

Seven striking features of Bundelkhand Expressway

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LUCKNOW: Set for launch on Saturday, the 296-km-long Bundelkhand Expressway will be the sixth e-way in Uttar Pradesh. To be dedicated to the people by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at an official ceremony in Orai, the expressway promises to change the fate of the people in the region infamous for its backwardness, poverty and migration.

Amid hectic preparations and final touches for the programme, TOI takes a look at some of its striking features. Read on.

Bundelkhand expressway map

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[Narendra Modi in traditional Bundeli style](#)

Elaborate preparations have been made for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jalaun on Saturday to dedicate to the nation the much-awaited 296km Bundelkhand Expressway. The programme will be held at Kaitheri toll plaza near Orai.

Fastest built expressway in the state

The Bundelkhand Expressway was made in record 28 months which makes it the fastest made expressway in the state. Compared to this, the Purvanchal and Agra-Lucknow expressways were made in 36 months. Officials pointed out that while the Purvanchal Expressway was made on time, the Agra-Lucknow was delayed by 14 months against the planned schedule. They said that the completion deadline was achieved despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Various districts along Bundelkhand Expressway are depicted through sand art at an installation in Jalaun

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Constructed at 12. 7% lesser cost than planned

Built at an estimated cost of Rs 14,849. 09 crore, the Bundelkhand Expressway has come up at a 12. 7% lesser cost than planned. The reduced cost has translated into a saving of over Rs 1,132 crore for the state ex-chequer. The credit for the savings goes to competitive bidding for the construction of the project. Officials said that 17 players had participated in the bidding for the construction of the expressway.

Will save water & promote greenery

Officials said that following recommendation of the groundwater department, arrangements for water conservation have been made along the entire length and breadth of the expressway. For this, rainwater har-

vesting pits have been built at 500 metres along the entire stretch of the expressway. The expressways will also promote greenery all along its way. Plantation of more than seven lakh saplings has been planned. Reviewing the progress of the expressway, chief minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to use plants that cut down pollution for the expressway. He has also stated that self-help group women should be engaged for the work for plantation. Instructions to use medicinal plants for the plantation have also been given. UPEIDA has already written to the state forest and environment department in this regard.

Safety intact

Officials pointed out that while on one hand, four public convenience complexes and fuel filling stations will come up soon to provide all necessary services for the commuters, arrangements for their safety have been made. Police patrolling, cattle catcher vehicles and advanced life support ambulances will remain deployed for the safety of expressway users. Also, efforts are on to make the Advanced Traffic Management System work to ensure that people drive safely.

Future expansion possible

Considering futuristic needs, the expressway may be expanded to six lanes. As of now, the expressway is four-lane, but in future, it may be expanded to six lanes. This is in addition to a service road of 3. 75-metre width which has been constructed on one side of the expressway in a staggered form to facilitate residents of the neighbouring villages. The overall structure passes through four railway overbridges and comprises 14 major bridges, six toll plazas, seven ramp plazas, 286 minor bridges, 19 flyovers and 224 underpasses.

Will serve as heartline of development

Two nodes of the UP-Defence Corridor are falling along the Bundelkhand Expressway and industry experts are of the view that in days to come, it will serve as the lifeline of business activity in the region. UPEIDA officials said that the starting point of the expressway is in Chitrakoot district where about 103 hectares of land has been identified for the defense corridor. In addition to this, efforts have begun for the construction of industrial corridors in Banda and Jalaun districts while the consultant agency for the industrial development along the expressway has been selected. It will also act as a catalyst for setting up of handloom industry, food processing units, storage plant, mandi and milk-based industries.

Boost tourism

Home to several interesting tourist attractions, Bundelkhand Expressway will work to boost tourism in the region. The government has already directed the state tourism department to curate a detailed plan for tourism development in the region. In the initial exercise conducted, a fully loaded package comprising caves, forts, eco-tourism and adventure sports opportunity has surfaced. In addition, the districts in Bundelkhand offer many options for genres such as history and heritage, religion, rural, adventure sports and eco-tourism. Some examples include Chitrakoot, where the Ram-Lakshman-Sita trio spent 11. 5 years of their exile and Lalitpur caves which are also known as mini Ellora.