

Students suffer in tattered dorm

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During winter, the three one-storied buildings get extremely chilly even after closing all the doors and windows, since most of them are damaged or cracked.

In rainy season, water seeps through the rusty tin roofs and walls.

There are four bathrooms, around 100 yards away from the adjacent buildings, which are damp and not properly cleaned; most of the doors are unhinged.

The Kobi Jibanananda Das Hostel of Government BM College, Barisal can hold around 50 students but approximately 120 are staying there.

The resident students continue to suffer due to its derelict condition and an acute accommodation crisis.

A five-storied building was allotted for them in 2009 at Tk 3 crore financed by the Education Engineering Department under the education ministry, whose construction started in 2010 but was still not finished.

"If we can use that building, about 200 students can stay there," said Sanjoy Kumar Bishwash, hostel superintendent and an associate professor of accounting. He said the hostel, popularly known as "Hindu hostel", is for the Hindu male students.

"Around 60 percent work has been completed," said SM Emanul Hakim, principal of the college, adding, the work was supposed to be finished by 2013. When asked about the delay, he said he joined the college around 18 months back and has informed the authorities concerned regarding the issue right away.

Meanwhile, students are observing different movements demanding immediate steps to resolve their accommodation crisis.

Shohag Das, a student of the hostel, leading the movement, said, "We have highlighted the issue several times but to no avail. Every hostel of the campus has modern building except for this one."

"The beds get wet when it rains as the tin-

roofs have developed many holes," said Biplob, a resident of the hostel.

"There's always a long queue in front of the toilets, and we end up wasting much time," said Subrata Sarkar, a student of soil science.

"We live in a cramped and unhygienic condition," said Sanjoy Kumar Debnath, a sociology student.

About 30,000 students are studying in the college under HSC, honours and master's programmes but only 2,000 of them can stay in six hostels, the principal said. "We've also informed the education ministry about the crisis. Hopefully they will look into it."

He said during the construction of the new hostel, contractors were changed couple of times, which delayed the project. The education minister visited the hostel around two years ago and directed the respective department to construct the building quickly, he said.

"Atik Construction got the work in 2010 and the work order was given in 2011. They gave the work to Munirul Islam

Manik, another contractor, who left the work incomplete," said Chinmoy Bishwash, project engineer of Atik Construction. He claimed they were not notified about the contractor leaving the work unfinished.

"Recently, we received a letter from the education engineering department that the construction work was left unfinished. So we took the responsibility of completing the work, which will be finished within six months," he added.

Contacted, Manik said they got the tender in 2010 and its quotation was based on the pricing of the materials of that year but as expenses went up over the years they could not continue the work.

"We know that the students are suffering and we have informed the higher authorities about the issue. Hopefully, we'll be able to finish the work by June next year," said Jahangir Hossain, executive engineer of the education engineering department.

GOVERNMENT BM COLLEGE