

The Indian Express 27.06.2013

BMC to carry out fresh structural audits of 959 dilapidated buildings

The BMC standing committee has asked the administration to undertake a fresh audit of the 959 structures declared 'dangerous and dilapidated' within 15 days. The decision comes after complaints by citizens that their recently renovated structures have been categorised as dilapidated to favour builders.

"We have asked the civic administration to look into these complaints and give us a report in 15 days. We have also asked the BMC to conduct another structural audit of the buildings categorised dangerous and dilapidated," said standing committee chairman Rahul Shewale.

The committee also proposed that dilapidated chawls in the suburbs be allowed an FSI of 3 for redevelopment. Currently, an FSI of 1 is granted to chawls which can be increased to 2 after builders pay a premium and transfer of development rights (TDR).

"The redevelopment of chawls in the suburbs is hampered as the structures get an FSI of 2. Chawl redevelopment in the island city is given an FSI of 4 while slum redevelopment gets 3. Because of this discrimination, people continue to live in dilapidated structures. The state must take a serious view of this," said BJP leader Dilip Patel.

"With the Rs 300 crore allotted for repairing dilapidated structures, the corporation can undertake the repairs of even privately-owned extremely dilapidated structures under section 353 (B) of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act. As a policy, we have asked the BMC to carry this out," he added.

The committee has also asked the corporation to survey all buildings and present a 'white paper'. "We want the history of the building, its current status, information on owners, tenants, and structural audits. The report should be given to us in a month. The committee believes a separate department should be created for looking at these issues," said Shewale.

The committee has also urged the urban development department to approve a pending policy which would empower BMC to register and regulate builders.

Additional municipal commissioner Rajeev Jalota said, "BMC is working on a policy for redevelopment of private dilapidated structures. Currently, over 60 engineers from the Building Proposals department are looking into the issue. There is no need to form a new department."