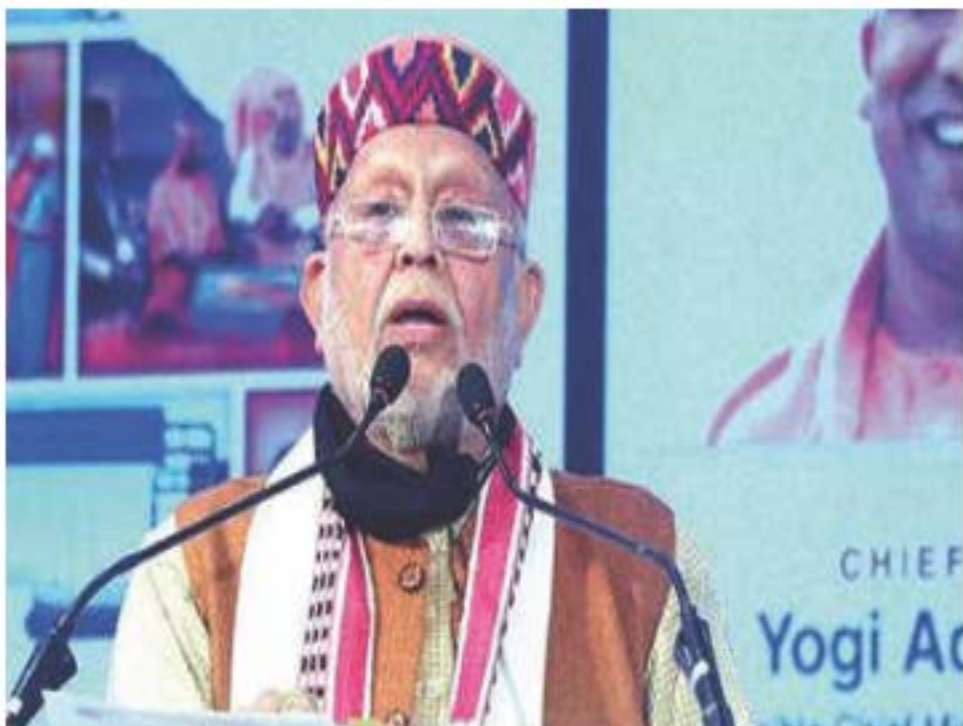


UP: Positive changes on various fronts since 2017, says Suresh Khanna

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LUCKNOW: Before 2017, UP was going down on every parameter, but after the Yogi Adityanath government came to power, the state witnessed massive improvement in law and order, financial discipline, development, and other various spheres, said Suresh Khanna, minister of finance, parliamentary affairs and medical education on Monday at the 'Destination Uttar Pradesh Conclave' organised by the Times of India in Lucknow. In the last five years, the public perception about UP has improved drastically, he said. "We maintained financial discipline despite the corona pandemic and our revenue collection has increased in the current financial year. In 2020-21, the revenue collection was 39.9%, while it was 48.5% till November this year, which is 8.5% more than last year," he said. There is a lot of discussion on inflation, but VAT on diesel and petrol in our state is much less than that in other states, including the Congress-ruled ones, he added.

"The prices of petroleum are governed by rates in the international market, still our government made enough arrangements to not let it affect people," Khanna said.

The prices of petrol and diesel are much higher in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh, he added. "Our government cut down unwarranted expenses. There was a system under which Income Tax on the salary of ministers was paid by the state government. This arrangement was in place since 1981 but was never discussed or opposed in the cabinet or Vidhan Sabha. We were surprised on coming to know about it and ended it," he said.

"As many as 67 treasuries were closed and 50 allowances were done away with, and all this helped us in maintaining fiscal discipline, he added. The government also stressed on generating employment in the state and organised 3,470 job fairs in which 5.28 lakh jobs were provided in the last five years, the minister said.