

City

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Safe Building Construction

Enforce national code with engineers' aid

US-based Bangladeshi civil engineer urges govt at Brac University seminar

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The government should immediately enforce the national building code for safe construction with the help of certified professional engineers, said a US-based Bangladeshi civil engineer at a seminar in the capital yesterday.

“On-site supervision by structural and foundation engineers...is extremely crucial to ensure a safe building,” Dr Sukomol Modak told the seminar, “Enforcing building code in Bangladesh”, Brac University organised on its premises.

Presently, such rigorous supervision is often absent and buildings are designed by civil engineers, who may not be structural engineers, and even by mechanical engineers, he said.

Compliance with the code implies ensuring a healthy environment by an architect, building design by a professional structural engineer, foundation design by a geotechnical engineer, sanitation design by an environmental engineer and observance of the code's remaining provisions, said Modak.

So, the government should immediately devise some system incorporating private professionals to ensure the code's enforcement, he said.

Abdus Sabur, a former Public Works Department additional chief engineer, believes that 90 percent of Dhaka city's buildings were non-engineered, making them vulnerable to any major disaster during earthquakes.

Brac University Vice-Chancellor Prof Syed S Andaleeb said human lives depend on structural engineers so they should be made to go through a competence test and certification process at a certain interval.

Bangladesh National Building Code was prepared in 1993 and compliance was made legally mandatory in 2006 with the detailed provisions and liability of professionals but the government is yet to designate the required official setup and officials.