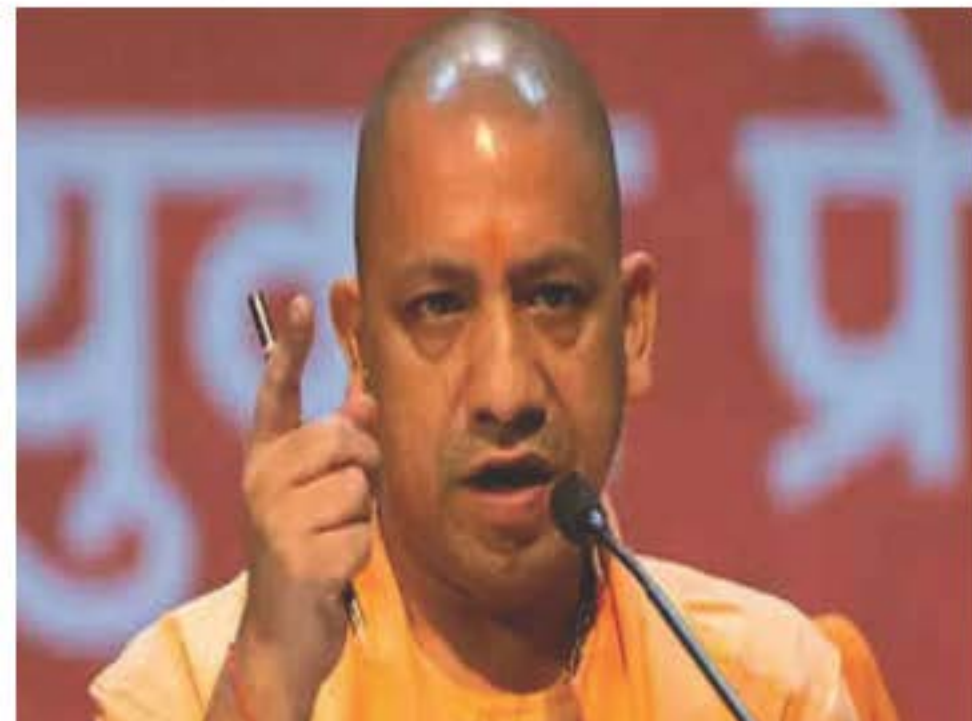


Govt's aim is to make Uttar Pradesh No. 1 economy in the country: CM Yogi Adityanath

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LUCKNOW: Earlier, development was for family, and not keeping the state in mind. Development meant person, family and if at all, was limited to caste. This cannot be the basis of sustainable development. We considered UP as one big family and will take it ahead as a USD 1 trillion economy, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath The Times of India Destination Uttar Pradesh Conclave on Monday. "Our task force is working on some sectors and our aim is to make UP into the number one economy in the country. We have moved from the sixth to the second position but we have to be number one. For this, some more work is needed and we need the blessings of the public for it. I am sure, if that happens then there will be no delay in establishing UP as a USD 1 trillion economy," the Chief Minister added.

Yogi said that the previous government had left the state with no funds and no bank was willing to lend to them. As a result, he had to ensure that there were sufficient resources with the state to be able to fulfil this election promise.

"Humare vipaksh ke dost khazana kuchh aise noch ke gaye thhe ki humare paas kuch nahin thha. In such a situation, how could we fulfil our promise to the farmers. I was not calling the cabinet but waiving off the debt was to be our first decision and we did not have the money. The principal secretary (finance) came to me and asked to be transferred to some other department," the CM said.

He added that when he sat with the official and discussed the expenditure under various heads, he was told that the previous government had set aside Rs 5,000 crore as pension for its cadre.

"I cancelled this. Then I was told that Rs 15,800 crore was for Purvanchal Expressway and I said not more than Rs 11,000 crore should be allocated for it. We went through several more projects and managed to free up Rs 25,000 crore like this. Then I called for the cabinet the next day and without any additional burden on the people, without taking loans or stopping any existing scheme, we cleared the most successful scheme of this government," he said.

He revealed that after this, bankers who were earlier not even taking his calls came up and said they wanted to invest in the Bundelkhand project. However, by then, the CM had decided that only budgetary funds would be used for projects and the government would not take loans.

Another problem he faced when he came to power, the CM said, was that of UP's image. When he decided to host an investors' summit in Lucknow in 2018, he claimed that officers told him that nobody wanted to invest in the state. Even PM Narendra Modi, he said, sounded amused. He asked Yogi how he was planning to host a successful summit with not even a year in power.

"I asked my team to do road shows. In the first, they got proposals of Rs 2,000 crore, in the second, Rs 3,000 crore and Rs 5,000 crore in the third. By the fourth one, even they were tired and I said I will go for the fifth. In this way, I attended the road show in Mumbai and we received proposals for Rs 2.5 lakh crore. Investors told me that they did not want to invest in UP but in the past six months, they had heard such good things about the state that they wanted to come and invest," he said.