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**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

# Mumbai: Existing CHS committees to continue as elections extended till Sept 17

TNN | Jun 17, 2020, 10.20 PM IST



MUMBAI: Elections to all cooperative bodies, mainly around 65,000 Housing societies in Mumbai metropolitan region, now stand extended further till September 16 amid Covid-19 pandemic. A notification to this effect was issued Wednesday evening.

The earlier deadline was June 17 which ended on Wednesday. The new deadline was awaited after an announcement of indefinite extension by the government after a cabinet held in May.

As a result several repairing and redevelopment works are on hold as societies cannot take major policy decisions thus posing risk to buildings ahead of monsoon, say housing society associations.

However, the deadline for submission of society audits and holding a GBM which is August 31 every year is yet to be extended. "This deadline too will have to be extended simultaneously given the present tough times though final decision is still awaited," sources added. Meanwhile the extension will not be applicable in cases wherein supreme court has ordered elections.

"The cooperative department should have published the final election rules for less than 250 members of Cooperative housing societies instead of passing such notification of postponing the elections. Since October 30, 2018, when the first ordinance to allow the small societies to conduct election by themselves was published, elections are getting postponed for one or the other reasons. As per the prevailing provisions, the govt cannot postpone them for more than one year. However, in the

present case, the elections stand postponed nearly for 18 months," said Ramesh Prabhu, president of Maharashtra societies welfare association, the federation of societies in Maharashtra.

"There are many societies , where administrator or authorized officer have been appointed who cannot hold office for more than 6 months as per the constitution of India but are holding the office for nearly 2 years now due to lethargic approach of govt in publishing the rules," he alleged.

According to Prabhu, building repairing and redevelopment works of old dilapidated buildings are stuck since two years which posed risks to them during monsoon. Several society cases are piling up with the registrar, he added. There are over 83,000 cooperative housing societies in Maharashtra with more than 3 crore residents 80% of which are in Mumbai metropolitan region alone.