



VARANASI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FORTNIGHTLY NEWSLETTER

10th December '2024



Simplified Map Approval Process at VDA: No NOC Required from Acquisition Section/Tehsil

To streamline the map approval process, Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) has eliminated the need for No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the Acquisition/Sealing Section or Tehsil. This change, initiated by Vice Chairman Pulkit Garg, will significantly reduce delays and simplify procedures for applicants.

Key Updates:

- **Ownership Verification:** The Under Engineer will now handle land ownership checks. The application will require additional clearance from the Land Acquisition/Sealing Section only in cases involving potential government or pond land.



- **Architect Independence:** Applicants may hire any registered architect listed on the VDA website; Zone Offices will no longer recommend architects.

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** Signboards will be installed to guide visitors to Zone Offices, ensuring easy access.

A workshop on 30.11.2024 provided training and information to zonal officers and engineers about the updated system. Vice Chairman Garg emphasised transparency and efficiency, aiming to minimise public inconvenience while strictly adhering to regulations.

Senior officials, including Secretary Ved Prakash Mishra and Additional Secretary Gudakesh Sharma, pledged to implement these measures effectively.



Vice Chairman Inspects Central Jail Road Development Project



On 06.12.2024, the Vice Chairman of Varanasi Development Authority inspected the ongoing project for enhancing Central Jail Road under the **“Enhancing Urban Interaction through Placemaking, Landscaping, and Pedestrianization”** initiative.

The project includes the construction of an RCC duct for power lines, footpaths, parking, vending areas, seating zones, and landscaping. The Vice Chairman directed the contractor to increase the workforce and ensure high-quality work within the stipulated timeline. The work aims to improve the pedestrian experience and urban aesthetics while laying underground electricity and OAFC lines. Urban planners and contractors were present during the inspection.



Varanasi Development Authority Initiates Statewide Redevelopment Policy

On the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) initiative, Uttar Pradesh is set to implement a comprehensive redevelopment policy to address the state's ageing and dilapidated residential and commercial structures. The draft policy, prepared by VDA, aims to optimise land use and upgrade urban infrastructure. Following its submission and presentation, the state government formed a committee chaired by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Planning, which convened its first meeting on 06.12.2024.

Key Highlights of the Redevelopment Policy:

- **Maximized Utilization:** Redevelop old and deteriorated structures using full Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and modern standards.
- **Enhanced Facilities:** Improve basic amenities, public utilities, and housing for low-income groups.
- **Alternative Arrangements:** Ensure temporary housing for residents during redevelopment.
- **Flexible Execution:** Enable redevelopment through government departments, societies, or private builders.
- **Incentives:** Offer benefits to encourage redevelopment, especially for properties with joint land ownership.



- **Economic Boost:** Align with Uttar Pradesh's vision for a \$1 trillion economy. The policy is expected to provide modern housing, create new business opportunities, and elevate urban standards across the state.



VDA Reviews Enforcement via Geotrics Software

On 07.12.2024, VDA Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg reviewed the identification and actions against unauthorized constructions in the Varanasi Zone using Enforcement Geotrics Software. The tool has enabled precise tracking of large-scale constructions, leading to significant enforcement actions across zones.

Key Actions Taken:

Zone 1 (Shivpur & Sikraul):

- 17 constructions surveyed
- 9 had approved maps.
- 6 unauthorized constructions were stopped, and notices issued.
- Action initiated for police intervention.

Zone 2 (Sarnath, Adampur & Jaitpura):

- 9 constructions surveyed.
- 3 had approved maps.
- 5 unauthorized constructions stopped; 1 sealed.
- Notices and police letters issued.

Zone 3 (Dashashwamedh, Chetganj, Chowk & Kotwali):

- 7 constructions surveyed.
- All were unauthorized.
- Construction halted, notices issued, and police informed.
- Clarification sought from field staff for oversight.

Zone 4 (Nagwan & Bhelupur):

- 5 constructions surveyed.
- All were unauthorized.
- 3 buildings sealed, notices and police letters issued.
- Departmental action recommended for staff negligence.



Future Directions:

- On-Site Inspections: Teams directed to survey identified sites larger than 500 sq. meters across all zones within a week.
- Satellite Data Analysis: Geo Tricks to analyze new constructions along National Highways 07 and 19.

This meeting, attended by VDA Secretary Ved Prakash Mishra and other senior officials, reflects VDA's commitment to maintaining compliance and urban planning standards.



VDA Reviews Map Submission Progress in Map Day Camp

A meeting chaired by VDA Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg reviewed the submission of maps and settlement fee collection during the October Map Day Camp.

Key Zone-Wise Performance:

Zone-1:

- Fee Collected: ₹55,10,481
- Maps Approved: 18

Zone-2:

- Fee Collected: ₹2,42,23,893
- Maps Approved: 18

Zone-3:

- Fee Collected: ₹70,96,890
- Maps Approved: 16

Zone-4:

- Fee Collected: ₹1,34,83,462
- Maps Approved: 12

Zone-5:

- Fee Collected: ₹48,29,115
- Maps Approved: 5



Recognition and Directives:

- **Acknowledgements:** Zonal Officers and Engineers from Zones 1 and 2 were awarded certificates for maximum maps approved and settlement fees collected.

Instructions Issued:

- Zonal officers and junior engineers must maximize map approvals and fee collection.
- Supervisors to be held accountable for illegal constructions in their respective areas.
- Town Planner Prabhat Kumar and all zone teams were tasked to enhance their focus on timely map approvals and enforcement.

This initiative highlights VDA's ongoing efforts to streamline map approval processes and enforce compliance effectively.



Notice Issued to ISWHC for Irregularities in Girja Devi Cultural Complex Operations

On 06.12.2024, Vice Chairman of Varanasi Development Authority (VDA), Shri Pulkit Garg, conducted a review of the Girja Devi Cultural Complex operations managed by ISWHC. Based on findings from a terrestrial and archival survey conducted by Additional Secretary and MD, Dr. Gudakesh Sharma, several irregularities were identified. Consequently, the Vice Chairman directed that a notice be issued to ISWHC with the following key concerns:



1. Incomplete Record Maintenance

- ISWHC failed to lawfully maintain booking and operational records.
- Instructions were given to rectify this immediately, with notices issued to ensure compliance.

2. Delayed Payments

- ISWHC has not been making timely payments to VDA as per the contract.
- Penalty interest was imposed, and the firm was directed to deposit the due amount promptly.

3. Insufficient CCTV and Fire Safety Equipment

- A lack of adequate CCTV cameras and deficiencies in fire safety systems (e.g., hydrants, sprinklers) were noted.
- ISWHC was instructed to address these lapses immediately and ensure compliance with fire safety standards.

4. Manpower and Equipment Shortages

- Deficiencies in the required manpower and equipment for the complex's efficient operation were identified.
- The firm must deploy the contracted manpower and equipment without delay.

5. Venue Maintenance Issues

- Breakages and lack of beautification in the halls and entrances were observed.
- Immediate repairs and maintenance were ordered to restore the venue to an attractive state.

6. Insufficient Publicity

- Lack of proper promotion led to fewer bookings than expected.
- The firm was directed to improve its marketing efforts to boost package visibility and bookings.

The Vice Chairman expressed dissatisfaction with ISWHC's overall performance and warned that failure to address these issues could lead to contract cancellation. The firm has issued a notice requiring quality improvements and adherence to contract terms.

This action underscores VDA's commitment to maintaining high operational standards and efficiently managing public resources.



VDA Holds November Review Meeting for Zone-3, Zone-4, and Zone-5

On 02/12/2024, a review meeting chaired by Secretary Dr. Ved Prakash Mishra was held at the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) auditorium to evaluate key metrics for November. Topics included mitigation map approvals, fee recovery, enforcement action on rejected maps, and complaint resolution.

Key Outcomes:

Zone-3:

- 31 mitigation maps approved
- ₹82,65,692 collected in fees

Zone-4:

- 11 mitigation maps approved
- ₹43,77,506 collected in fees

Zone-5:

- 9 mitigation maps approved
- ₹24,93,531 collected in fees

Secretary's Directives:

1. Petrol Pump Survey: Zonal Officers must survey all petrol pumps in their areas. Action should be taken under relevant laws for pumps without approved maps.
2. Illegal Plots: Each zone must identify and demolish 10 illegal plots in December.
3. Mitigation Maps: Increase filing of mitigation maps for unauthorized constructions.
4. Complaint Resolution:
 - Visit sites, take photos, and consult complainants.
 - Address grievances as per rules with evidence-based actions.



Dr. Mishra emphasized achieving the pending November targets by the end of December and expressed dissatisfaction with the disposal of IGRS portal complaints.

The meeting was attended by Joint Secretary Parmanand Yadav, Zone-3 Officer Saurabh Dev Prajapati, Zone-4 Officer Pramod Kumar Tiwari, Zone-5 Officer Shri Prakash Kumar, junior engineers, and other staff.



VDA Reviews Reconstruction Plan for Jawahar Market

On 28/11/2024, VDA Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg chaired a meeting to finalize the MoU terms with NBCC for reconstructing the Jawaharlal Nehru Commercial Complex, Englishia Line, Varanasi. Originally developed by VDA 40-45 years ago, the complex sits strategically near Cantt Railway Station, Bus Station, and Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, serving as a key commercial and administrative hub.

Reconstruction Highlights:

- **Multistorey Building:** New facilities will cater to businesses and pilgrims alike.
- **Strategic Location:** Situated near two proposed ropeway station buildings, boosting connectivity and accessibility.
- **EOI Process:** Redevelopment plans by M/s. E&Y LLP have been approved, with e-tenders to follow.



The reconstruction aims to enhance regional commerce and streamline passenger services. Additional Secretary Gudakesh Sharma, NBCC GM Anil Kumar Yadav, VDA Superintending Engineer Ajay Pawar, and the City Planner participated in the review.



New Simplified System for Repair and Reconstruction Near Ganga

The Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) has streamlined the process for applications regarding the repair/reconstruction of private buildings within 200 meters of the Ganga River. Announced by Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg on 27/11/2024, the changes aim to reduce delays and improve transparency.

Key Changes:

- **Direct Submission to Zonal Offices:** Applications can now be submitted directly to zonal offices or the VDA helpdesk, with immediate transfer to zonal offices for processing.
- **Ownership Verification:** Zonal sub-engineers will confirm ownership based on submitted records, limiting referrals to other sections.
- **Time-Bound Disposal:** Applications must be processed within 30 days, with responsibility placed on Zonal Officers.
- **Site Inspections:** Sub-engineers and Zonal Officers will verify physical details like setbacks, floor plans, and elevations on-site.

Application Guidelines:

- **New Certificate Requirement:** Applicants must submit a certificate confirming the exclusion of municipal land.

Sanctioned Applications:

- 23 applications were approved in FY 2023-24 and 19 in FY 2024-25.



No Prior Permission Required For:

- Cement plastering, floor reconstruction, painting, septic tanks, solar structures, and sewer repairs.

Permission Required:

- Wall reconstruction, full rebuilding, parapet construction, internal floor area changes.

This revamped system aims to facilitate smoother processing and maintain compliance, ensuring balanced development near the sacred river.



VDA Inspects Lawn/Marriage Hall for Compliance

On 27/11/2024, Varanasi Development Authority Vice Chairman Pulkit Garg conducted a site inspection for a mitigation map submitted by Mr. Abdul Kalam and Mr. Nizam Ahmed for a lawn/marriage hall at Banjara Square (C.19/15-A-1-KA RG 648, Mauza Habibpura, Ward-Chetganj).

The site inspection focused on:

- Construction Compliance: Checking adherence to the standards in the submitted mitigation map.
- Infrastructure Facilities: Verifying access roads, rainwater harvesting, and infrastructure availability.
- Parking: The map showed provision for 56 four-wheelers; however, the site lacked adequate parking.



Following the findings, the Vice Chairman directed the Regional Zonal Officer to issue a legal notice to the operators and ordered immediate compliance with parking standards. The zonal officer, junior engineer, and the applicant were present during the inspection



VDA Inspects Development Work at Sudhipur

On 27/11/2024, Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) Vice Chairman Pulkit Garg inspected the development work in the approved layout map by Rudra Real Tax Private Limited in Mauza Sudhipur, Pargana Shivpur, under Arazi numbers 218, 219, 220, 221, and 251 in Ward Shivpur.

The inspection focused on verifying the availability and quality of:

- Roads
- Electricity supply and transformers
- Rainwater harvesting systems
- Sewerage and water supply
- Streetlights and other basic amenities



A total of 14 plots were approved and developed at the site. Assistant Engineer Ramchandra and Rudra Real Tax Private Limited representatives were present during the inspection.



Geotrics software will catch illegal constructions and will identify illegal constructions in an area of 200 sq.km from satellite images.

The Varanasi Development Authority VDA has started using state-of-the-art Geotrics software to identify and monitor illegal constructions in the city. Through this software, illegal constructions will be identified in a 200 sq km area of the city with the help of satellite images. A meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg in the Authority's auditorium on 28th November 2024. In this, experts trained the zonal officers and junior engineers about the new technology in the development planned by the technical leader of the software Advanced Satellite Transformation Software. He explained in detail how the software works and its capabilities. The software will not



only be used to identify illegal construction but also give information on where new plotting has occurred in the city. Incorporating this technology will give a new direction to town planning in Varanasi. Timely information of construction through Geotrics software will prevent illegal construction. Digital mapping will create a digital map of the entire city, increasing town planning accuracy. The plotting will be monitored. Information on new plotting areas will enable the Authority to prepare planned development plans. It plays an important role in future planning. Better data will be available for land use and housing schemes. The launch of Geotrics software is a new town planning initiative in Varanasi. This will not only control illegal construction but also facilitate planned city development. Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg described it as a major step towards the city's development. The Chairman said that according to the information from the new technology, the zonal will go to the spot, take photos, and upload them. The training session was attended by Joint Secretary of the Authority Parmanand Yadav, Dinesh Singh of the IT Section, and other zonal officers and sub-engineers.



A weekly review meeting regarding settlement of mitigation maps related to Zone-3, Zone-4 and Zone-5 was held under the chairmanship of the Secretary of VDA.

On 20/11/2024, a weekly review meeting was held in the auditorium of Varanasi Development Authority under the chairmanship of Secretary Dr. Ved Prakash Mishra regarding settlement of mitigation maps, arrears and deposits, complaint settlement, enforcement action etc. related to Zone-3, Zone-4, Zone-5. In which instructions were given to stop the construction work going on in sealed buildings, regarding vacating the basement, demolition of illegal plotting and filing a case, to investigate illegal petrol pumps and to run a campaign for their map approval and to file a large number of mitigation maps in relation to the illegal constructions taking place in the area. In the week under review, 6 maps were approved in Zone-3, 3 in Zone-4, 2 in Zone-5 respectively in relation to the mitigation map. In the head of deposited mitigation fee, Rs 8 lakh 19 thousand 221 has been deposited in Zone-3, Rs 9 lakh 75 thousand 338 has been deposited in Zone-4 and Rs 17 lakh 46 thousand 664 in Zone-5. Rs. has been deposited in the Authority fund. Expressing displeasure, the Secretary directed to withhold the November salary of Zonal and JE of all three zones and issue show cause notice to them. After surveying all petrol pumps in their respective areas, if there is no approved map then effective action should be taken under the relevant section and the complaints should be resolved in a systematic and qualitative manner. During the meeting, Officer (Zone-3) Saurabh Dev Prajapati, Zonal Officer (Zone-4) Pramod Kumar Tiwari, Zonal Officer (Zone-5) Shri Prakash Kumar, Junior Engineer (Zone-4) R.K. Singh, (Zone-5) P.N. Dubey were present.





VDA Vice Chairman Inspects Sports Complex and Lalpur Housing Scheme

On 26/11/2024, Vice Chairman of Varanasi Development Authority (VDA), Pulkit Garg, conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Sports Complex in the Lalpur Housing Scheme.

The inspection included:

- Synthetic Hockey Ground: Assessment of the new turf approved for restoration, with a focus on promoting sports activities and ensuring project quality.
- Drainage System: Review of the KC drain and RCC deep drain being developed to resolve water drainage issues in the area.
- Park Development: Inspection of the AM to PM Park in Lalpur Residential Scheme Block-C, featuring modern amenities like a badminton court, yoga area, children's play area, amphitheater, walkway, and skating area.
- Jagran Park: On the request of Lalpur Kalyan Samiti, instructions were issued to shift the LT electricity line.
- Interlocking Work: Evaluation of the parking area interlocking in front of shops in Phase 2 of the Lalpur Awasiya Yojana.



The Vice Chairman emphasized timely completion and announced that the ongoing projects would soon be inaugurated. Executive Engineer Arvind Sharma and Assistant Engineer Shivaji Mishra accompanied him during the inspection.



VDA Additional Secretary Reviews Pending Mitigation Maps for Zone-1 and Zone-2

On 22/11/2024, the Additional Secretary of Varanasi Development Authority (VDA), Dr. Gudakesh Sharma, conducted a review meeting focusing on the pending mitigation maps for Zone-1 and Zone-2. Key highlights include:

Zone-1:

- ₹3,26,197 deposited as compounding fees (10-16 November 2024).
- Total for FY 2024-25: ₹4,98,19,357 deposited.
- Outstanding amount: ₹1,36,64,250 from 51 defaulters.

Zone-2:

- ₹5,43,974 deposited as compounding fees (10-16 November 2024).
- Total for FY 2024-25: ₹6,20,97,101 deposited.
- Outstanding amount: ₹2,74,86,556 from 86 defaulters.



Directives Issued:

1. Early Disposal: Mitigation maps to be processed promptly.
2. Fee Recovery: Field staff and junior engineers must ensure full fee recovery within 15 days.
3. Enforcement Actions: Take strict measures, including sealing and legal action, against defaulters.
4. Basement Parking: Ensure cleared and compliant parking facilities in sealed cases.
5. Public Complaints: Address grievances within one week with proper on-site inspection and documentation.
6. Illegal Developments: Identify and act on unauthorized constructions and illegal plotting.

Negligence in duties will result in strict action against responsible officers or employees. The meeting was attended by Zone-1 Officer Singh Gaurav Jaiprakash, Zone-2 Officer Sanjeev Kumar, junior engineers, clerks, and field personnel from both zones.



World Bank and ADB Team Lauds Varanasi Development Projects

On 19/11/2024, a joint mission team from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Town and Country Planning Organization (TCPO) conducted a two-day review of Varanasi's ongoing redevelopment projects. VDA Vice Chairman Pulkit Garg led the inspection of the key sites, including the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, Dashashwamedh Plaza, facade improvements from Godaulia to Dashashwamedh Ghat, and the Man Singh Observatory.

The team praised the quality and pace of work, highlighting the projects as transformative for the local environment and Varanasi's global cultural and economic stature. The redevelopment aligns with India's 2024 Budget goal of establishing growth centres for creative urban development.



The team described Varanasi's model as an inspiration for other cities and emphasised how these projects preserve heritage while modernising infrastructure. Notable attendees included Srinivas Sampath (World Bank), Ramola Singru (ADB), and Monis Khan (TCPO). The visit concluded with a vote of thanks and an exchange of mementoes.



Banarasgiri – Celebrating Streets' Brings Vibrancy to Cantonment

On 10th Nov'24, the Cantonment Board Varanasi and Varanasi Development Authority hosted "Banarasgiri – Celebrating Streets" at Nehru Park and Nehru Park Circle. The event, aimed at promoting health, well-being, and community spirit, drew over 1,000 participants from diverse backgrounds, including students, professionals, and local residents.





Seven Junior Engineers Join VDA

On 20.11.2024, seven junior engineers joined the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) after completing training on VDA operations and regulations. Vice Chairman Shri Pulkit Garg awarded certificates to Ms. Priya Agrahari and Ms. Vartika Dubey for top performance during their evaluation. The engineers have been assigned across various zones, including Sikraul, Sarnath, Kotwali, Chowk, Bhelupur, Nagwa, and Mughalsarai wards. The Vice Chairman expressed confidence in their contributions to VDA's development goals.



VDA Cracks Down on Illegal Constructions and Plotting

The Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) has intensified its actions against unauthorized constructions and illegal plotting across various zones. Here's a roundup of recent enforcement actions:

Zone-4: Illegal Construction Sealed

On 09.12.2024, Mayank Bhargav's unauthorized third-floor construction and additional work at a building in Kamchha, Bhelupur, was sealed under the UP Town Planning and Development Act, 1973. The structure was handed over to the Bhelupur Police for monitoring.

Zone-1: Unauthorized Basement Sealed

On 06.12.2024, Farzana Shabnam's illegal basement construction and setback violations in Khajuri (Azad Nagar Colony) were sealed. Despite earlier notices, unauthorized work persisted, prompting enforcement under Section 28(a) of the Act.



Zone-5: Illegal Plotting Demolished

On 06.12.2024, VDA demolished unauthorized plotting spanning 11 bighas across Hridaypur, Ramnagar. Multiple unknown plotters had engaged in illegal development, which was removed with police assistance.



Zone-3: Illegal Plotting Cleared

On 04.12.2024, unauthorized plotting in Ganjari, Dashaswamedh, led by Ajit Singh, was demolished. The development covered approximately 6 bighas and was cleared with enforcement and police support.

The Vice Chairman of VDA, Shri Pulkit Garg, has reiterated the importance of obtaining necessary approvals before initiating any construction or plotting. Strict actions, including sealing, demolition, and legal proceedings, will continue to be enforced against violators.

IMPORTANT ADVISORY: Varanasi Development Authority VDA urges all the citizens of Varanasi to refrain from buying or selling properties with illegal constructions or plotting. All citizens are also advised to secure mandatory map approvals before any construction activity to avoid engaging in illegal construction practices.

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