

JUSTIFICATION NOTE

The Parmarth Ganga Ghat was leased to Swami Shukdevanand Trust in 1964 by the Uttar Pradesh Van Bihag (Appendix 1_UP Shashan Van (Kha) Vibhag No 7147/XIV-B-362/64) for the construction of bathing Ghat, reading room and library.

Thereafter there was a request for renewal of land lease which we submitted along with regular follow ups (Appendices 6-10) but due to some reason there was no reply. Furthermore, the land lease was paid in full up to 2003 (Appendix 11).

However, as much of our work has always been in conjunction, cooperation and alignment with the Government, always dedicated to the welfare of society, with no discrimination, in selfless service and dedicated to the mass inspiration and connection of millions of pilgrims to the very essence of India. We have worked tirelessly to protect and preserve this space with the three-pronged objective:

1. **Interface for millions of devotees** to interact and connect with the sacred River Ganga, to perform sanskaras, meditation, japa and other spiritual practice, as well as provision of free and safe shelter, especially during the Kanwad Mela, the rainy season, summertime, etc
2. **Promotion of spiritual/wellness tourism** through periodic free Yoga Classes and the daily evening free and open to all Ganga Aarti.
3. **Preservation of our spiritual cultural and natural heritage** with large-scale and world-renowned events, conferences and summits at Parmarth Niketan that inspire people to take the touch and experience of the holy banks of Mother Ganga back with them and to be instruments of positive change in our world. It also motivates mass pledges and inspiring messages/calls to action for environmental conservation and climate action

The land when it was originally allotted was 2.3912 acres (Appendix 4) and in the early 1960s the River Ganga used to be more than 100 feet from the land, but over the years the waters of River Ganga have come closer to the land, allowing millions of pilgrims year round to experience the divinity and essence of Maa Ganga from this sacred space.

As this is the only space for a Ghat right in front of our Ashram and with direct connection with the Divine River and as the Ghat is already constructed here there is no possible alternative location. In turn till date the existing infrastructure has been able to effectively serve the purpose for which it was allotted whilst becoming a great asset to the state, the nation and to the world.

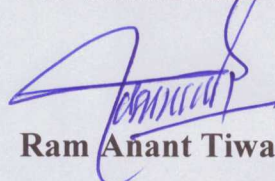
Just the evening, world renowned Ganga Aarti at Parmarth Niketan draws between hundreds and thousands of visitors each day from all cultures, all languages, all religions and all walks of life. The yagna, puja and Ganga Aarti that take place on the banks of Ganga are free for all. As it is open to all and free to all it serves as truly a divine gift to the residents and pilgrims of Rishikesh and all surrounding areas. Countless pilgrims and devotees come to bathe in the waters of Mother Ganga in the morning, meditate and perform their sadhana throughout the day and perform the Aarti in the evening.

Each evening the audiences of hundreds and thousands at the Ganga Aarti are also inspired to pledge, reflect and commit to protecting and preserving the sacred river, whilst creating a Swachh Bharat and Swachh World. Furthermore, countless many, especially those coming to India for the very first-time, leave feeling a great connection with India and a place they can truly call home.

Hence, we request for a 30-year lease extension. This extension will enable ongoing and continuing uplifting opportunities of service, inspiration, and connection to happen in this sacred and divine space through the selfless service, devotion, and care of the Swami Shukdevanand Trust as our continued contributions to the nation and to the welfare of all of humanity.

Please find enclosed the map of the Ghat duly signed by the concerned authorities (Appendix 12) herewith for your kind reference and perusal.

For Swami Shukdevanand Trust,



Ram Anant Tiwari

MANAGER

Parmarth Niketan

(Swami Shukdevanand Trust)

The early 1960s, the waters of Mother Ganga were hundreds of feet away from the Ghat. Every year a long pathway needed to be created in order to allow pilgrims and devotees to have direct contact with the River. These pictures are taken from what is today the middle of the river, but at the time of construction on the land it was filled with hundreds of feet of rocks and dirt (*see pictures below*).

