

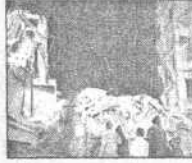
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MONSOON FUNERALS

Mumbai has lost scores of lives under crumbling buildings over the last few years

LAXMI CHHAYA, BORIVLI

The six-storeyed building in Borivli (W) collapsed on 18 July 2007, killing 29 people and injuring several others. A probe revealed the building was not on the list of dangerous structures but one of the families staying there had made internal alterations that weakened the building.



RASSIWALA BUILDING, DHOBI TALAO

Six people were killed and nine others injured when this building, on Second Marine Street, Dhobi Talao, collapsed on 29 August 2005. It was among the 80 that figured in the Mhada's list of dangerous buildings in the island city. Tenants, however, had refused to move out even though the building was served a notice. The loss of lives could have been averted if residents had listened to requests, officials said.

PUSHPANJALI, KHAR

Six residents of the 48-year-old three-storeyed building in Khar died when it caved in on 25 June 2005. The building was served a notice in 2002 for carrying out structural changes without approval. But, before the BMC machinery could mow down the illegal changes, joint owners Ram Gupta and Ramesh Gupta sought a court injunction and successfully dodged the civic hammer. They, however, failed to dodge fate.

GOVIND TOWERS, KHERWADI

Seven-storeyed Govind Towers collapsed in August 1998, within 20 years of its construction, killing 35 and injuring 23. The building was originally granted permission for four floors but three floors were added illegally. A fact-finding committee headed by then BMC chief K C Srivastava indicted his own organisation, Mhada and the collector for failing to demolish the unlawful constructions carried out in the building.

SADAF MANZIL, NAGPADA

Eleven people were killed and 24 others hurt when a century-old cessed building in Nagpada collapsed on 23 August 2005. The Mhada repaired the building, opposite J J Hospital, in 2002 and — even three days before the crash — Mhada engineers visited it and declared it safe.



POONAM CHAMBERS, WORLI

Five people were killed and 28 others injured when a section of the seven-storeyed building collapsed during a monsoon 11 years back. A probe revealed that a ground-floor occupant had removed a load-bearing column, weakening the building structurally and leading to the crash on 17 September 1997. BMC engineers say internal alterations, illegally carried out, are often to blame for weakened buildings and subsequent tragedies.