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Second Karachi Building Collapse This Month Raises Questions About Oversight and Accountability

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Two women were killed and three others injured when a six-storey building collapsed near Lyari's Khadda Market in Karachi on Thursday. The incident, the second deadly collapse in the city this month, has reignited concerns over the region's worsening infrastructure, lack of enforcement, and the state's failure to act despite repeated warnings.

According to rescue officials, the sixth floor of the Ghani Mansion, located near Bilal Masjid and Peshawari Hotel, suddenly caved in, bringing down the floor beneath it in a chain reaction. Rescue 1122 teams and other emergency services were dispatched quickly to the

scene, where they began a search-and-rescue operation that remains ongoing. Police cordoned off the area to support rescue coordination.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) South Syed Asad Raza confirmed that two women, believed to be residents of the building, lost their lives in the collapse. Three others, said to be their daughters, sustained injuries and were transported to the Civil Hospital Karachi for treatment. One of the victims has been identified as 45-year-old Hurmat Rafiq, according to the Edhi Foundation, while the identity of the second woman remains unknown.

This tragic incident comes just weeks after a similar disaster in Lyari's Baghdadi area, where a five-storey residential structure collapsed, killing 27 people and injuring 10 others. That recovery operation took nearly 50 hours to complete, underlining the challenges faced by under-resourced rescue services in one of Pakistan's most densely populated urban centers.

The collapse has once again drawn attention to the crumbling state of residential buildings in Karachi and the broader failure of city and provincial authorities to uphold safety standards. While officials were quick to initiate an investigation and promised action, public confidence remains low given the frequency of such tragedies and the apparent absence of meaningful follow-up.

In response, the provincial leadership has ordered a fresh survey of hazardous buildings across Sindh Province. Committees have been formed to inspect these sites, composed of engineers and experts from the Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD), the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), and the Council of Architects and Town Planners. Yet these measures, though necessary, appear reactionary rather than preventative.

A recent review chaired by Sindh's Local Government Minister, Nasir Shah, covered 588 aging structures in Karachi. Out of these, 59 were labeled "extremely dangerous," and only 29 had been vacated at the time of the report. Authorities later added over 70 more buildings to the unsafe list. Despite the alarming statistics, accountability remains elusive. No substantial penalties or prosecutions have followed these deadly incidents, and there is little evidence that those responsible for regulatory enforcement are being held to account.

The broader issue at hand goes beyond just decaying buildings; it underscores a systemic failure by the government to prioritize public safety. The frequency of these collapses points to chronic neglect, haphazard construction practices, and weak regulation. Unfortunately,

the government's track record, particularly under the current administration, continues to demonstrate more concern with damage control than actual reform.

As Karachi continues to expand and densify, residents are left wondering when leadership will finally put their safety above bureaucratic inertia and political posturing. Until then, the cycle of preventable tragedies is unlikely to break.