

Andhra tops states' ease of biz rankings

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New Delhi: Andhra Pradesh topped the list of states in the ease of doing business rankings 2019 followed by Uttar Pradesh and Telangana, a report released on Saturday showed.

Finance minister Nirmla Sitharaman released the report which ranks states based on 180 reform points covering 12 business regulatory areas such as access to information, single window system, labour, environment among others.

Gujarat was among the top 10 states while West Bengal was ahead at the ninth spot. Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh took the fifth and sixth places while Madhya Pradesh was placed at number four. Delhi bagged the top spot among Union territories. Assam was among the top performers among north-

DELHI UP GUJ FALLS

► **Andhra** tops states' ease of doing business rankings 2019, repeating its previous year's performance

► **UP** moves up from No.12 to No.2. **Delhi** up from No.23 to No.12, also is the top

► **Bengal** (9) ahead of **Gujarat** (10), which falls 5 ranks from 2018. **Maha** unchanged at 13

eastern states. The industrially important state of Maharashtra was ranked 13th in the list for 2019, retaining the same spot for the second successive year. Uttar Pradesh has made a strong comeback rising to the second position in 2019 from 12th place in 2018.

Himachal Pradesh moved up to the seventh place in 2019 from 16 in 2018. In the overall ranking, Delhi moved to the 12th spot in 2019 from the 23rd place in 2018. The rankings for 2019 were to

be released in March this year but had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The government had launched the ease of doing business for states to trigger a competition among states to reform their business and approval processes to attract investment. The sustained progress of India's rankings in the World Bank's ease of doing business had also had an impact on states to shore up their approval and regulatory processes and increase their potential to attract investors.

"India is seen taking the reform process seriously which showed when foreign direct investment in the country increased even during the Covid-19 pandemic, amid what was called the world's strictest lockdown. Some states have shown extraordinary energy in putting together

action plans and making sure that reforms happen. States have embraced the true spirit behind the State Business Reforms Action Plan," said Sitharaman while releasing the rankings.

The larger objective of attracting investments and increasing ease of doing business in each state was sought to be achieved by introducing an element of healthy competition through a system of ranking states based on their performance in the implementation of business reform action plan.

The ranking this time gives full weightage to the feedback from over 30,000 respondents at the ground level, who gave their opinion about the effectiveness of the reforms. State rankings will help attract investments, foster healthy competition and increase ease of doing business in each state.