



Green building is need of the hour

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ARCHITECT Nafizur Rahman has been working with some innovative ideas regarding how green buildings can be made and how an architectural design can play a vital role in making the buildings energy-efficient. From his long time study on the necessity of architectural design in the Bangladeshi perspective he shared some crucial issues which may be useful for the development of the Real Estate sector as well as ensuring safer and lasting comfortable homes for the coming generations.

On the question of the positive side of the business he said that many businesses are inter-related with real estate business, such as rod and cement factory. Therefore, it is creating huge employment opportunities. It also contributes to energy sector regarding consumption. About 40% of energies of the total production in Bangladesh and 30% worldwide are consumed by the buildings. So it is obvious that housing is the basic need and real estate business is contributing to it in a big way. Investment and cash flow occur in this sector. So we should develop this sector considering its present value. Though it is not so profitable sector at the moment but

other business sectors related to it will be benefited through the development of this sector. This sector has spread outside the Dhaka city now and the government is doing a lot for its growth. Government has taken up the Palli Janapod Project which is under process.

When asked to comment on the necessity of right kind of architectural design Nafizur Rahman stressed that if a structure is designed well, the consumption of energy will automatically be reduced. And there is a scope of energy saving by adapting proper and longer policy as well. If you go for eco-friendly building design you can save 20%-30% energy. Even we can save the cost of one quick rental capacity (small power plant) plant per year if we follow green building policy.

He said that many high-rises with glass all around are being built commercially which does not allow proper ventilation. These buildings have to depend on air-coolers. These kinds of high-rise building also need lift which may be considered heavy equipment. So when you go for the modern buildings in line with the changing world, ultimately huge energy and equipment are consumed by these buildings. So again the issues of efficient consumption of water and electricity come in front. As such, we may need a policy for the high-rise buildings for implementing green buildings in the future. In this regard some international development partners are giving financial and technical support for the high-rise energy saving building policy.

In our discussion the issue of unplanned urbanisation, especially

Dhaka city, came up. He said that some developers do not follow the rules of building code formulated by RAJUK. They deviate from the rules but in the policy of 2008 there are so many articles for controlling deviation from the proper building rules of RAJUK. The unplanned Dhaka has not been created overnight. For the demand and supply, these huge unplanned buildings have been constructed over a long period of time. Everything is Dhaka city centered in Bangladesh. Decentralization of service centers like hospital, education center, and employment facilities is very important to minimize pressure on Dhaka city. One very pathetic fact is that you have to come to Dhaka city for your predictable death. The housing loan is very important for spreading the real estate business to the rural areas so that the pressure on the city life can be lessened. But unfortunately 9% - 9.5% Single Digit Loan has been postponed and as a result apartment culture is in a slide in the last two years, he said.

We wanted to know from him about the concept of eco-friendly buildings. In reply he said that you can call a building eco-friendly when it will consume less energy, water, equipment and have standard indoor environment quality. The developers who want to go for green buildings are applying for LEED Certification from US Green Building Council (USGBC) which is an America based organization. In India it is known as IGBC. We also have this as BGBC but it is not active enough. If we have any system for evaluation, we can certify for these as green buildings. In addition, other certifications like this can be initiated locally if government wants. I think there is no alternative ways of energy saving without making green buildings. Green building is not expensive at all rather for being systematic and well documented its construction cost can be reduced.

On the question of prospects of real estate business in the country he said that its prospect is good because 16 crore people need 16 crore homes or shelters. But we need Land Use Planning. If we build house on agricultural land it will



damage the objective of green buildings. In our country the RMG sector is approaching towards green buildings. Foreign buyers rely on them who have LEED certificate.

What about the cost of good design. Nafizur Rahman said that it depends on the capability or market value of an architect. Some architects demand 80-90 taka/squire-foot. But it starts from 20 taka only. Usually it ranges from 30-35 taka to 120 /s. foot in total. But it will cost high if you hire an international architect. So it is clear that it entirely depends on the skill and recognition of the architect. He further informed that there is a course named Continue Professional Development (CPD) under IAB (Institute of Architect of Bangladesh). They are offering courses every year for the new architects for professional development. In addition they have to practice under an experienced architect after passing. Then they become candidate members. They appear for the examination on what they learn from them. All these

are done through a process or training.

In conclusion he said that he is working with green building for several years. There is no alternative way without energy efficient building to develop this sector. If it can be done it will be a great relief for the government and the future generation. Every architect and engineer should think over it. It starts from the land use plan to building completion. Take for an example of a shower tap from which water discharge will be little. It will become energy efficient equipment and ultimately it will make the building a green building. As a result energy demand will be less and it will be beneficial nationwide. Apart from this, rain water preservation system and proper management of building waste must be added with the mechanism. Septic tank should be used in the building so that the sewerage line cannot contaminate the river water. If we follow green building policy we can save electricity which is equal to a small power plant, he emphasized.



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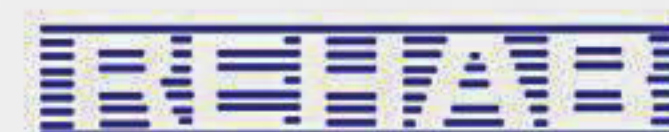
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