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Building Safety Governance in India and the United Kingdom: A Comparative Analysis of Accountability, Certification and Regulatory Enforcement

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ABSTRACT

Building failures reveal not merely defective materials or design, but failures of governance: dispersed responsibility, unreliable certification, incomplete information and enforcement that arrives after occupation or disaster. This article compares building safety governance in India and the United Kingdom, while recognising that the United Kingdom contains devolved regimes and using England's post-Grenfell framework as the principal comparator. Through doctrinal and functional analysis of legislation, technical codes, regulatory institutions, inquiry findings and judicial decisions, it evaluates three linked dimensions: accountability, certification and enforcement across the building lifecycle. India possesses technical knowledge in the National Building Code, model bye-laws, municipal legislation, disaster-management law and real-estate regulation. Yet these instruments operate through uneven State and local incorporation, fragmented agency mandates and dependence on professional self-certification. Responsibility is frequently concentrated at approval and completion, while changes during construction, occupation-stage deterioration and unauthorised alterations escape a continuous assurance system. England's Building Safety Act 2022 responds to comparable problems by creating a national Building Safety Regulator, statutory duty-holders, gateways for higher-risk buildings, accountable persons during occupation, competence requirements, mandatory occurrence reporting and a digital golden thread of information. Its model nevertheless remains complex, resource-intensive and limited by building classification, transitional disputes and institutional capacity. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland further demonstrate that "United Kingdom regulation" is not uniform. The article argues that the English model should not be transplanted wholesale into India. Its transferable insight is institutional, not merely technical: safety requires an auditable chain connecting named actors, controlled design changes, verified completion information, occupied-building duties and credible sanctions. India should adopt nationally consistent minimum outcomes

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through cooperative federalism, while States retain legislative authority and municipalities implement risk-sensitive controls. The proposed reforms include a statutory duty-holder framework, independent review of higher-risk projects, interoperable digital building records, periodic and event-triggered assessment, professional competence registers, resident-accessible safety information and performance-based oversight of local authorities. The comparison concludes that certification has public value only when it records verified compliance within a continuing regulatory process. A certificate cannot compensate for weak inspection, divided responsibility or missing evidence. Effective governance must make safety responsibility visible before failure, enforceable during construction and continuous throughout occupation.

Keywords: *Building safety governance, comparative law, regulatory accountability, structural certification, Building Safety Act 2022, municipal enforcement, golden thread*

I. INTRODUCTION

Building safety regulation determines who may create risk in the built environment, who must verify its control and who answers when institutions fail. A collapse, uncontrolled fire or dangerous deterioration is therefore not simply a breach of an engineering rule. It may reflect deficient allocation of responsibility, unreliable product information, incomplete construction records, weak inspection, regulatory capture or delayed enforcement. Certification is valuable only within this wider system: it must communicate what was checked, by whom, against which standard, and on what evidence.

India and the United Kingdom offer a productive comparison because both distribute building-control functions across multiple legal and professional actors, yet their recent trajectories differ. India relies on constitutional federalism, State municipal legislation, local bye-laws, national model codes, professional certification and sectoral statutes. The United Kingdom is itself legally plural. Building regulation is devolved; England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland operate distinct systems. This article therefore uses England's post-Grenfell regime as the principal comparator and identifies relevant contrasts in the devolved nations.¹

The Grenfell Tower fire exposed systemic failures in product regulation, design, procurement, inspection, information and resident voice. Dame Judith Hackitt described a system in which roles and responsibilities were unclear, competence was patchy and the ambiguity of regulations and guidance allowed some participants to game the system rather than deliver safe outcomes.²

¹ Building Safety Act 2022, c. 30 (UK); Building (Scotland) Act 2003, asp 8 (Scot.); Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 1979, S.I. 1979/1709 (N.I. 16); Building Safety (Wales) Act 2026, asc 5 (Wales).

² DAME JUDITH HACKITT, BUILDING A SAFER FUTURE: INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF BUILDING REGULATIONS AND FIRE SAFETY: FINAL REPORT 5–13 (Cm. 9607, 2018) (UK), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov>

Parliament responded principally through the Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA), secondary legislation and amendments to the Building Regulations 2010.³ The result is a lifecycle regime for higher-risk buildings, overseen by the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), with statutory duty-holders, controlled changes, completion gateways and occupied-building accountability.

India's recurring collapses and unauthorised construction reveal related governance concerns but no equivalent consolidated reform. The National Building Code of India 2016 (NBC) supplies substantial technical and administrative guidance, yet generally depends on adoption through State or municipal law.⁴ The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA) strengthens promoter duties and purchaser remedies, but it does not establish a unified building-safety regulator or a comprehensive occupation-phase regime.⁵

The article asks three questions. How clearly does each system allocate responsibility? What assurance does certification actually provide? How effectively does enforcement connect design, construction and occupation? Its thesis is that England's central achievement is not a particular certificate or height threshold, but an auditable chain of responsibility. India should adapt that institutional logic through cooperative federalism, calibrated to local capacity and to the scale of informal and existing construction.

II. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONSTITUTIONAL SETTING

The comparison is functional rather than formal. It examines whether each jurisdiction performs five regulatory tasks: setting enforceable outcomes; assigning competent duty-holders; verifying design and construction; preserving safety information; and intervening when risk changes. This avoids equating differently named documents. A planning permission, building sanction, completion certificate, occupancy certificate, fire clearance and structural stability certificate may overlap, but each answers a different legal question.

In India, legislative competence is dispersed. State List subjects include local government and land, while article 243W and the Twelfth Schedule contemplate municipal responsibility for urban planning, regulation of land use and construction of buildings. National institutions influence the field through standards, disaster-management powers, housing policy and centrally enacted market regulation. This permits adaptation to seismicity, climate and urban

[.uk/media/5afc50c840f0b622e4844ab4/Building_a_Safer_Future_-_web.pdf](https://www.ijlma.com/media/5afc50c840f0b622e4844ab4/Building_a_Safer_Future_-_web.pdf).

³ Building Safety Act 2022, pts. 2, 4 (UK); Building Regulations 2010, S.I. 2010/2214, pt. 2A (Eng.) (as amended).

⁴ BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS, NATIONAL BUILDING CODE OF INDIA 2016 vol. 1, pts. 0, 2 (SP 7:2016).

⁵ The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, No. 16 of 2016, INDIA CODE (2016), §§ 4, 11, 14, 17, 18 [hereinafter RERA].

form. It also means that the legal force of the NBC, professional eligibility, inspection stages and renewal duties can differ between cities.⁶

In the United Kingdom, devolution creates four building-control jurisdictions. England and Wales share historical statutory foundations but now diverge, Scotland operates under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, and Northern Ireland under its own Order and regulations. The BSA's most distinctive higher-risk-building machinery principally concerns England. Scotland retains local authorities as verifiers, with independent design and construction checks, building warrants and accepted completion certificates.⁷ Wales has enacted the Building Safety (Wales) Act 2026 for the ongoing management of risk in multi-occupied residential buildings, including structural-safety duties for prescribed buildings, although commencement depends partly on subordinate legislation.⁸

Two cautions follow. First, the comparison is not between a decentralised India and a unitary "UK model." Both systems are multi-level, but England has created clearer central supervision for defined risks. Secondly, regulatory design must be separated from implementation. Statutory duties do not prove adequate staffing, timely decisions or safe outcomes. The relevant question is whether law makes omissions detectable and responsibility enforceable.

Building safety also engages public-law values. Indian constitutional doctrine connects article 21 with life, shelter and dignified conditions, while article 14 restrains arbitrary administration. UK public authorities act within statutory duties, public-law review and Convention rights, but the BSA more directly organises preventive responsibility. In both jurisdictions, strong emergency powers must coexist with reasoned decisions and fair procedures, particularly where evacuation, remediation costs or demolition affect innocent residents.⁹

III. INDIA: FRAGMENTED STANDARDS AND APPROVAL-CENTRED CONTROL

India's framework begins with a sophisticated but unevenly binding technical foundation. The NBC addresses administrative control, development rules, fire and life safety, structural design, materials and construction management. The Model Building Bye-Laws 2016 (MBBL) translate many of these principles into suggested approval procedures, professional responsibilities and structural-safety documentation. Neither instrument ordinarily operates as

⁶ INDIA CONST. sched. VII, list II, entries 5, 18; INDIA CONST. art. 243W, sched. XII, entries 1–2.

⁷ Building (Scotland) Act 2003, asp 8, pts. 2–3 (Scot.); SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, *Building Standards: Verification and Certification*, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/building-standards-verification-and-certification/> (last visited Oct. 5, 2026).

⁸ Building Safety (Wales) Act 2026, asc 5, pt. 1, §§ 138–139 (Wales).

⁹ *Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation*, (1985) 3 SCC 545 (India); *Chameli Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh*, (1996) 2 SCC 549 (India).

a comprehensive national building statute. Binding force arises through State legislation, local bye-laws, development regulations, approval conditions or contractual incorporation.¹⁰

The administrative sequence commonly includes land-use approval, building-plan sanction, professional undertakings, notices at specified stages, departmental clearances, completion documentation and an occupancy decision. Structural engineers may certify calculations and drawings; architects coordinate submissions and completion statements; authorities scrutinise documents and may inspect. Local variation is substantial. Delhi's Unified Building Bye-Laws prescribe professional responsibilities and structural forms, while Mumbai operates under a different statutory and development-control structure. The same label can therefore represent different evidence and a different intensity of public review.¹¹

RERA adds a market-accountability layer. A promoter must disclose project information, follow sanctioned plans and structural designs, obtain applicable completion or occupancy certification, transfer documents, and rectify specified structural defects reported within five years of possession. These duties reduce information asymmetry and create remedies. However, RERA authorities generally rely on technical and municipal decisions made elsewhere. RERA registration is not structural approval, and the defect-liability provision is not a substitute for preventive inspection or long-term building management.¹²

The Disaster Management Act, 2005 imposes preventive responsibilities on authorities and requires local bodies to ensure that construction under their jurisdiction conforms to prescribed standards.¹³ The earthquake guidelines of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) promote code enforcement, techno-legal regimes, professional capacity and assessment of vulnerable buildings.¹⁴ Yet disaster-management agencies rarely control the ordinary approval-to-occupation chain. Their role often becomes most visible during preparedness drives or after failure.

This architecture produces four governance gaps. Incorporation is uncertain because technical standards may be adopted selectively or by general reference. Responsibility is dispersed

¹⁰ TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ORGANISATION, MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, *Model Building Bye-Laws 2016*, chs. 2, 6 & apps. (2016), <http://tcpo.gov.in/sites/default/files/TCPO/schemes/MODEL-BUILDING-BYE-LAWS-2016.pdf>.

¹¹ DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, *Unified Building Bye-Laws for Delhi 2016*, chs. 2, 9, S.O. 1191(E) (Mar. 22, 2016); MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI, *Development Control and Promotion Regulations for Greater Mumbai 2034* (2018), sanctioned by Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra, Notification No. TPB-4317/629/CR-118/2017/DP/UD-11 (May 8, 2018).

¹² RERA, *supra* note 5, §§ 2(zq), 4(2), 11(4), 14, 17, 19.

¹³ The Disaster Management Act, No. 53 of 2005, INDIA CODE (2005), §§ 30, 34, 41.

¹⁴ NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY, *National Disaster Management Guidelines: Management of Earthquakes* 17–28, 35 (2007), <https://ndma.gov.in/sites/default/files/PDF/Guidelines/earthquakes.pdf>.

because no actor owns the complete safety case. Information is discontinuous because drawings, soil reports, test results, deviations and as-built records remain in separate files. Enforcement is approval-centred because post-occupancy deterioration, structural alterations and change of use often receive systematic attention only after a complaint or visible distress.

The Supreme Court has consistently resisted administrative tolerance of unlawful construction. In *Dipak Kumar Mukherjee v. Kolkata Municipal Corporation* it stressed the public harm caused by illegal construction and the responsibility of those entrusted with enforcing planning law, commended the Corporation's officers for enforcing it and imposed exemplary costs on the builder who had defied a stop-work notice; in *Supertech Ltd. v. Emerald Court Owner Resident Welfare Association* it upheld demolition arising from serious departures from the governing norms and collusion. The judgments articulate firm principles, but adjudication after occupation cannot replace competent, timely and documented regulatory control.¹⁵

IV. ENGLAND: POST-GRENFELL LIFECYCLE REGULATION

England's reformed system retains the Building Act 1984 and functional Building Regulations but overlays them with stronger supervision and differentiated controls. The BSA established the BSR within the Health and Safety Executive. Its functions include overseeing building-control standards, improving competence and acting as building-control authority for higher-risk buildings. The regime is risk-based rather than universal: special procedures apply to buildings meeting statutory height, storey and use criteria, while local authorities and registered building-control approvers continue to regulate other work.¹⁶

During design and construction, the client, principal designer, principal contractor, designers and contractors have express duties. They must plan, manage and monitor work so that it complies with relevant requirements and must possess or secure appropriate competence. Naming duty-holders reduces the familiar defence that every participant controlled only one fragment. It does not make responsibility exclusive: each actor remains liable for functions within its control.¹⁷

For higher-risk building work, the BSR operates regulatory gateways. Approval is required before work begins. Applications must demonstrate regulatory compliance and effective management arrangements. Work must follow agreed documents; changes are classified,

¹⁵ *Dipak Kumar Mukherjee v. Kolkata Municipal Corporation*, (2013) 5 SCC 336, ¶¶ 2, 8–9, 30 (India); *Supertech Ltd. v. Emerald Court Owner Resident Welfare Association*, (2021) 10 SCC 1 (India).

¹⁶ Building Safety Act 2022, §§ 2–6, pt. 3 (UK).

¹⁷ Building Regulations 2010, S.I. 2010/2214, regs. 11A–11Q (Eng.), inserted by Building Regulations etc. (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023, S.I. 2023/911, reg. 6(1).

recorded and, where major, approved before affected work continues. At completion, the client, principal designer and principal contractor provide compliance declarations, and the BSR issues a completion certificate only if satisfied. Registration is required before residents occupy an in-scope high-rise residential building.¹⁸

Information is treated as safety infrastructure. The “golden thread” requires accurate, current, accessible digital information capable of supporting decisions over the building’s life. Change-control logs, mandatory occurrence reporting and prescribed handover information seek to prevent the loss of design intent between procurement, construction and occupation. This directly addresses a weakness visible in both jurisdictions: a regulator or later assessor cannot verify safety when it cannot reconstruct what was approved, changed and built.¹⁹

During occupation, accountable persons must assess and manage building-safety risks arising principally from the spread of fire and structural failure; the principal accountable person coordinates the safety case, registration and engagement with residents. The BSR may investigate, issue compliance notices and pursue offences. Residents receive information and complaint routes, making lived evidence part of regulatory intelligence rather than an informal afterthought.²⁰

The system remains contested. Classification thresholds create boundary problems; detailed application requirements can delay projects; regulator capacity affects approval time; and complex allocations among accountable persons may generate disputes. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s 2024 Phase 2 report also demonstrates that legal reform cannot by itself cure fragmented government, commercial dishonesty, poor testing or weak professional culture. England nevertheless supplies a more explicit answer than India to the question: who owns safety risk after the certificate is issued?²¹

V. COMPARATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The sharpest contrast concerns the legal visibility of responsibility. Indian building control frequently distributes signatures among the owner, promoter, architect, structural engineer and

¹⁸ Building (Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023, S.I. 2023/909, pts. 2–5; Building Safety Act 2022, § 77 (UK).

¹⁹ Building Safety Act 2022, §§ 87–90 (UK); Higher-Risk Buildings (Management of Safety Risks etc) (England) Regulations 2023, S.I. 2023/907.

²⁰ Building Safety Act 2022, pt. 4, §§ 72–76, 83–94, 99–104 (UK).

²¹ GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY, PHASE 2 REPORT: REPORT OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE FIRE AT GRENFELL TOWER ON 14 JUNE 2017 vol. 1, pt. 1, ¶ 2.19 (HC 19-I, 2024) (UK), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d817aa701781e1b341dbd3/CCS0923434692-004_GTI_Phase_2_Volume_1_BOOKMARKED.pdf; *id.* vol. 7, pt. 14 (HC 19-VII, 2024), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d818059084b18b95709f86/CCS0923434692-004_GTI_Phase_2_Volume_7_BOOKMARKED.pdf.

contractor, but the precise duty represented by each signature varies locally. Public authorities may rely heavily on empanelled professionals while lacking capacity for substantive review. When defects emerge, responsibility fragments into disputes over design, workmanship, unauthorised change, maintenance and the meaning of municipal approval.

England's duty-holder model converts coordination into an express obligation. The client must make suitable arrangements and appoint competent persons; the principal designer coordinates design compliance; the principal contractor coordinates building work; individual designers and contractors retain duties. This creates a map for investigation. It also recognises that safety is produced through decisions, not discovered only at completion.

Professional regulation exposes another difference. India's Architects Act, 1972 regulates registration and use of the title "architect," but there is no equivalent comprehensive central licensing statute for engineers. Municipal empanelment operates as a practical licence for structural work, with inconsistent competence categories, discipline, continuing education and disclosure across jurisdictions. England now requires competence for building-regulation functions, registers building inspectors and building-control approvers, and embeds competence duties in project roles. Registration is not a guarantee of performance, but it creates portable regulatory visibility.²²

Neither public nor private certification should become a liability shield. A professional paid by a developer has indispensable project knowledge but an inherent assurance conflict. Higher-risk work therefore warrants independent technical review separate from the original design team. The reviewer's involvement must supplement, not dilute, the designer's responsibility. Public authorities must remain responsible for risk-based supervision, audit selection and enforcement.

India can adopt duty-holder clarity without reproducing England's institutional scale. State legislation should define the client, lead designer, structural engineer, principal contractor, independent reviewer and occupied-building manager. Each certificate should state its scope, applicable standards, assumptions, evidence, unresolved deviations and conflicts. A national interoperable competence register could record categories, insurance, disciplinary findings and restrictions, while States retain licensing or empanelment authority. Public officials should record who examined each submission and why occupation was permitted. This would replace collective anonymity with traceable, proportionate responsibility.

²² The Architects Act, No. 20 of 1972, INDIA CODE (1972), §§ 17, 22, 29, 37; Building Safety Act 2022, §§ 35, 42 (UK).

VI. COMPARATIVE CERTIFICATION, INFORMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Certification in both countries mediates between expert knowledge and public permission. The crucial distinction is whether a certificate merely confirms submission or forms part of a controlled evidence chain. In India, design, supervision, completion, occupancy and structural-stability certificates may be issued under different instruments and can be misunderstood as equivalent warranties. Their evidentiary basis is rarely accessible to purchasers or residents. A building may be legally occupied yet later rendered unsafe by additions, corrosion, overloading or change of use.

England's higher-risk regime separates stages more clearly. Approval precedes work; controlled changes remain visible; completion declarations identify responsible actors; and registration precedes residential occupation. The golden thread connects these decisions. This does not make the completion certificate a warranty. It strengthens its institutional meaning by linking it to retained evidence, regulator scrutiny and continuing accountable-person duties.

Enforcement design also differs. Indian municipal statutes commonly provide stop-work, sealing, repair, evacuation and demolition powers, while RERA adds directions, penalties, compensation and adjudicatory remedies. Enforcement is nevertheless vulnerable to delayed detection, regularisation practices, political pressure and the hardship imposed on purchasers after occupation. The Supreme Court has warned that deliberate violations must not be regularised and that regularisation must remain a rare exception, not the rule. Severe demolition orders may be legally justified yet reveal preventive failure.²³

England uses improvement and compliance notices, stop notices, prosecution, building assessment certificates and special measures for occupied higher-risk buildings. Mandatory occurrence reporting can alert the BSR to safety events before catastrophe. Longer limitation periods and remediation mechanisms under the BSA increase exposure for historic defects. Yet formal enforcement capacity remains decisive; complex powers produce little deterrence if investigation and decision are slow.²⁴

The comparison supports graduated, data-led enforcement. Low-risk work may use standardised professional declarations and random audit. Medium-risk work should include notified stages and targeted inspection. Higher-risk buildings require independent design checking, regulatory hold points, change control, mandatory reporting and continuing safety

²³ *Esha Ekta Apartments Co-operative Housing Society Ltd. v. Municipal Corporation of Mumbai*, (2013) 5 SCC 357 (India).

²⁴ Building Safety Act 2022, §§ 38, 42, 80–81, 87, 99, 102, 116–125, 133–135 (UK); Defective Premises Act 1972, c. 35, § 1 (UK).

management. Sanctions should distinguish error, negligence, recklessness, false certification and collusion. Early correction orders should be easier to issue than late demolition, while deliberate concealment should attract professional and criminal consequences.

Both systems must also measure the regulator. Published indicators should include application time, inspection coverage, recurring non-compliance, unresolved high-risk cases, enforcement closure and professional discipline. England's regulator needs scrutiny for resources and consistency; Indian States should audit municipal capacity and outcomes. Accountability is incomplete when the law monitors builders but not the institutions that approve them.

VII. REFORM LESSONS FOR INDIA

The comparative lesson is not to enact an Indian copy of the BSA. England's framework responds to a particular tenure system, administrative capacity and catastrophic history. India's scale, informal development, municipal inequality and federal distribution require adaptation. Reform should nevertheless adopt six principles.

First, Parliament, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Union housing ministry should support a model statutory chapter defining minimum building-safety outcomes, while States incorporate and enforce it through municipal law. The model should distinguish design approval, construction conformity, completion, occupancy and current-condition assessment. Regularisation of planning deviations must never imply structural acceptance.

Secondly, States should establish a risk classification using height, occupancy vulnerability, structural complexity, seismic zone, soil, density, alteration history and consequences of failure. Higher-risk projects should require independent peer review, named duty-holders and mandatory hold points. Hospitals, schools, assembly buildings and dense residential towers deserve priority even where height thresholds are not met.

Thirdly, each regulated building should have an interoperable digital safety record. It should preserve sanctioned structural drawings, design criteria, geotechnical information, review reports, material tests, site deviations, change approvals, as-built drawings, completion decisions, major repairs and periodic assessments. Entries must be time-stamped and attributable. RERA, municipal, fire and property systems should exchange defined data while controlling access to security-sensitive details.

Fourthly, responsibility must continue into occupation. Owners or associations of prescribed buildings should retain the record, control structural alteration and commission assessment at risk-based intervals. Reviews should also follow damaging events, material change of use,

major renovation or credible evidence of distress. Residents need accessible safety summaries, complaint channels and protection against retaliation.

Fifthly, competence and independence require institutional support. Registers should identify the classes of work a professional may perform and disclose current sanctions. Independent reviewers must be free from financial and organisational conflicts. Regulators need structural engineers, digital systems, inspection budgets and laboratories; otherwise, additional certificates will produce paperwork rather than assurance.

Sixthly, enforcement should intervene at the earliest correctable point. Authorities need rapid stop-work and information powers, proportionate civil penalties, professional referrals, liability for false declarations and criminal sanctions for knowing endangerment or corrupt approval. Good-faith purchasers require transparent warnings and remedial pathways, but their hardship should not legitimise unsafe construction.

Central funding for urban reform and disaster resilience can reward State adoption of common outcomes, data standards and independent performance audit. This form of cooperative federalism respects local legislative competence while giving safety information a consistent meaning. The aim is neither centralisation nor deregulated self-certification. It is a system in which every significant safety decision has an identified maker, evidentiary basis, review route and durable record.

VIII. CONCLUSION

India and the United Kingdom demonstrate that building safety is governed through institutions long before it is tested by disaster. Both possess technical standards and professional expertise; both have experienced the consequences of fragmented information and weakly owned responsibility. Their principal difference lies in the recent legal organisation of those resources. India continues to rely on uneven local incorporation and approval-stage certification. England has moved, for defined higher-risk buildings, toward a regulator-led lifecycle model with duty-holders, gateways, a golden thread and accountable persons during occupation.

England's framework is not a finished solution. Devolution prevents easy reference to a single UK system, thresholds exclude many buildings, and institutional capacity determines whether detailed duties become timely protection. The comparison nonetheless establishes that technical rules cannot regulate themselves. Someone must coordinate compliance, verify changes, retain evidence, respond to warnings and remain responsible after occupation.

For India, meaningful reform should convert certification from a stand-alone signature into an auditable regulatory event. The certificate must disclose its scope and evidence; the underlying record must follow the building; independent review must correspond to risk; and municipal supervision must remain visible. RERA can distribute reliable information and remedies, but cannot replace building control. Disaster-management institutions can identify vulnerability, but ordinary regulators must prevent it.

The governing principle is continuity. Accountability must connect design choices to construction, completion to lawful occupation, and occupation to maintenance and alteration. Enforcement must come early enough to prevent innocent residents from inheriting both danger and the cost of correction. When the law makes responsibility traceable and information durable, certification can support trust, valuation and safe urban development. Without those conditions, it remains an administrative symbol whose apparent certainty conceals institutional risk.
