

## DU students double in 2 decades

### Only 3 halls built in 20 years

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THE number of students in Dhaka University almost doubled to 47,800 in two decades but only three halls of residence were built in the period, increasing the number of seats to 2100.

The authorities can now provide only a fourth of the

students with accommodation in halls, with the number of students increasing every year.

The university has in all 18 halls of residence and a hostel. The Amar Ekushey Hall with 615 seats for the males and Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall with 508 seats and Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall with 1,000

seats for the females were built in the past two decades.

With the huge number of students, including examinees of bachelor's and master's courses, the authorities are grappling to provide students with accommodation in halls.

The number of students in the university was only

27,100 two decades ago in 1993.

The engineering office of the university said that they had the capacity to accommodate only 12,800 students in the halls and the hostel.

Of the total seats, 8600 are for male and 4300 for female students but about 19,000 students live in halls

leaving about 28,000 others to fend for themselves outside the campus.

The students who live in the halls and the hostel often sleep on the floors in guest rooms, mosques and prayer rooms, canteens, TV rooms and even on the verandas, facing severe problems in their academic life.

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Residential students said that the authorities had not taken any steps to resolve the accommodation crisis or to stop seat allotment based on political affiliations.

'I have been living in a room of the hall with about 50 others for a year,' said a second-year student staying in the Salimullah Muslim Hall.

He said that many students had been sleeping on the floors for more than two years.

Sometimes students need to sleep on the verandas and roofs, a number of students said.

They also said that the accommodation crisis was so acute that on an average, eight to 10 students live in a room meant only for four oc-

cupants.

Nearly 5,800 students take admission to the university each year, most of them coming from outside Dhaka.

The Shahidullah Hall has 1,225 seats, the Fazlul Haq Muslim hall 766 seats, the Amar Ekushey Hall 615 seats, the Salimullah Muslim Hall 805 seats, the Jagannath Hall 1,521 seats, the Zahurul Haq Hall 725 seats, Haji Muhammad Muhsin Hall 540 seats, the Surya Sen Hall 577 seats, the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall 484 seats, the Muktijoddha Ziaur Rahman Hall 484 seats, Kabi Jasimuddin Hall 397 seats, the AF Rahman Hall 496 seats, the Bangladesh Kuwait Matri Hall 360 seats, the Be-

gum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall 508 seats, Ruqalah Hall 1,618 seats, the Shamsun-nahar Hall 688 seats, Nawab Faizunnesa Chowdhurani Hostel 160 seats and PJ Har-tog International Hall 194 seats and the Sufia Kamal Hall 1,000 seats.

Former Dhaka University vice-chancellor Maniruz-zaman Miah said that accommodation crisis in the university persisted as the university has been the most preferred seat of earning for students.

Former vice-chancellor SMA Faiz said that all students should have accommodation facilities provided by the authorities 'but with the passage of time, as the number of students increased manifold, it has

been difficult to ensure accommodation for all.'

'Lack of adequate residential facilities make the students fall prey to politics of the ruling party-backed student wing,' he said. 'Many government and non-government organisations want to invest in the building of residential halls but the university has scarcity of land. We can now think of building halls outside the campus.'

The current vice-chancellor Arefin Siddique said that accommodation crisis persisted in all educational institutions. 'We have built the Sufia Kamal Hall and other buildings to ease the crisis. We hope the new halls being built will ease the pressure to a great extent,' he said.