

Old Dhaka beautification in uncertainty

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Old Dhaka is still left out of the ongoing beautification programme as the corporate houses are least interested in this part of the city.

The project was undertaken to beautify the city ahead of the Saarc Summit, which was scheduled to be held early this year, but initially the old part of the city was not included in the programme.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), however, later included the Old Dhaka in the beautification project but it could not find any corporate houses to beautify this part.

"We have requested many firms including those which have beautified other parts of the city. But they are not interested," said ANM Iftekharul Hoque, officer-in-charge of Dhaka City Beautification Cell (DCBC).

Private business firms and non-government agencies are executing the beautification works on complementary basis.

Iftekharul said the DCBC is still looking for firms to take charge of Old Dhaka beautification. "The whole project is being executed on complementary basis, so we can't compel any organisation to work in a particular area."

When asked, officials of a few companies who took part in the beautification programme said the Old Dhaka beautification is not viable and it might not fulfill their business purpose.

"The overpopulated and congested area with narrow roads and lanes and shabby establishments will involve much

The project was undertaken to beautify the city ahead of the Saarc Summit, which was scheduled to be held early this year, and initially the old part of the city was not included in the programme, but the DCC, later included Old Dhaka in the beautification project

more money to beautify and maintain than the new part of the city. But the return will be very little. So we are less interested for old Dhaka," said marketing manager of one of the leading organisations taking part in the beautification project.

Earlier this year, DCC had selected three companies --- Premier Bank, Pakiza Dyeing and Medinova Ltd --- for beautifying the city from Golap Shah Mazar to Sadarghat via North South Road and English Road, but no work has been done in the last three months.

The officials of Medinova Ltd said they are interested to take part in the beautification of Old Dhaka on a condition. "We have submitted a proposal for installing nameplates of all the roads in Dhanmondi. If DCC permits us, we will take part in the beautification of Old Dhaka," said Mujammel Hossain, chairman, Medinova

Ltd. The Old Dhaka residents are disappointed at the negligence of government and private organisations to develop the old city.

"It is a matter of grief. The government always neglects us and now the private organisations are following their footsteps," said Kamal Uddin, a businessman in English Road area.

"Now it seems that we are not part of the capital city. But without our contributions this city would not be in today's position," said Ashfaque Salehin, a resident of Bangshal in the Old Dhaka.

The officer in charge of DCBC said they are now communicating with the local traders regarding beautification of the area. "We are still hopeful. We will definitely implement the project today or tomorrow," he said.



Corporate houses are not interested in taking part in the beautification of heavily congested Old Dhaka.

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