

Heritage building of GRH will be protected'

A heritage building, which was to be torn down as part of an infrastructure development project by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at the Government Rajaji Hospital (GRH), would now be protected, said Dean K. Vanitha.

Doctors and activists raised objection to the move to demolish the heritage building. JICA would provide ₹330 crore for the project, which would involve construction of a six-storey building housing a 600-seater auditorium. "It will also have 27 operation theatres with world class equipment and civic work," said Dr. Vanitha.

Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director, People's Watch, threatened to take up the matter to court, if the Public Health and Family Welfare department decided to go ahead with the original plan. A public meeting involving several stakeholders, including doctors and activists, was held at the hospital in which speakers objected the hospital's proposal.

The Dean said that the hospital administration had taken into account the suggestions put forth by the stakeholders. "We were told that we should look at a futuristic design. Citizens and activists said that we should attempt to design this project with a version of the hospital's look in the year 2030. We have submitted changes to the State government regarding this," she said.

A senior doctor said that decision on design change would be taken after the election.