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Bawana and back, blame Khurana

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IN December, almost 10 to 15 industrialists used to begin work on their factories in Bawana every day. Only one or two do now. Why stay here when Madan Lal Khurana has said that 24 colonies will become industrial, they say.

The Delhi BJP chief's announcement has stymied efforts to shift industries out of the Capital as per the Supreme Court's orders. Chief Secretary Shailaja Chandra today held an urgent meeting to discuss the implication of the sudden drop in the number constructions at Bawana, said sources. The Delhi government has to go back to the

SC on this issue soon.

Several industrialists suddenly have no need to shift to Bawana as they own units in the 24 colonies. "The SC's pressure has gone down as the businessmen will now prefer to wait and watch rather than relocate immediately," said an official associated with developing Bawana.

Shailaja Chandra said: "I have been told that the enthusiasm shown by industrialists has suddenly died down. This is disappointing because almost five years of our effort will be wasted if relocation loses speed."

Khurana's plan also threatens to derail efforts to construct another industrial area which can accom-



modate about 11,000 factories outside Delhi. Buying land in the estate wouldn't make sense if you can run industries in the city, say businessmen.

The Supreme Court had ordered construction of 27,000 plots for industries but only 16,000 plots in

about 1,900 acres have been allotted in Bawana. "The government has notified the acquisition of 500 acres in Narela to accommodate more industries," said Rajni Kant Verma, MD, Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation.

A total of 10,000 industrialists have paid the entire amount (Rs 6 to Rs 7 lakh) for plots in Bawana but the rest of them are likely to delay payment after Khurana's announcement.

"The announcement has done irreversible damage to the relocation efforts," said an official. "It was only after serious persuasion and the SC's order that people started moving there. Now the move has been delayed by over a year."