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Rawalpindi's Battle Against Illegal Housing Schemes: RDA Calls for Tougher Enforcement

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The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has renewed its efforts to stop the expansion of illegal housing schemes that continue to disrupt the city's planned development. Unapproved private schemes are reportedly selling plots and constructing buildings without authorization, raising concerns over urban disorder and environmental degradation.

RDA Director General Kinza Murtaza recently addressed the matter in a formal letter to the Director General of the Punjab Housing and Town Planning Agency (PHATA). The letter emphasized that several unauthorized schemes are disregarding Rawalpindi's Master Plan and violating regulations within the Site Development Zone. Murtaza criticized PHATA for allegedly issuing permits without conducting proper legal reviews, warning that such

practices undermine planning authority and pose a threat to regional environmental stability.

To curb these violations, the RDA has requested the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) to enforce stricter actions, such as imposing fines, serving legal notices, and lodging First Information Reports (FIRs) against those responsible. The agency has also sought help from the Cyber Crime Wing to block digital marketing of unauthorized plots and prevent online property transactions that fall outside official monitoring.

Well-known housing societies, including Blue World City and Faisal Town Phase 2, have been named for continuing construction despite lacking the necessary approvals. These projects, according to the RDA, violate planning laws and could negatively impact Rawalpindi's water resources and green zones.

Developers are reportedly using regulatory gaps to bypass RDA oversight, with some withdrawing applications from the RDA to instead seek approval from PHATA. The RDA asserts that PHATA does not have legal jurisdiction over Rawalpindi Tehsil, and any such approvals are considered invalid under current planning laws.

Mounting public complaints have increased pressure on the RDA to act. Citizens have reported misleading promotional campaigns and unlawful plot sales that risk harming infrastructure and deceiving buyers. In response, the RDA is calling for coordinated enforcement to ensure that development follows legal frameworks.

By targeting these unapproved developments, the RDA aims to uphold Rawalpindi's urban planning standards and prevent unregulated expansion that could harm the city's future growth.