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## RU fails to take step in more than a year

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Rajshahi University authorities have failed to take measures to renovate, reconstruct or demolish the 19 buildings that the university's engineering department marked 'risky' for their dilapidated and rundown condition in July 2017.

The authorities were yet to decide whether the people living in or using the buildings should be shifted in safe places before any fatal accident took place, said university employees and students.

The buildings, including four student dormitories, could collapse anytime, said officers of engineering office.

According to the engineering office, roof of Nawab Abdul Latif Hall, west block of Syed Ameer Ali Hall, south block of Madar Bux Hall and some portions of Sher-e-Bangla Fazlul Haque Hall and Shah Mukhdum Hall were badly damaged as the buildings were older than any other buildings of the university.

Nawab Abdul Latif Hall's assistant registrar Md Abdul Gaffar told New Age that the condition of the hall was very poor as plaster was peeling off the walls and in many places iron rods became visible and began to rust.

He said they had sent several applications in last few years urging the engineering department to take steps, but no measure was taken.

Syed Ameer Ali Hall provost Aminul Islam said he sent an application to the engineering department with a request to repair some specific rooms and places of the hall, but got no response.

Madar Bux Hall provost Abdul Alim said cracks developed in the west block of the hall and he also wrote to the engineering office seeking urgent response.

Besides, the engineering office of the university also spotted several staff quarters as risky. They are no. 34, 35, 37, 41, 42, 44, 9f and a portion of 36 and 52ka, 53ka, and 54ka.

A teacher said most of the old buildings were risky. 'A big chunk of plaster came off in a teacher's quarter at a night. I was lucky enough to escape fatal accident and none of my family got injured.'

RU chief engineer Sirajum Munir said they were trying to repair those buildings but financial crisis held them back.

Officers in the university's engineering and the planning and development offices, however, told New Age that they could not renovate or reconstruct the buildings due to financial crisis.

Md Moshir Rahman, acting deputy director of the university's planning and development office, said they had prepared a detailed report on those buildings and sent a proposal to the University Grants Commission seeking allotment to repair the structures, but the UGC said it would not allot any separate fund for those buildings.

The funding authority, however, said it would allocate funds for reconstruction or repair of the buildings with the overall budget, Moshir Rahman said.

'But there is no development to this end as far as I am concerned,' he added.

University vice-chancellor M Abdus Sobhan said they were contemplating repairing those buildings as soon as possible.

This year the university had a budget for renovation works in the buildings, but the amount was very inadequate, he added.

He, however, said they, following the recommendation of UGC, asked the engineering office to make an estimated budget and send it to the commission.

