

Uttar Pradesh’s three aspirational districts make it to UNDP top-10 list

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CM Yogi Adityanath thanked PM Narendra Modi for the development brought about by the Aspirational District Programme. (File photo)

LUCKNOW: Out of the eight aspirational districts in Uttar Pradesh under the United Nations Development Programme, three have made it to the top 10 among 117 across the country, on the basis of improvement in positive indicators of development. Chandauli has ranked second this year, followed by Sonbhadra at the fourth position and Fatehpur which has ranked seventh.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the development brought about by the Aspirational District Programme. “Under the guidance of the PM and with the efforts by UP Government, the state is fast progressing towards holistic and inclusive development. The UNDP India report on the development in Sonbhadra, Chandauli and Fatehpur recognises this fact,” the CM said. The Aspirational Districts Programme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2018 as a part of the government’s effort to raise the living standards of its citizens and ensure inclusive growth for all, he added.

HOW THEY STACK UP

District	Rank
Chandauli	2
Sonbhadra	4
Fatehpur	7
Balrampur	19
Chitrakoot	25
Shrawasti	26
Siddharthnagar	39
Bahraich	81

He added that the UNDP report has appreciated the PM’s aspirational district programme which has helped to cover many districts in the state with inclusive development. “UP Government is committed to achieving ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas’ under the PM’s guidance,” the CM added.

Appreciating the work that has taken place in Chandauli, known as the ‘rice bowl’ of eastern UP, for production of the more economically viable black rice, the report has commended the district administration for encouraging farmers to take up black rice farming. “Black rice as such is not native to the area and is actually produced in high quantities in Manipur. However, given the increasing demand for the product in the global markets, the district administration promoted the product among a small group of 300 farmers. With the success of the initiative, high quality black rice produced in the district is now ready to be exported to Australia and New Zealand and will soon be exported to other countries as well,” the report has said, adding that black rice is double the price of normal rice in the local market at Rs 200 per kg.

A government spokesperson said that the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has been motivating more farmers to grow black rice as Chandauli’s soil is highly favourable for paddy farming.

“The UNDP report is based on quantitative analysis of publicly available data and interviews with various stakeholders, including DMs, central prabhari officers, district fellows and other development partners,” said the spokesperson.

Furthermore, the UNDP report has put Chandauli and Sonbhadra among the top 5 districts with maximum change in net resilience since 2018. According to the report, Chandauli and Sonbhadra among others were found to have progressed the most since the beginning of the programme.

The Aspirational Districts Programme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2018 as a part of the government’s effort to raise the living standards of its citizens and ensure inclusive growth for all, he added.

“Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has always encouraged innovation in the agricultural sector. He has given the much required impetus to the sector in line with the UP Export Policy 2020-25, which aims at doubling the income of farmers and increasing farm exports while promoting the ‘Make In India’ programme,” he said.

Jharkhand capital Ranchi has topped the rankings. Bahraich is UP's worst performing district at 81st position.