

# Lulu Group to invest Rs 2,400 crore in malls in Prayagraj, Varanasi

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LUCKNOW: More cities in Uttar Pradesh are set to get an international shopping mall. The Lulu Group is planning to expand its retail business in the state within the next three years. Senior executives of the company, which operates a chain of hypermarkets, announced on Saturday that the group has plans to open a shopping mall in Prayagraj and Varanasi with total investments of Rs 2,400 crore. After that, the group has plans to expand its operations in the retail space in UP by covering Kanpur and Gorakhpur.

On Saturday, chief minister Yogi Adityanath is expected to inaugurate the group's first mall in Lucknow. Situated on Shaheed Path in Sushant Golf City, it will be the group's fifth mall in the country and the first one in north India.

General manager of the Lucknow mall Sameer Verma said, "An investment of about Rs 2,000 crore has been done in this mall. It is going to yield 5,000 jobs and provide employment to about 5,000 other individuals indirectly."

The spokesperson of the company said Lulu Group is mulling a proposal to seek government support for local sourcing of fruits and vegetables.

"We are interested in entering into an arrangement with a group of farmers. We will buy fruits, vegetables, grains as well as other food products from them after providing them training. We have been informed about the leading farmer producer organisations active in UP and will seek help of the government on this front," said the executive.

Lulu Group has already started work on setting up a food processing plant in Greater Noida.

To promote products manufactured by UP-based artisans and craftsman, an area will be demarcated on the ground floor of the mall. The group will showcase the patented ODOP products prominently.

"We will also showcase the popular ODOP products in our malls in south India and in the Gulf region," added the spokesperson.