

## Making land available at concessional rates to set up industries, says UP minister

By HT Correspondent

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UP industrial development minister Nand Gopal Gupta (HT Photo)

LUCKNOW The UP government, which made a record of sorts claiming to attract investments of ₹37 lakh crore at the UP Global Investors' Summit-2023, is now preparing to implement these investment proposals. State industrial development minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' speaks to HT about the preparations and the issues that are being taken care of ahead of 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Excerpts:

**Q** When will the ground-breaking ceremony be organised?

**A** We propose to hold the ground-breaking ceremony in the next three to four months, around Diwali. Preparations are on to implement proposals of ₹10 lakh crore. Of these, proposals of ₹4.68 lakh crore are ready.

**Q** Do you have land to give to the industry?

**A** There is no problem. We have been able to allot land to investors as and when there is a demand. We have already allotted land to many.

**Q** What about the bottlenecks?

**A** We are in the process of removing the bottlenecks. The state government has recently appointed a nodal officer for the purpose of identification of land of industrial units that are shut, and how the same land could be used to set up new industrial units. Anil Sagar (special secretary, Infrastructure and industrial development department) is the nodal officer. There are cases wherein a small patch of land belonging to scheduled caste/scheduled tribe falls between the patch of land identified for industry. We are working to find a solution to this. Such land will be bought, and alternate land will be provided to the owners to ensure that the patch of land earmarked for industry is free.

**Q** What about the cost of land?

**A** We are making land available to the industry at concessional rates. The conversion cost and the development charges have to be brought down. As of now, about ₹80 lakh is added as charges to land valuing ₹1 crore. This should be brought down to 1% to 2% of the land cost.

**Q** What about expressways?

**A** Uttar Pradesh has 37.7% of all the expressways of the country. Seven new expressways, including the Ganga Expressway from Prayagraj to Meerut, are coming up. We hope Ganga Expressway will be completed before 2025 Mahakumbh in Prayagraj. After completion of the new expressways, UP's share will be 50% of the total expressways in the country.

**Q** The Samajwadi Party appears to be your main target on social media?

**A** I am not targeting the Samajwadi Party alone on social media. I also attack other parties including the BSP. I read each and every word of my posts...at times, the content is edited 10 to 20 times. I post the content or re-tweet the tweets after weighing the pros and cons.

**Q** Your Tweets are witty. Do you compose them or your team?

**A** Ask my team (minister gestures towards his media consultant standing behind him). Sir composes all tweets (replies the media consultant).

**Q** Your take on the opposition joining hands?

**A** 'INDIA' has no future. Everybody who loves India favours the BJP's policies. You can conduct a survey of sorts, even in your family, and you will get the answer.

**Q** Where will the BSP go?

**A** BSP chief Mayawati's greed for money is leading to the downfall of her party.

**Q** Your take on 2024 Lok Sabha elections?

**A** The Lok Sabha elections in 2024 will be fought on the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has taken development to the grassroots level, and this will help the BJP in Uttar Pradesh. The double engine government (Modi and Yogi governments) has made BJP's journey in 2024 Lok Sabha elections easier.

**Q** Are you mobilising traders?

**A** I am fulfilling the responsibility the party has given me. There are 7,623 bazars in UP, and we have appointed bazar pramukh for every such market.

**Q** What is the government doing to address the GST issues?

**A** GST issues have been resolved by and large, but there is a need for improvement. We have addressed around 80% to 85% issues related to GST. Traders come to me with their issues (related to GST). I discuss them with Suresh Khanna (finance minister, U.P. government) as he is a member of the GST Council. GST is a subject of the central government and all issues related with it could only be addressed at the GST council's meeting. So, it will take some time to address them.

**Q** Are the organisations of traders still active?

**A** We have not shut shops of other leaders of traders. We are doing our job better than others.

**Q** Do you still feel a threat to your life after the July 12, 2010, incident in which you were injured in a bomb attack in Prayagraj?

**A** In the Yogi government, criminals need to fear. In this government, there is no compromise with the law and order situation. But if you ask me on the personal front, I have a life threat. In that incident (bomb attack), 16 people were arrested and trial is going on. Under the Samajwadi Party government, a police officer (then CO Rajesh Sahani) had to cling on to the bonnet of a jeep driven by SP workers (May 31, 2006).