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Heritage building pulled down without AMC nod

Kumar Manish, TNN 19 September 2009, 06:02am IST

AHMEDABAD: A 100-year-old listed heritage building at Moto Suthar Vado in Khadia was demolished by its owner on Thursday. Deputy estate and town development officer, central zone, Rajendra Jadav, said, "The owner of the heritage building demolished the structure without any prior permission from the AMC authorities. We have served him a notice and asked not to pull down the structure till he has a proper clearance from AMC. The building is in the Grade II of heritage list of buildings under AMC."

However, owner of the building, Ashish Pasiwala, said he had bought the building for Rs 7 lakh a year ago. Pasiwala added, "The building was not demolished. It collapsed as it was more than 100 years old. I do not have any idea that the building comes under the heritage list."

Of late, many such structures have been falling prey to rapid commercialization. Ironically, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) in a recent event joined hands with industries to restore and conserve structures under Ahmedabad Heritage Foundation (AHF). But, the move seems to be an eyewash.

Appointment of a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) is also in a limbo. HCC was to be set up in September 2007 under the Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act. The panel was to preserve listed heritage buildings, precincts and natural features.

However, due to shrinking space and high premium value of these structures in the city, many architectural wonders are being illegally encroached upon or languishing in neglect.

In August 2009, 11 heritage structures collapsed in Sarangpur, Jamalpur, Dariapur, Kalupur, Khadia and Raikhad in the walled city. Strangely, the owners of most of these heritage structures are oblivious to the fact that their buildings are under heritage list as AMC authorities have failed to serve notice informing them of the heritage status.

AMC authorities said the building demolished at Moto Suthar Vado comes under the list of 12,500 heritage buildings in the city. The last survey of heritage buildings was done way back in 2001 by AMC in association with the French government. In 2009, AMC authorities have served notices to owners of 28 heritage buildings which are in bad state and can collapse anytime.