



Pedestrians walk freely along the footpath in front of the Sangsad Bhaban in Dhaka yesterday, a day after city corporation authorities evicted street vendors, inset.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, PALASH KHAN

Take action against illegal structures near Dhaka airport

Speakers tell BIP event; call for white paper on planning violations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) yesterday called for a comprehensive technical assessment of all high-occupancy structures located within the flight approach and funnel zones of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and urged legal action against buildings lacking proper approvals.

At a press conference titled "Aircraft Crash at Milestone School: The State's Responsibilities and Actions in Public Safety and Development Control", held at the BIP Conference Hall, BIP leaders also demanded the publication of a white paper detailing planning-related violations in Dhaka,



Rajuk is not authorised to approve any project in aviation zones without an NOC from CAAB. The fact that Milestone School is situated directly in the runway's takeoff and landing path exposes a serious lack of coordination between Rajuk and CAAB.

Sheikh Muhammad Mehedi Ahsan
BIP general secretary

followed by corrective actions based on its findings.

Presenting key insights from a rapid assessment conducted by BIP's research team, Planner Tamjidul Islam, joint secretary of BIP, said the permanent campus of Milestone School lies within the inner approach area of the airport's runway.

He said the location not only hampers aviation operations and safety but also poses long-term public health risks, such as excessive noise pollution and high carbon emissions.

While the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) has guidelines under the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) to regulate building height,

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Justice after 40 years

Sonali Bank to pay Tk 20 lakh as man wins legal battle

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After a 40-year legal battle, 80-year-old Harendranath Chandra finally achieved victory as the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has upheld its previous verdict over the payment of Tk 20 lakh to him as litigation cost.

A six-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed came up with the order after dismissing a review petition filed by Sonali Bank against its earlier verdict.

Following the apex court order, Sonali Bank PLC must pay Tk 20 lakh to Harendranath Chandra without any delay, his lawyer Md Omar Farouq told The Daily Star.

Barrister Farouq said his client was made accused of embezzling funds falsely by the Sonali Bank and Harendranath endured years of hardship, including imprisonment and financial ruin.

In 1985, the Sonali Bank initiated a departmental proceeding and filed three cases against Harendranath alleging misappropriation of Tk 16.16 lakh from the bank. This accusation eventually led to the loss of Harendranath's job and a five-year prison sentence.

Over the past four decades, he has tirelessly fought to clear his name.

On December 9 last year, the Appellate Division upheld a lower court judgement, acquitting him of all charges and ordering Sonali Bank to pay him Tk 20 lakh as compensation for legal expenditures. The bank authorities have also been

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Harendranath Chandra

SERVER HACK

Rajuk services halted for over 2 months

DIPAN NANDY

On May 19, a group of hackers reportedly infiltrated the Electronic Construction Permitting System (ECPS), the server of the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), and illegally obtained approval for a building. From the following day, Rajuk suspended all activities of the ECPS.

Even after two months, the server remains offline. As a result, all types of services under Rajuk have come to a standstill. From design approvals to land use clearance, no services are currently being provided -- not even general information.

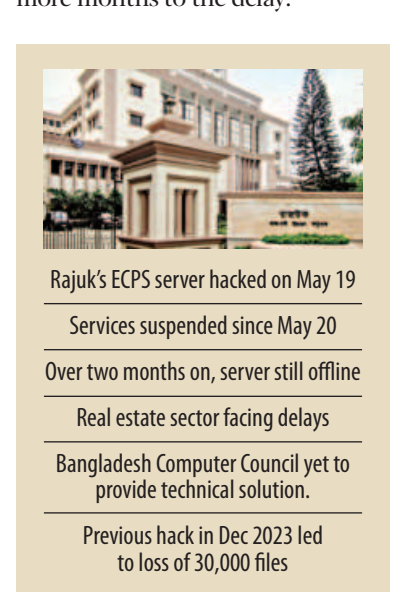
Rajuk authorities claim they have sought technical advice from the Bangladesh Computer Council to fix the server errors, but no response has been received yet. As a result, they have not been able to restart the server and are now considering launching manual citizen services.

The breach occurred on May 19, when a group infiltrated the ECPS server. Within 17 minutes, a building was approved. The 15-storey, 185-unit building, located in a wetland and height-restricted area, had previously been denied approval. The group managed to get the building's design approved. A month later, police conducted a raid in Motijheel and arrested three individuals linked to the incident.

When this reporter visited the Rajuk building on Sunday, Sirajul Islam, a resident of Pallabi in the

capital, said, "We've been coming to Rajuk for nearly one and a half months for a design approval, but we haven't received any solution. Even the officials don't know when this issue will be resolved."

Mohammad Ali, another resident from Basabo, said, "My building's approval was stuck for six months. This problem has already added two more months to the delay."



Several Rajuk officials mentioned that every day, people come to Rajuk to find out when the server will be operational again, but they cannot give them any clear answer.

In areas under Rajuk's jurisdiction, land use clearance and construction approval are required before constructing any building.

Previously, this was done through a manual process. In 2016, Rajuk began its online operations on a limited scale, starting with land use clearance in only one of its eight zones. By 2018, online land use clearance was expanded to all zones. In May 2019, Rajuk officially began issuing both land use clearance and construction permits online.

To perform these tasks online, a specific website is used. Citizens must register on the site and apply for land use clearance and construction approval. They must upload all necessary documents, including building designs. After verification and necessary processing, the approved land use certificate and building design are uploaded to the website. Users can then download the documents and begin construction.

Rajuk's server had previously been hacked on December 6, 2023. It took 17 days to regain control, which happened on December 21. Upon inspection, Rajuk found that 30,000 files were missing from the server. These files belonged to applicants who had submitted for construction approval between May 2019 and December 6, 2022. The matter escalated to the High Court.

An HC bench comprising Justice Nazrul Islam and Justice Khizir Hayat asked the then Rajuk chairman, Anisur Rahman Miah, to explain the disappearance of the 30,000 files within 30 days. While Rajuk claimed to have the files stored on a hard disk, there has

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DENGUE IN 2025

July the deadliest month so far
Death toll reaches 70;
cases rise to 18,789

- ▶ 28 dengue deaths reported in first 25 days of July
- ▶ Experts urge early hospitalisation
- ▶ Call for decentralised healthcare
- ▶ Lack of primary care in Dhaka delays diagnosis, care
- ▶ Urgent policy shift needed to prevent further fatalities

HELEMUL ALAM

At least 28 dengue patients have died in the first 25 days of July, including eight in last five days, highlighting the alarming trajectory of this year's dengue outbreak.

According to data from Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), dengue-related deaths stood at 19 in June, 3 in May, 7 in April, 3 in February, and 10 in January.

With 164 new infections reported yesterday, the total number of dengue cases this year has risen to 18,789, while the death toll has reached 70.

Health experts attribute the rising fatalities to severe complications, such as multi-organ failure, dengue shock syndrome, delayed hospitalisation, and underlying health conditions.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said this year they are seeing a growing number of patients suffering from Expanded Dengue Syndrome (EDS).

These patients often die suddenly due to the severity of the complications, he said.

EDS refers to atypical, severe, and multi-organ manifestations of dengue fever that fall outside the traditional classifications of Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever and Dengue Shock

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'Abul Mansur Ahmad's words still guide us'

Speakers pay tribute to the renowned writer, politician, and journalist at Kolkata seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The writings of renowned writer, politician, and journalist Abul Mansur Ahmad remain timeless and continue to inspire to this day.

His works on social reform, religious fundamentalism, secularism, democratic values, the Language Movement, Bangladesh's Liberation War, and politics still resonate and guide us.

Professor Rochona Majumdar of the University of Chicago, USA, made the remarks at a special seminar in memory of the noted journalist, political thinker, and writer at Presidency University in Kolkata yesterday.

The event titled "Abul Mansur Ahmad's America: A Global Intellectual History of the Language Movement in East Pakistan/Bangladesh," was held at the university's AK Basak Auditorium.



Prof Rochona Majumdar of the University of Chicago speaks at the seminar yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

The event began with a welcome speech by Utpal Chakraborty, associate professor of sociology at the university.

The university's Department of Sociology organised the event.

Professor Majumdar was the keynote speaker at the seminar. She discussed various

books written by Abul Mansur Ahmad.

She said, "Abul Mansur Ahmad portrayed the social life, superstitions, politics, and major movements of the subcontinent in a way that remains historically significant and relevant for the future."

He also highlighted, both

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The Ilisha launch terminal in Bhola remains submerged due to tidal surges triggered by a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal, disrupting operations and causing immense suffering to passengers -- particularly those arriving from Dhaka. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MONIR UDDIN ANIK