz Anam: Another new group now is involved in all this. They are the developers. It is some developer who is perhaps installing shops which are target in society where these provisions for lifts and escalators in high rise buildings. But I feel that the way in which Dhaka is growing in the year 2000 or the dearth of land that there is in Dhaka, if that is to be coped with, then this Building Act needs quite a few pragmatic changes. I can cite a few.

These may be new things in Bangladesh, but they exist in other countries of the world. It is not as if we are having to invent anything. We just have to tailor some of the rules and regulations which are being used in some other countries, maybe even in India or Thailand, Malaysia. We can render these rules appropriate for the day. For example, the concept of developers in our country is about 15 years old. No one would live in apartments 15 or 20 years ago. Where one or two families would live on one big plot of land in Dhanmondi, 20 to