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Bengaluru real estate: Why are developers withholding site inspections to homebuyers until registration is complete?



Bengaluru developers cite challenges, but legal experts say denying buyers access to under construction flats until registration may violate consumer laws. Several homebuyers in Bengaluru have raised concerns over being denied access to their under-construction apartments until full payment and registration are completed. The issue surfaced when multiple buyers from a Bengaluru project shared their experiences on Reddit, claiming they were barred from visiting their units or entering the premises prior to registration. "Just came to know that Brigade Group is denying all homebuyers in its El Dorado project. Including any visit to their unit before the entire payment is made, and even registration is completed. Do you think this is fair, and is it also followed by other builders and developers?" the Redditor wrote. Other Reddit users noted a similar policy being followed at TVS Emerald and Shriram Group, where flat owners were allegedly stopped from inspecting the apartments. Buyers say this practice feels unfair and risky, especially when large sums of money have already been paid. This is what developers have to say. Builders cite logistical and operational challenges as key reasons for restricting access to units under construction. These sites are active construction zones governed by strict safety protocols, and unauthorized entry can pose serious risks to visitors, they explain. "Access to under-construction areas is currently restricted due to safety protocols and set guidelines. These projects are active construction zones, and as such, entry without proper authorization and safety measures poses potential risks to individuals. To ensure the wellbeing of all parties and avoid any liability or disruption to ongoing work, we have instituted controlled site visits at appropriate stages of construction, typically accompanied by authorized personnel," Prathap Desu, COO Residential, Brigade Group, told HT.com. Ideally, developers state that once the Occupancy Certificate (OC) and Completion Certificate (CC) are received, indicating the project is ready for occupancy and registration, it is considered safe for customers to visit their apartments.

"As we give quality utmost importance, we ensure every apartment is QA certified before being offered for possession," Desu said. "At Shriram Properties, we allow all our customers to their respective projects. However, to ensure fair balance between customer experience and safety, customer visits are pre-planned and done in a structured manner," Gopalakrishnan J, executive director and CEO of Shriram Properties Ltd, said. Developers say their customer relationship management team facilitates site visits for all homebuyers at regular intervals (typically twice a year) to ensure they are well-informed about the project progress and engaged throughout the construction journey. "However, unrestricted access to under-construction sites is restricted due to safety, liability, and security protocols. We remain committed to transparency and customer-centricity and, but it is equally important to ensure regulated customer visits to avoid untoward instances," Gopalakrishnan said. A list of questions has been sent to TVS Emerald. The story will be updated after receiving a response. Also Read: Bengaluru real estate: Should you buy an old apartment in the city or a new one in the outskirts? Legal experts weigh in Legal experts say that while there is no specific law mandating that builders must allow buyers to visit under-construction flats, completely denying access until registration can raise concerns about transparency and consumer rights. According to lawyers, under RERA (Real Estate Regulation and Development Act, 2016), developers are obligated to provide regular updates on construction progress and ensure transparency. "If a buyer has paid a significant portion of the amount, they do have a right to know the condition and progress of their flat, at least through proper documentation or limited supervised access," said Vittal BR, an advocate at the Karnataka High Court. Legal experts also warn that forcing buyers to register a flat without seeing it could be interpreted as unfair trade practice under consumer protection laws, especially if defects are discovered post-registration. "Builders must ensure that the buyer is not being pressured into registration without a fair inspection. Courts have, in the past, ruled in favour of buyers in similar disputes," Vittal said. He advises buyers to check the builder-buyer agreement and RERA filings for any mention of site visits or inspection rights. If access is being denied entirely, buyers can file a complaint with the state RERA Authority or even seek relief under the Consumer Protection Act, he said.