

'Anyone willing to invest must think of UP first'

All set to host the third groundbreaking ceremony on June 3 to attract investments, UP cabinet minister for industries and infrastructure development Nand Kumar Gupta 'Nandi' tells Shailvee Sharda that while the world is looking towards India, eyes of India Inc are set on Uttar Pradesh.

UP as \$1 trillion economy – the target on board is clear and expectations are high and you have pledged to achieve it.

What is the strategy?

■ The power of the double-engine is with UP. The key barrier of law and order and perception has been dealt in an exemplary way. The big and scary names are languishing in jails and smaller players are surrendering on their own. The framework of scheme and proactive measures are firmly in place, while industry feedback-based reforms are in the pipeline to attract investors. UP is now the most sought-after destination for investment. The strategy is simple, anyone willing to invest must think of UP first... Don't let any willing investor go. Think how to make it happen.

A lot is happening in and around Noida. But the NCR district remains behind Gurgaon on several counts which you said irks you. What are you doing to change this?

■ Yes. We have compared Noida with other districts in the NCR. And Noida has a clear-cut advantage over other places. This means that there is an immense scope to turn the tables in our favour. Being a self-sustained entity, NOIDA or GNIDA can execute plans at a much faster pace. While I would not like to reveal much, but a reformation plan to make Gautam Budh Nagar a world-class city is underway.

To most, UP's development story

ends beyond Noida, Greater Noida. How would you counter this?

■ I would counter this by saying that the story doesn't end, but begins with these

two places. It is true that Gautam Budh Nagar is the crown of UP as far as investments are concerned, but over the past five years a lot has been done to attract investment in the parched Bundelkhand and lag-gard Purvanchal. The hard work put in will now be showing up.

What is the vision for Purvanchal and how would your department achieve it?

■ With Gorakhpur as the heart of Purvanchal, the state sees Purvanchal as the gateway to

eastern India. Distances have reduced because of better road and air connectivity. Additional incentives would be given to those willing to work in the region and Bundelkhand. Officials, who worked hard for Noida, Greater Noida and Lucknow, have been brought together to turn GIDA into Noida.

The UP investment policy is being revamped. What kinds of changes are on cards?

■ Feedback from investors in different sectors and our learning over the past five years have been put together to eliminate loopholes that existed in the previous draft. For example, in some cases, availing incentives and subsidies was impossible. The loose ends have been pulled and tightened. The state is now looking forward to developing industrial clusters along expressways and arrangements to attract investment in a systematic way are being made. Inputs from policy documents of

states like Telangana, Gujarat and even some foreign countries have also been taken. But the bottom line is that UP means business and 100% efforts the moment any investor shows interest.



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