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# MCH sits tight on GO

## *Buildings under construction can be checked*

FROM A SRINIVASA RAO

**Hyderabad, June 30:** The Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad, which is undertaking demolition of illegal constructions on a warfooting now, has been sitting on a Government Order which empowers it to check violations in buildings during the construction stage itself.

According to Section 13 of GO No 23 of Municipal Administration and Urban Development (M1) MA dated July 31, 1998, the MCH should carry out mandatory inspection of constructions at the foundation stage, plinth level and at the first and upper floor level regarding high-rise buildings. Even Section 451 of the MCH Act calls for inspection of buildings during construction and alterations.

This means the MCH authorities, who are supposed to stop unauthorised structures during the construction stage itself, are keeping quiet till the building is completed and then going in for demolition when some major mishap occurs. In fact, the government had issued

orders with regard to prevention of poor quality of constructions last November itself. In GO Ms No. 541 dated November 17, 2000, the government observed several instances of builders/plot owners violating the building standards and safety measures. As per the GO, a builder can sell the flats only after the local authority (read MCH in the case of the twin cities) gives Occupancy Certificate which is mandatory for all multi-storied constructions. The certifi-

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cate is given on the basis of submission of a Building Completion Certificate by the architect and owner. The GO clearly states that water and sewerage connection and power connection shall be given only after production of the certificate. The GO says if there is failure in following any of the provisions, the local authority shall blacklist the builder or construction firm apart from initiating punitive action. They shall not be entitled to take up construction

activity for group housing or such projects for five years in any of the sites falling under the urban body (read Hyderabad Urban Development Authority). But the GO has been in cold storage ever since it was issued. The builder does not submit the completion certificate nor does the MCH give any Occupancy Certificate. And neither HMWS&SB or APTransco insists on such a certificate for providing water, sewerage and power connections. When contacted, MCH Commissioner P.K. Mohanty told *Deccan Chronicle* that carrying out inspections at every stage was not feasible. "There are 26,000 constructions being carried out in the city and each building takes three years for completion. How is it possible to inspect each and every building? We lack staff for such inspections. By the way, why do you want to revive the 'inspection raj' in this era of liberalisation," he asked. On the issuance of Occupancy Certificate, Mohanty bluntly said: "We are not giving the certificate because nobody asks for it."