

Filmmaker seeks 250acre land to develop Noida Film City Phase 1

Deadline For Global Tenders Ends On Mar 31

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Noida: Veteran filmmaker KC Bokadia has sought 250 acres of land in the proposed Film City in Noida for developing the first phase of the project even as senior government officials are meeting in Lucknow on April 4 to discuss a way forward for the ambitious project, which is yet to find any applicants in its second round of global tenders. The last date for applications is March 31.

In a letter to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bokadia has sought the land and also promised to pay a daily fine of Rs 10 lakh if the project is delayed. Once land is allotted, he has proposed to start work on the ground in 90 days and complete it within a year.

But he has laid down some conditions. He has urged the government to consider his proposal in the 'super mega category' and allot land to his company directly. He has also offered to develop the project in phases and said no other company should be allotted land in the Film City for the next five years so that his firm can recover a part of the investment. Bokadia has sought concessions in the annual premium and urged the government to implement the project on a public-private partnership model. He has also asked for permission to let him sub-lease the land for setting up different production houses. "I met the chief minister and expressed my desire to set up a film city and school here. I plan to bring 8-10 producers, especially from the south Indian film industry, and form a company. Since my base is Chennai, I know several Tamil and Telugu producers. I am planning to invest Rs 500 crore in the project

initially. I expect a decision at the meeting scheduled for April 4," Bokadia told TOI.

So, the options before the government now are to either wait for at least three companies to show interest in the project by March 31, allot the project to the lone international studio that has shown interest (if it formally applies) or accept Bokadia's proposal. Bokadia visited the Film City site in Sector 21 and met Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority CEO Arun Vir Singh on Wednesday and Thursday to discuss the project. Conditions were relaxed in the second round to sweeten the business proposition for investors but bidders have not been drawn by it. The first global tender for the project, for which the CM has met members of the film fraternity on multiple occasions, was launched in November 2021. One company applied after the deadline was extended thrice. The bid evaluation committee cancelled that ap-

plication in July 2022 in the absence of a minimum of three applicants.

The government, subsequently, revised the project report and relaxed conditions after taking suggestions from investors and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). A fresh global tender was issued last October, with the government offering to increase the concession period from 40 to 60 years and allowing new entities like OTT platforms and VFX studios to set up offices. The deadline was extended from December 16 to March 31.

Officials said one international film studio has shown interest in the project, but is yet to submit any official request.

A change in the project's plan could be inevitable. Officials said the government could allot land directly to a company to build the Film City. YEIDA has set aside 1,000 acres near Noida International Airport for the project.