

## View: People have voted for highways that will lead to progress and development

Agencies



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### Synopsis

In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP government has done remarkably well on expressway development. It should focus on timely completion of three additional expressways — Ganga Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway and Gorakhpur Link Expressway. Western UP has the potential of driving UP's ambition of becoming a \$1 trillion economy and generating massive employment.

The five state elections were fought on promises of development. The incumbent governments were seeking a repeat mandate to complete existing initiatives.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, the **BJP** government has done remarkably well on expressway development. It should focus on timely completion of three additional expressways — Ganga Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway and Gorakhpur Link Expressway. Western UP has the potential of driving UP's ambition of becoming a \$1 trillion economy and generating massive employment. Many infrastructure projects need to be taken up and existing ones completed expeditiously. These include **Jewar** Airport and its complementary surrounding investments, metro from **Greater Noida** to Jewar, multi-modal logistics and transport hubs in Greater Noida, Dehradun Expressway and **Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System**.

The state should also persuade the **Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India** to quickly complete the remaining section in the state. Timely completion of the link between the Eastern and Western Freight Corridors would improve port access for UP's exporters.

The BJP government is returning with a full majority. There should be some tough measures to reform electricity distribution. Finally, the state would do well to continue to push the ambitious Nal-se-Jal programme, which would be a singular boost for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

In Punjab, AAP faces different challenges. While road connectivity is improving, the state has a broken electricity sector. It would do well to reinstate confidence in PPAs and reform power distribution. The immediate focus should be social infrastructure. AAP is best placed to improve education and health systems with a zealous use of innovative formats like in Delhi.

The other three states stand to benefit from the Centre's largesse and should leverage the "double-engine" opportunity. Goa should complete three projects — Mopa Airport, Cruise Terminal at Mormugao Port and the muchdelayed widening of NH-66. **Uttarakhand** should complete the Char Dham project and the proposed ropeways which got a special mention in this year's budget. RishikeshKarnaprayag rail link, also known as the Char Dham Railway, needs special attention as it also serves as a strategic move to build connectivity close to the Chinese border.