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UP unveils ambitious plan for industrial hub in Bundelkhand

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The Uttar Pradesh government is embarking on an ambitious initiative to establish new industrial, residential, and commercial townships in Bundelkhand, akin to the transformative development seen in Noida during the 1970s. The endeavour, led by the Yogi Adityanath government through the newly formed Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority (BIDA) headquartered in Jhansi, aims to rejuvenate the sparsely-populated region known for arid landscapes and a high number of job-seekers.

In its initial phase, the project will involve acquiring over 35,000 acres of land valued at more than Rs 60 billion across 33 revenue villages in the Jhansi district. The government plans to commence the land acquisition process soon and is set to attract private and public sector investments in the billions once the foundational infrastructure is established. While industrial development is the primary focus of BIDA, it also aligns with the state's broader goal of achieving a 1 trillion dollar economy.

A budget of Rs 80 billion has been allocated for land acquisition, with approximately Rs 50 billion dedicated to BIDA. The synergy with other significant projects, such as the Bundelkhand Expressway and UP Defence Corridor, will position BIDA as a major industrial hub in North India. Notably, the Jhansi node of the defence corridor has already allocated 1,000 hectares of land to defence manufacturing investors, with Bharat Dynamics leading the way in the production and testing of arms and ammunition.

The Bundelkhand region, spanning seven districts in UP and six in MP, covers nearly 69,000 square kilometres. Geographically, UP and MP contribute approximately 40% and 60% of Bundelkhand's population, with the UP region being more densely populated. The recent inaugural board meeting of BIDA, chaired by UP's additional chief secretary Manoj Kumar Singh, emphasised the immediate focus on land acquisition and the hiring of a global consultant to craft a master plan for industrial and commercial enclaves.

Parallely, the UP government is contemplating the development of new townships on the outskirts of major urban centres to alleviate congestion and provide affordable housing options. The comprehensive vision seeks to replicate the success story of Noida in transforming the landlocked state's economic landscape.