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Mandatory To Instal CCTVs In Elevators

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Mumbai: The state government has allowed lifts in residential buildings to have 16-mm-thick toughened glasses, which can withstand fires for about an hour, making it easier to spot stranded people and rescue them. It has also made it compulsory to instal CCTVs inside all lifts to curb cases of sexual harassment.

Until now, only malls and multiplexes were allowed to have lifts with glass doors and walls. A circular issued by the public works department (PWD) stated that lift doors, manual or automated, can be made of glass. PWD minister Chandrakant Patil signed on the circular last Tuesday.

The minister told **TOI** that the government had made it compulsory to instal CCTVs in lifts while glass doors were optional. "We have made CCTVs in lifts mandatory for safety of women."

Congress MLC Anant Gadgil, who had raised the issue in the last session, said that the government had taken a note of his demand. "The government has allowed glass for lifts in residential buildings and it will be beneficial while rescuing people during fire incidents. However, the glass doors should open towards the building's exit so that people can be rescued during emergencies," said Gadgil.

Glass doors will also prevent cases of molestation in lifts, he added. "No one would dare to harass or molest anyone inside lifts with glass doors."

Gadgil said he will write to CM Devendra Fadnavis, who holds the charge of urban development department, to instruct all corporations and councils to implement the circular. He said that he also plans to write to the municipal commissioners of Mumbai and Pune to make changes in the development control regulations for further action.

There are a total of 35,683 lifts in Mumbai, of which 32,493 have been inspected by the PWD till February this year. "It is observed that in these lifts, failures were only due to power cuts," said a PWD official.

DEATH TRAPS IN HIGHRISES

- In June first week, seven people died in a fire that broke out at a 21-storeyed residential building in Chandivli near Powai. Five of the seven were trapped in the lift
- In May, five of a family, including two children, were charred to death after they were trapped in a lift while trying to escape fire in their apartment's stilt in Nagpur
- In Oct 2009, six firemen of Thane fire brigade suffocated to death as they took the elevator to reach a fourteenth floor apartment in Tarangan Complex in Thane

Housing policy at next session

The state government will announce the much-awaited housing policy in August. "We had planned to finalize it in May, but will do it by August and table it at the next legislature session," said chief minister Devendra Fadnavis while talking to mediapersons. The government has distributed copies of the draft policy to all MLAs, MLCs and MPs for feedback. Ironically, only seven MLA's have responded.