

THIS STORY IS FROM MAY 8, 2023

20,000 new builder floors in 5 years in Gurgaon, bijli, sadak, paani under strain

Rao Jaswant Singh / TNN / Updated: May 8, 2023, 08:37 IST



In the 1990s, when most of the city's licensed colonies were being developed, the basic infrastructure — road, electricity, water and sewerage — was built keeping in mind the construction of two and a half floors on each ...[Read More](#)

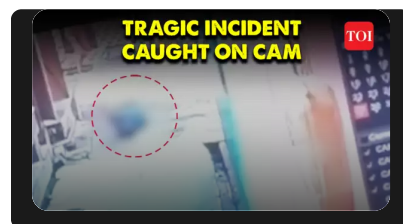


GURGAON: In the 1990s, when most of the city's licensed colonies were being developed, the basic infrastructure — road, electricity, water and sewerage — was built keeping in mind the construction of two and a half floors on each residential plot.

Over three decades later, the population has doubled, and the number of floors allowed on a residential plot was four till February this year, when the state government put approval of fourth floors on hold after wide-scale protests by residents' groups.



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A Tale Of Four Floors

In the 1990s | Licensed colonies started coming up in the city. With **rising population, demand for housing also rose**

20,000 independent floor flats built in city in last five years

2017 | The state allowed construction of stilt plus four floors. While thousands of builder floor apartments were built and people started moving in, the civic infrastructure was not upgraded accordingly, resulting in problems like **choked drains, insufficient water and power supply and poor roads**

Why did the city witness a boom in independent floors?

FOR BUYERS

Shorter wait | The **date of possession** for independent floor apartments is much shorter than that of highrises

Increased area | Independent floors have more **space and privacy** than highrise apartments

Better amenities | These flats have larger **balconies and windows, high-quality and pre-built wardrobes**, as well as superior electrical and plumbing fittings

FOR BUILDERS

Quick money | The development **turnaround time for independent flats is faster than highrises**, providing an opportunity for faster monetisation

> Also, money generated from builder floors starts flowing in within a year, while highrises take at least four years to pay off

DLF 2

NOW After **widespread protests across the state**, the state put the policy on hold in February 2023. Residents have demanded that civic amenities be upgraded before the policy is implemented

The infrastructure, however, has remained unchanged.

Since 2017, when the [Haryana](#) government allowed construction of stilt plus four floors, more than 20,000 floors have been constructed across residential colonies in the city — according to a rough estimate, around 5,000 buildings with four floors were granted occupation certificates (OCs) in DLF areas, Sushant Lok 1, Vipul World and other licensed colonies in last five years. But civic amenities like width of drainage and sewer lines, capacity of underground water tanks and electricity distribution networks, among others, have not been upgraded since the colonies were first developed. Even after chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced the takeover of most of these colonies, including DLF areas, by the Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon (MCG) in 2016 and 2017, not much work has been done to augment infrastructure.

Despite this, as soon as the state government approved the fourth floor policy, hundreds of residential properties across the city were converted into four floor buildings while residents questioned how the infrastructure could sustain almost double the load.

DLF 1, one of the city's oldest licensed colonies and also the costliest as far as residential floor prices are concerned, is grappling with water supply problems, as the pipelines haven't been replaced since they were first laid. Similarly, residents of Sushant Lok 2 and 3, Ardee City, Malibu Towne and Mayfield Garden too are facing civic issues such as broken roads, overflowing and blocked sewer lines and poor power infrastructure.

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Residents were protesting against deficient infrastructure even before the fourth floor policy came into effect. According to them, the existing infrastructure is insufficient to meet the demands of the current population and will collapse if the state government allows four floors as independent dwelling units.

Deepak Pasricha, a Palam Vihar resident, said residents have spent a lifetime's savings to build homes, but they were not even consulted before such an important announcement was made. "Only small-time builders benefited from the move, leaving us to face the repercussions of poor infrastructure," he said.

Colonies have been witnessing sudden and frequent power outages due to overloaded transformers that can't cope with the rising demand, especially in peak summer, apart from shortage of water. "We are at the mercy of the private tanker mafia for water supply. Moreover, our electrical appliances are damaged due to low or fluctuating voltage and frequent power cuts," said Praveen Yadav, president of Ardee City RWA.

Shiv Rai, who lives in Sushant Lok, said the construction of additional floors in his colony is also causing air pollution, as most of the plot owners are demolishing old buildings to build four floors and profit through floor-wise sales.

Meanwhile, MCG hasn't utilised around Rs 100 crore which it has received from the department of town and country planning (DTCP) in the form of fees collected from property owners against the increased floor area ratio (FAR), residents claimed. The funds, as per the norms, should have been used for infrastructure augmentation.

In 2016, the state government had increased the FAR allowing change of land use for residential purposes under the Haryana Building Code, 2016. The building code provides that additional FAR is allowed on the payment of charges as approved by the government from time to time.

MCG claimed the funds have been used for civic work. "MCG has been undertaking infrastructure development work in colonies as per requirement and demand, irrespective of us getting EDC and IDC from the department. We are working for the public and have already spent more than what we have got as EDC and IDC for development work," commissioner PC Meena told TOI. DTCP has maintained that the policy will help meet the demand for housing.

"The changes in the building code were made as per law and after receiving representations from the public. The changes will allow meeting the growing housing demand in the city," said a senior DTCP official.

Deputy commissioner Nishant Yadav said, "The authorities are continuously working to improve infrastructure. It is the government's focus to provide sufficient infrastructure to support civic amenities."

In May 2021, a city-based people's group — Gurgaon Citizen's Council — moved the Punjab and Haryana high court against DTCP for making changes in its policy to allow the construction of fourth floors and their registration as independent dwelling units. The policy was changed without augmentation of the civic infrastructure, which will increase the density of population in an area as well as put stress on the already crumbling civic infrastructure of the city, the petition claimed.

On January 10 this year, the Supreme Court banned construction of floor-wise apartments on residential plots in Chandigarh. The apex court was hearing a

petition filed by the RWA of Chandigarh Sector 15 in 2016 seeking an order banning construction of flats on residential plots.

Following this, RWAs in Panchkula demanded a similar ban. It soon turned into a state-wide campaign. Gurgaon residents wrote to chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar asking him to stop registration of fourth floors until the infrastructure is upgraded. In the name of helping residents, this was an unethical step by the state government to promote small-time builders and brokers, with total disregard for the already poor and deficient infrastructure of plotted colonies in the city, the residents alleged.

On February 23, the state announced that the policy would be kept in abeyance till further orders. The CM also constituted a committee with HSPCB chairman P Raghavendra Rao as its chairperson, and former DTCP chief town planner Dilbagh Singh Sihag, HSIIDC chief town planner Dinesh Chauhan and HSVP and DTCP senior town planner Vijendra Rana as members. The panel was asked to examine the issue and submit recommendations, based on which a decision would be taken. The committee has taken suggestions and feedback from residents.

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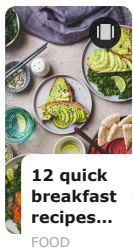
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