

Aiding customers to identify genuine private housing projects

Rajuk move to make public a list of approved developers

TAWFIQUE ALI
 ...
 Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) is set to make public a list of approved private housing projects to make people aware of illegal projects and stop fraudulence by a section of developers who are advertising their unauthorised projects.
 The move is intended to protect the general public from falling prey to flashy and manipulative publicity of illegal projects. Once the list is made public, customers will be able to identify the authorised and unauthorised housing projects.
 The authorities are working on making the list of housing projects approved so far in the private sector, said Rajuk Chairman KAM Haroon.
 Rajuk will put the plan of an approved housing project on display specifying exact area and blocks. It will also issue notice asking the prospective buyers to come to Rajuk and check out authenticity of a private housing project.
 "We are now going to invite tender for installation of necessary arrangements for display of approved plans and other documents at Rajuk building," said the Rajuk chairman.
 The general people, aspiring to purchase a housing plot at any

private project in an area within the Rajuk jurisdiction, will now have an opportunity to check legal status of a housing project before making a purchase deal with the developer.
 Detailed and specific information on the projects that got approval during 1984-98, long before various legislations on environmental and wetland conservation and private housing project land development rules of 2004 were framed, would be publicised.
 Most of such projects are completed and unknown to the public.
 Rajuk Board used to deal with approval of private housing projects before legal instruments like Wetland Conservation Act of 2000, Environment Conservation Act of 1995, Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMD) of 1995 and Private Housing Project Land Development Rules of 2004 were in place.
 As per Rajuk records, no ongoing private housing projects have approval under the Private Housing Project Land Development Rules of 2004. However, 35 housing projects got approval before the rules of 2004 were framed.
 In case developers initiate extension or alteration of the layout plans of any of these projects, they have to obtain approval under the rules of 2004.
 According to records at Rajuk,

Pallabi Abashik (30.44 acres) and Arambagh Cooperative Housing (7.59 acres) projects of Eastern Housing Ltd got approval in 1984. Kalyanpur Land Project (4.79 acres) of the same developer got approval in 1986. Cap Hasan (Niketan) Housing Project (68.53 acres) of Eastern Housing got approval in 1987.
 Adarsha Chhayanir Greeha Nirman Samabay Samity project (4.5 acres) got approval in 1986. Baitul Aman Cooperative Housing Project (12 acres) got approval in 1986. M o h a m m a d p u r Pisciculture Housing Project (38.01 acres) in 1987, Firoza Properties and Development residential project (9.10 acres in Mohammadpur) in 1987 and Metropolitan Christian Co-operative Housing Project in Tejgaon got approval in 1987.
 Janata Housing Project (4.40 acres in Kafrul and Mirpur) got approval 1987. Postagola (2.22 acres), Rayerbazar (10.03 acres), KM Das Lane (4.02 acres), Bashabo (3.03 acres) and Shishmahal (11.31 acres) projects of Eastern Housing got approval in 1987. Cap Hasan Housing Project in Paikpara (6.13 acres) got approval in the same year.
 Postagola Riverview Land Project (29 bighas) of Eastern Housing got approval in 1989, Mallika residential project (4.53 acres in Mirpur) of Sheltech



Increasing earth filling in the city's eastern fringe by unauthorised private developers has destroyed floodplains and retention ponds marked in the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP).

Private Limited in 1990, Blue Star Estate (0.33 decimals in Kakrail) of Blue Star Real Estate Limited got permission in 1990, Probal Housing (8.49 acres in Mohammadpur) in 1990 and Janata Co-operative Housing (14 acres in Mohammadpur) in 1990.
 Mukti Real Estate in Mirpur got approval in 1990, Sukhinir residential project (3.99 acres) in 1992, Susomoy Bahumukhi project in Uttarkhan and Gobindapur in 1994 and Jahangirnagar University Cooperatives' Aurnapalli project (82.34 acres in Savar) got approval in 1998.
 Basundhara (Baridhara extension) housing project of East West Property Development Limited got approval for 305 acres. But the developer later placed a proposal of 1247.30-acre extended project, which has not yet got approval.
 Dhaka Real Estate project in Katusur, Shyamoli Housing project (18.25 bighas) in Uttara and a number of other projects got approval but were implemented deviating approved layout plans. There are several other projects that got approval but later the government filed cases against the developers for rules violations and the projects were stalled.
 A number of powerful developers that have no government

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Making shoe-forma was never a carefree career for Ali

DURDANA GHIAS
 ...
 Hazrat Ali, a shoe-forma (measurement of a shoe) maker, was working with his mallet and chisels in his little shop in Aga Sadeq Road in old Dhaka, patiently paring away a small wooden beam and gradually turning it into a forma of a shoe.
 Ensnared in a typically narrow lane of old Dhaka, his shop is adorned with various kinds of tools and different sizes of forma. Wooden beams are neatly stacked in one corner.
 Ali, who hails from Dohar of Dhaka district, said that this is a traditional profession and there are around 15 such factories in the area.
 "I have been doing this for the last 20 years," he said while



engrossed in chiselling out a forma.
 "We sell the forma to leather shoe traders and shoe factory owners of Malitola," he said.
 "I can make three or four pairs

of forma a day. Previously we used to sell each pair at Tk 50, but now a pair is priced between Tk 200 to 400," he said.
 The main raw material for making forma is wood from the babla tree. The wood is purchased from timber traders at Gosaibari and Swarighat once or twice a month.
 "Previously the price of 1KB (1.5 sipti) was Tk 250, but now the price is Tk 320 per KB. Therefore, even though we are selling a pair of forma at a higher price than before, it is still hard to survive," said Dulal, Ali's assistant.
 "The business has not been going well for the last few months because the hawkers who sell cheap footwear on the roadside were evicted. These hawkers sell most of the locally made leather shoes to people from the low-

income group. When the shoe traders incurred loss due to the eviction, we shoe-forma makers also felt a dip in business," said Ali.
 "I do not have a shop of my own. I work in rented shops, so we cannot remain at one place for long. Since landlords increase rent every year, we have to move after two or three years. Previously, my shop was at Sikkatulii, Siddiqbazar and many other places," he said.
 "I could boost my business if I could avail myself of small loans. Under the existing system of taking such loans, I will have to pay daily or weekly instalments, which is not possible for small traders like me. However, for the last few months these loans are also proscribed due to government regulations unknown to me," he added.

Hawkers returning to footpath

RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN
 ...
 Hawkens are coming back again with their merchandises to occupy city's footpaths from where they were evicted soon after the present caretaker government took over.
 In Gulistan, New Market, Mirpur and several other areas the hawkens are now found doing business on footpaths right under the law enforcers' nose.
 Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) evicted hawkens from footpaths at the key traffic points to facilitate smooth movement of pedestrians. The DCC later set up 10 holiday markets in different areas for the evicted hawkens under a rehabilitation scheme.
 But very recently, the hawkens have been allowed to sit at eight traffic points again. Moreover, taking the advantage of little monitoring by the DCC staff, the hawkens also occupy footpaths in some restricted zones.
 According to a DCC spokesman, the city corporation recently allowed hawkens to sit regularly at the footpaths adjacent of Alam Market in Jurain, Samad Super Market and Shaheed Faruque Road in Jatrabari, Bangabandhu Avenue Link Road and Baitul Mukarram Link Road, southern side of Shahbagh crossing, Doyel Chattar at Dhaka University, Indira Road and Amtoli in Tejgaon and Mirpur Stadium area.
 Apart from these spots, the hawkens sit in the weekly holiday markets on footpaths between Matsya Bhaban and Segunbagicha crossing, between Pir Jangi Mazar and T&T College in Motijheel, in front of Bishal Centre at Moghbazar and Polwel Market in Naya Pallan, between Golapshah Mazar and Zero Point, Dilkusha commercial area, between Mouchak Market and Anarkali Market, link road between Elephant Road and Bangla Motor, between old Elephant Road and Gausia Market, and in front of

Bashundhara City.
 DCC assured the hawkens that no one would collect toll from them at the holiday markets while no hawkens would be allowed to construct any structure at the spots. Selling of kitchen market goods is totally banned at the holiday markets.
 However, this correspondent found a large number of hawkens doing business in the non-allowed zones in Gulistan, Nilkhet and New

zone offices."
 He said that Traffic Engineering Department have one road inspector for every zone who monitors illegal occupation of the footpaths.
 Talking to Star City, Azad, a garment vendor on Mirpur Road, said he had been doing business near Dhaka Stadium area four months ago before the authorities evicted hawkens from the area. Then he came to New Market area.



A footpath in Gausia area yesterday.

Market areas, Mirpur section 1 and 10, Pallabi and Rokeya Sarani with the law enforcers turning a blind eye to them.
 Kamruzzaman Chowdhury, chief of the Estate Department of DCC, said his department does not have any mechanism for monitoring the footpaths. "We just evict unauthorised occupants from the footpaths after getting report from the

"I lost all my capital during the eviction drive. Then I took loan from an NGO to restart my business. I don't know why DCC evicted us," said Azad.
 Asked why he is doing business in an unauthorised place, he said he has to pay toll for it. But he declined to say who are collecting toll from the hawkens there.



RICKSHAW GRAVEYARD

Dumped for months in a government-designated compound in Agargaon these rickshaws are disappearing into the ground. Most of these rickshaws were held during the drives by Dhaka City Corporation and Dhaka Metropolitan Police for not having legal documents.
 SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN