

Expressways to put Uttar Pradesh on fast track of progress

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LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh is the land of opportunities in terms of business, industries and human capital. The last four-and-a-half years have seen an unprecedented boost to infrastructure to bring this vast state on the driver's seat to ensure nation's development.

The objective of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is to make Uttar Pradesh the driver of development activities. PM Narendra Modi had also said recently that "a determined approach to boost infrastructure in the state is turning UP into an 'express state'".

The expressway projects launched since 2016 include Purvanchal Expressway, Gorakhpur Link Expressway, Ganga Expressway and

Bundelkhand Expressway. The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority has been given the responsibility of completing these projects.

While Purvanchal Expressway is set to be inaugurated by the PM on November 16, work on other expressways is continuing at a fast pace.

GatiShakti Boost: The development of expressways in UP is set to get a boost with the GatiShakti National Master Plan for infrastructure development. It aims to ensure integrated planning and implementation of infrastructure projects in the next four years, with focus on expediting works on the ground, saving cost and creating jobs.

Purvanchal Expressway: Express development for East UP: The Purvanchal Expressway has opened new horizons for the development of eastern Uttar Pradesh which has immense possibilities with its abundant natural resources, extensive agriculture, a huge repository of human resources, a big market, and unique products in all districts. The foundation stone laying ceremony for the Purvanchal Expressway was held in Azamgarh in July 2018 by PM Narendra Modi. This greenfield expressway has its starting point at Chand Sarai village, located near the existing Lucknow-Sultanpur Road (NH- 731) in Lucknow. Its end point is near village Haidaria on NH-31 in Ghazipur.

Its total length is 340.82 km and the districts falling along the expressway include Lucknow, Barabanki, Amethi, Sultanpur, Ayodhya, Ambedkarnagar, Azamgarh, Mau and Ghazipur.

Districts near the Purvanchal Expressways have immense industrial potential. A wide range of products from Barabanki, Amethi, Sultanpur, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Ayodhya, Gorakhpur, Ambedkarnagar and Ballia will get access to huge market. Major gains are expected in getting a big market for ODOP (one district, one product) items from these districts. The total project financial outlay of the expressway was Rs 22,497 crore, of which, land acquisition accounted for Rs 7,380 crore.

Gorakhpur Link Expressway: Boost to the east: For large parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Gorakhpur is the hub of activity in education, medical & health facilities, trading, tourism, sugar mills, border trade with Nepal, and also holds cultural and religious significance dating back to centuries. The city is named after the revered saint Gorakshanath. The Gorakhnath temple in Gorakhpur is the seat of the Nath sect. With the futuristic era of expressways now covering the entire state, Gorakhpur will soon be linked to Purvanchal Expressway with a Link Expressway.

The Gorakhpur Link Expressway project is a 91-km long, fully access controlled four-lane expressway with the starting point at Jaitpur in Gorakhpur, on the NH-27 bypass. It will end at Salarpur village in Azamgarh, joining the Purvanchal Expressway which ends at Haidaria village in Ghazipur. The stipulated date for completion of the project is December 2023.

Ganga Expressway: Express road link across UP : The Ganga is synonymous with the spirit and essence of India. Now, an expressway coming up along the holy river will transform road connectivity in the state. The Ganga Expressway will be a 594-km long, fully access-controlled expressway proposed to start from Bijauli village on Meerut-Bulandshahr road (NH-334) in Meerut, and ending at Judapur Dando village near bypass on NH-19 in Prayagraj. It is slated to be completed by 2025.

Bundelkhand Expressway: Towards rapid transformation: Bundelkhand is a historic region in central India straddling across UP and MP. Now, a modern expressway will transform this relatively inaccessible region into a hotbed of development activities. The CM launched the Bundelkhand Expressway project in April 2017. After the completion of this project, the ambitious Defence Industrial Corridor Project will get tremendous boost. The proposed expressway will link Bundelkhand with Delhi through the Agra-Lucknow Expressway and Yamuna Expressway. The PM laid its foundation stone on February 29, 2020. Its total length is 296.07 km, beginning from Chitrakoot on Jhansi-Prayagraj NH-35/76 near Bharatkoop, and ending at Agra-Lucknow Expressway, near Kudrail village of Takha tehsil on Agra-Lucknow Expressway in Etawah. Till November 2021, more than 75% work on the expressway has been completed and at this pace, it is likely to be completed by the stipulated time of March 2022.

(The writer is MD of Uttar Pradesh Industrial Consultants Limited. Views expressed are personal)