

Uttar Pradesh plays pivotal role in India's self-reliance quest: Pradhan

TNN | Dec 21, 2021, 04.21 AM IST



LUCKNOW: A day after Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra targeted the BJP government by claiming that women empowerment does not imply possession of a cooking gas cylinder or a toilet, Union education minister and BJP's UP election in-charge Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday said the Congress leader was not aware of ground reality.

"Some people do not know the social problems faced by people, especially women, in rural households," he said, while speaking at the inaugural session of 'Destination Uttar Pradesh Conclave' organised by the Times Group in Lucknow.

"Steps like construction of toilets and providing LPG connections not only ensure security to women but also elevate their dignity," he said.

Pradhan, who played a pivotal role in the implementation of Ujjwala Yojana entailing free gas connection, said the scheme was rolled out after an exhaustive research done by American scientist Kirk Smit, who pointed out that around 5 lakh women used to die due to inhalation of smoke emanating from clay stove.

Pradhan said UP played a pivotal role in India's aspirations to become self-reliant. "No one can imagine the country's development without the empowerment of women who account for around 50% of the population," he said, stressing that various projects, including expressways and airports, were the examples of development ushered in by the government.

Stressing that democracy is strengthened when people benefit from welfare schemes, Pradhan said, "UP will not only be the destination for the development of Kashi, Ayodhya and Mathura. It will not only be the destination for investment, business or resources. It will also be the destination for the ultimate welfare of society in the time of crisis."

Pradhan also lauded the state government for Covid-19 management and for tackling reverse migration in the aftermath of lockdown.