

## Southwest prepares to have 17 economic zones

A Monitor Report

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Dhaka : The government is establishing 17 economic zones in southwestern districts to bring about an industrial revolution as part of efforts to accelerate economic growth of the country.

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) is pleased to have long-awaited road connectivity between Dhaka and the southwest region on June 25 following the inauguration of the Padma Bridge.

BEZA believes it will attract investment in the industrial sector and create jobs for thousands of people in the southwestern region, said Shaikh Yusuf Harun, executive chairman of the Beza.

The zones are part of the governmental goal of setting up 100 economic zones across the country, with a view to creating one crore jobs and exporting USD 40 billion worth of goods and services from the enclaves.

The Mongla Economic Zone (MEZ) is being developed on 205 acres of land near the Mongla Port and it has already constructed the administrative building, boundary walls, connecting bridge and roads, power sub-stations, and water lines.

Powerpack Economic Zone Ltd is developing the MEZ under the public-private partnership (PPP) model. A land-lease deal has been inked to set up three industrial units there.

Development of another economic zone on 105 acres of land near the MEZ is underway as well. A developer, appointed by the Indian government, is preparing

the economic enclave.

It is expected that the setting up of industries in the two economic zones in Mongla will begin soon.

BEZA plans to set up an ecotourism park on 1,546 acres of land near the Sundarbans in Bagerhat as well.

It has approved the proposal of setting up two economic zones in Shariatpur: one on 525 acres of land in Zajira upazila and another on 686 acres of land in Goshairhat upazila.

The agency has agreed in principle to build an economic zone on 1,125 acres of land in the Rajoir upazila in Madaripur.

The government has decided to set up an economic zone on 888 acres of land in the sadar upazila under Faridpur. Moreover, a feasibility study has already been carried out for another zone on 200 acres of land in Kotalipara of Gopalganj.

It has taken up a project to conduct the feasibility study for an economic zone in Khulna's Botiaghata. The governing body of the Beza has also chosen Terokhada upazila to set up a zone.

The work to perform the feasibility study to construct an economic zone in Sreepur upazila under Magura and another in Satkhira sadar upazila has been initiated.

The feasibility study for setting up an economic zone at Agailjhara in Barishal has been completed and BEZA has approved the proposal of developing an economic zone in Hizla of the district.

The Beza plans to develop an economic zone in Bhola sadar upazila. It has acquired 382 acres of land to set up a similar zone at Bheramara of Kushtia. The feasibility study is underway.

Moreover, another economic zone, located over 800 acres of land, would be set up in Dhaka's Nawabganj.