

DSCC cancels trade licenses of unauthorized rooftop restaurants

- A Monitor Report

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Dhaka: Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has revoked trade licenses of unauthorized and rooftop restaurants operating outside approved building plans. In a public notice issued on April 28, the DSCC warned that any business found operating with a cancelled license would face legal action.

Several residential and commercial buildings under the DSCC's jurisdiction were found to have restaurants operating without approval from the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), including illegal rooftop establishments, according to the notice. It further mentioned that several accidents, including loss of life and property, have occurred due to these unauthorized restaurants.

DSCC's Chief Revenue Officer Md Muniruzzaman said to the media that, "Prioritizing public safety, we have revoked the licenses of these

restaurants. Although this decision will lead to a significant revenue loss, it was necessary to ensure the safety of the city's residents and to build a safer Dhaka."

"Licenses have been cancelled where restaurants provided incorrect information. However, building approvals have not been cancelled. If any restaurant can provide proper documentation proving its compliance with the building's approved design, we will reinstate their license upon physical verification by officials," he added.

According to DSCC, there are currently 1,026 hotels and restaurants operating in Dhaka South under valid trade licenses, and at least 100 rooftop restaurants.

Talking to the media, Shahjahan Ali, DSCC's Deputy Chief Revenue Officer (current charge), said, "We have not yet completed a full list, but we will take action step-by-step against these restaurants. Hotels and restaurants contribute around BDT 4 crore annually to our revenue."

"Before renewal, we will verify that all establishments have obtained the necessary clearances. Failure to provide required documents will result in license revocation, while illegal restaurants will be shut down through enforcement drives," he also claimed.

The move has caused widespread outrage among restaurant owners. Bangladesh Restaurant Owners' Association Secretary General Imran Hasan called DSCC's decision "reckless and one-sided", as per reports.

Imran said to the media that "Without any consultation with us, the authorities have made a decision that will throw business owners onto the streets. Our businesses were not built overnight. If such a decision is enforced, nearly 30 lakh people in the country will lose their livelihoods."

The deadly fire at Green Cozy Cottage on Bailey Road in February last year, which killed 46, highlighted safety concerns. Investigations revealed that none of the eight restaurants inside had proper authorization. DSCC and Rajuk later launched crackdowns, however, enforcement faded.