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Path to progress



Construction of the road in progress near Thakdari in Rajarhat from where it starts on the Sector V side. Photos by Mayukh Sengupta



NDITA chief Debashis Sen and engineers on a land survey on Monday at the crossing where the proposed road will meet Basanti Highway



After the success stories of Sector V and New Town, the government has set its eyes on another locality not too far from us. This time it will be Bantala, behind the bheris of Sector V, and it will be called Sector VI.

The announcement to develop the area was made last year but now work is about to start. At a recent event held at Sector V, minister for urban development and municipal affairs Pritish Hakim spoke about the plans. "We are working on a new road that will connect Sector V's Ring Road to Basanti Highway and Sector VI. The road will pass through Bantala Bazar leading directly to the Leather Complex," said Hakim, who is also the chairman of Sector VI.

The development, he said, would facilitate business in the region. "It is our dream to bring the youth who had left in search of better opportunities back to Calcutta. And it will happen soon," said Hakim.

The road from Sector V to VI is

Bantala is set to be modernised as Sector VI, an industrial township. **SHOWLI CHAKRABORTY** reports on a road being built to connect it with Sector V

being built by Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority (NDITA) and its chairman, Debashis Sen, said IT would be frontrunner in the region. "The area has been renamed Sector VI by the chief minister Mamata Banerjee. Sector V stands for IT and business development and we want Sector VI to be associated with job opportunities, business development and revenue earners too," said Sen.

Township in the making

As the crow flies, Sector VI is not that far off from Sector V. It's just divided by bheris. But the perception is that it's at the back of beyond. "When we tell friends that our office is at Bantala, they joke that we're working 'on-site', a term used when employees go out of town or country to the client's location," says Smaran

Swaroop Mishra, who works at the Cognizant Technology Solutions campus at Bantala.

But Mishra, who is actually on-site in Hong Kong at the moment, was delighted on getting the news from *The Telegraph Salt Lake*. "I'm glad they're starting with connectivity. It used to take me an hour by car to reach office from my BD Block home if I took the EM Bypass. But that road had no divider and was accident-prone," he says. So the other option was driving up to Uniworld City in New Town and taking a longer route through the rural belt.

"If more industries come up there we will have more food and entertainment options too. As of now even pizzas don't get delivered there. I also hope they do something about the awful smell emitting from the tanneries and garbage dumps. I got

sick the first time I took the bus to our office there," says Mishra.

The authorities are considering most of these factors. Sector VI is being developed by the Sector VI Industrial Township Authority in Bantala, much on the lines of NDITA that looks after Sector V of Salt Lake. Both are independent bodies as per the Municipalities Act and Sector VI will follow the NDITA model.

The government is also set to allow relaxation to industrialists under Section 14Y of the Land Ceiling Act in the township projects. This could mean cheaper rates for the land. One-fourth of the land in the new townships will be reserved for projects to benefit the economically-weaker sections too.

At present, many locals of the area are fishermen dependent on the bheris between Sector V and VI. The

area also has farmlands and dump yards (including Dhapt). Most houses are huts, made of clay and haystacks.

"Four mouzas have been incorporated in the township — Karaidanga, Bhatipota, Gangapur and Andulguri. These were previously under the jurisdiction of gram panchayats but will now be looked after by the Sector VI Industrial Township Authority," said Md Ghulam Nabl Ansari, Project Director, Sector VI.

Staff deputed by Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA) are now visiting the area daily to assess the situation and determine steps. "We will provide municipal facilities to start with. Things like road, electricity, infrastructure development, slum development, house drainage/sewage, water supply etc are being surveyed," said Ansari. "Thereafter funds will be sanctioned to begin work. We are not encroaching upon anyone's land."

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Quiz time

Watch Mir toss posers at familiar faces at EZCC tomorrow evening

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